

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 17 OCTOBER 1975

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

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE**1. IMPROVED WATER SUPPLY, KARUMBA AND NORMANTON**

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

(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 his department?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) As it happens, I have today written to the Honourable the Prime Minister in regard to this matter.

2. SEIZED TAIWANESE TRAWLERS

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

(1) Further to his answer to my question on 9 October, were tug haulage charges and wages for watchmen included in part (3) of his answer and, if so, will he detail the charges to date in each instance and category for each vessel while in custody?

(2) What were the dates of apprehension in each instance of the seized Taiwanese fishing vessels and what was the number of crew members in each instance?

(3) What is the present position relative to court proceedings and decision, repatriation dates of crews and arrangements made for the disposal of the vessels in each instance?

Answers:—

(1) Tug haulage for "Wan Shun Chuan": \$640 tug haulage for "Yuan Cheng Fu No. 31": Nil. Wages for watchmen on both craft over period 27 May 1975 to present: \$2,540, and these were included in totals advised previously.

(2) "Wan Shun Chuan" apprehended on February 1975 had a crew of 21. "Yuan Cheng Fu No. 31" apprehended on 24 June 1975 with crew of 25.

(3) Re "Wan Shun Chuan": Court proceedings were finalised on 3 March 1975. Sixteen crew were convicted and fined a total of \$800, which was later remitted. The vessel, catch and fishing gear were forfeited to the Crown. The crew were repatriated on 28 May 1975. Tenders for sale of the vessel closed on 21 July 1975. Acceptance of a tender of \$6,315 now awaits a decision by the Commonwealth Department of Transport regarding an entry permit for the vessel to remain in Australia. Re "Yuan Cheng Fu No. 31": Court proceedings were finalised on 11 September 1975. The captain only was proceeded against and fined \$100. This fine was remitted. The vessel, catch and fishing gear were forfeited to the Crown. Tenders for sale of the vessel closed on 13 October 1975, and a tender by the previous owner of \$20,000 has been accepted. The vessel is expected to leave for Taiwan within the next few days with all crew aboard except one member who was earlier repatriated on compassionate grounds on 8 October 1975.

3. ACCOMMODATION AT CAIRNS WEST STATE SCHOOL

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

(1) Is he aware that the Cairns West State School is presently short of three classrooms and that anticipated enrolments within this rapidly developing suburban growth area indicate that the shortage could extend to six classrooms in the school year of 1976?

(2) What is the programming, forward-planning priorities and/or approvals for (a) adequate staffroom accommodation, (b) a free-standing library and (c) a suitable administration area at the school?

Answers:—

(1) Information just to hand indicates that there has been an increase in enrolment beyond that which was anticipated and planned for. Provision was made by my department earlier this year for two additional teaching spaces at this school for 1976. Latest figures indicate that four rooms will probably be required, and the Department of Works has been requested to meet this increased need. I am advised that planning is in hand for the provision of a second demountable building to make the four required teaching areas available for the 1976 school year.

(2) As a result of the survey into school accommodation carried out last year, planning envisages the provision of four open-area teaching spaces by conversion of

existing rooms as well as construction of two new teaching spaces. Office and staff-room accommodation is planned, but the implementation of this planning will be governed by the availability of funds. It has not been possible to give priority listing to a new library at the school.

4. HIGH QUALITY OF MILK FROM NANANGO DAIRY CO-OPERATIVE

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

(1) Is he aware that milk sent from the Nanango Dairy Co-op. for distribution to the Brisbane bottled milk-market has topped the State for quality on seven occasions this year?

(2) In view of this, will he see that this area's quota to the Brisbane market is increased at the earliest opportunity, thus giving the Brisbane public the advantage of this high-quality product and at the same time giving incentive to the efficient producers in the South Burnett district?

Answers:—

(1) I am aware that the Nanango Dairy Co-operative Association has achieved a high standard with some of the quality tests and analyses made on milk supplied to the Brisbane liquid milk market.

(2) The supply of milk to Brisbane is regulated by a quota system which has been adopted by the Brisbane Milk Board acting on the recommendations of a quota advisory committee, which comprises representatives of the dairying industry. Quotas are reviewed annually, and I am assured that any submission made by the Nanango Dairy Co-operative Association will receive close consideration when quotas are next under review.

5. SHARE DEALINGS OF A.L.P. MEMBERS

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

With reference to the increased trading in shares after the resignation of Mr. Connor as Commonwealth Minister for Minerals and Energy, is he aware of any buying of shares by Commonwealth or State A.L.P. members following this announcement?

Answer:—

I am aware that there was an upsurge in trading on the various stock exchanges as an obvious result of the long overdue resignation of Mr. Connor as Minister for Minerals and Energy. Whilst I am not aware of any share transactions undertaken by members of the A.L.P., I am certain that the share market would improve even further for all investors if the Prime Minister would submit his Government's resignation to the people.

6. A.L.P. INTERFERENCE IN OTHER MEMBERS' ELECTORATES

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

(1) Have any members of the A.L.P. Opposition been guilty of the reprehensible and downright rotten, underhanded practice of making representations on behalf of constituents of a Government member's electorate and of generally interfering in matters in other members' electorates?

(2) Will he give an assurance that, if any Opposition members attempt to make representations to him on matters affecting other members' electorates, he will notify the member concerned before taking any action?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) There are occasions when A.L.P. members have made representations on behalf of persons or organisations not resident or situated within that particular member's electorate. Some A.L.P. members have even made representations for people in other A.L.P. electorates. On one occasion the Leader of the Opposition wrote to me concerning a welfare case in my own electorate of which I was already aware and on which action had been taken. On such occasions I have always adopted the policy of advising the local member of such representations. However, if a genuine approach of a personal nature is made in the area of adoption or family assistance, I have been in the habit of respecting the confidentiality of the inquiry. If, however, I feel that the local member is able to lend his support to the family concerned, I do alert him to the facts of the case.

7. AID FOR DISTRICT EISTEDDFODS

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

What assistance, financial and otherwise, may be given by the State Government to the conduct of district eisteddfods.

Answer:—

My department, being aware of the important role which the eisteddfod movement has historically played especially through community effort and self-help, has been and is making financial assistance available to district eisteddfods in the light of total funds available. Also, the eisteddfod organisations are offered free publicity and advertising through the services of the Queensland Cultural Diary, and advice and information by the office of the Director of Cultural Activities.

8. REPRESENTATIONS BY N. H. TURNER & SONS PTY. LTD. ON LIQUOR LICENCE FEES

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

(1) Has he seen a letter dated 10 October from N. H. Turner & Sons Pty. Ltd. referring to the increased licence fees for wholesale spirit merchants and endeavouring to illustrate that wholesale spirit merchants have the same cost price for liquor as hoteliers?

(2) As wholesale spirit merchants buy from the breweries and should be selling wholly or principally to licensed persons, that is, hoteliers, to sell by retail, if they were abiding by the spirit of the law, is the effort by N. H. Turner & Sons Pty. Ltd. to sell the idea to parliamentarians that they have the same cost price as hoteliers gross deception?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) I have read the letter to which the honourable member has referred in his question. In fact a number of honourable members have approached me with somewhat identical letters which would indicate that the firm of N. H. Turner & Sons Pty. Ltd. has adopted pressure group tactics. The assertion that hoteliers in the area of concern are able to purchase their requirements at the same price as spirit merchants is correct. To my knowledge it has never been otherwise. What does concern me, however, is that the majority of spirit merchants are no longer operating principally as merchants to the licensed trade, but have established themselves as retailers of hot beer in carton lots, and have deliberately set out to undercut and capture the normal hotel bottled trade. It must be remembered that in the interests of having first-class accommodation available throughout Queensland, the Government through the Licensing Commission insists that hotels maintain a number of rooms available to travellers at any hour of the day seven days a week; that they provide dining rooms, lounges and modernly-equipped bars with refrigeration; and that they employ at all times sufficient staff to meet the required demand. Merchants on the other hand operate from bulk-storage depots or sheds for five days a week with minimum staff, provide few or no public amenities, and are not involved in bar service or refrigeration. They are therefore in a position to meet the increased licence fee. I have already told Mr. S. O. Svensson, a director of N. H. Turner & Sons Pty. Ltd., by telephone that, where his firm or any other spirit merchant performs the functions of a merchant supplying to the licensed trade, then no percentage fee whatsoever applies to that part of his business turnover.

9. SPIRIT MERCHANTS' LICENCES

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

(1) Do those holders of a 2-gallon or spirit merchant's licence under the Liquor Act who are selling wholly or mainly to members of the public, and who obtained their licence through buying out a bona fide wholesaler, trade unfairly against bona fide retailers, namely, hoteliers and are they not trading in accordance with the sense of the Act?

(2) Does any company or person now applying to the Licensing Commission for a spirit merchant's licence have to satisfy the commission that sales will be made wholly or principally to persons licensed to sell by retail?

Answers:—

(1) The holder of a spirit merchant's licence may lawfully trade wholly or mainly with members of the general public, except in cases where the Licensing Court has prescribed terms and conditions in regard to curtailment of sales to the general public. These restrictions have been imposed by the court in regard to two recent grants of spirit merchant's licences in Brisbane.

(2) Yes—both the commission and the Licensing Court.

10. SCHOOL TOILETS

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

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:—

Where a town water supply or other suitable water supply is available planning provision is made in accordance with the following scale—Girls: 4 W.C. pedestals for first 100 pupils; 4 W.C. pedestals for second 100 pupils; and 3 W.C. pedestals for third and each subsequent additional 100 pupils. Boys: 3 W.C. pedestals for first 100 pupils; 3 W.C. pedestals for second 100 pupils; 2 W.C. pedestals for third 100 pupils; and 1 W.C. pedestal for fourth and each subsequent additional 100 pupils. Urinal stalls are also provided, being 1.8 m (6 ft.) run for each 100 pupils. Female Staff: 1 W.C. pedestal per 7 teachers. Male Staff: 1 W.C. pedestal per 10 teachers; and 1-1.2 m (4 ft.) urinal stall. Provision of additional facilities by reason of growth factor is subject to the availability of funds.

11. DEATHS ATTRIBUTABLE TO DEFECTS IN MOTOR VEHICLES

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

(1) Has he seen the newspaper report wherein the Car Consumers' Association of Australia claimed that cars with safety defects were involved in 19 deaths every week on Australian roads?

(2) How many deaths have occurred so far in 1975 in Queensland which can be attributed to defects in vehicles?

(3) How many deaths occurred in the whole of 1974 in Queensland from such defects?

Answers:—

(1) No.

(2 and 3) I am advised by the Government Statistician for Queensland that deaths of persons involved in vehicles in traffic accidents are classified statistically in Queensland only to the extent that the deaths occurred in a specific type of traffic accident or involved a specific type of road user and consequently there are no official statistics available concerning causes such as defects in vehicles.

12. FORMULA FOR PURCHASING HOUSING FOR ABORIGINES

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

Does his department have a definite formula when purchasing homes throughout the community for allocation to Aboriginal families and, if so, will he table the details of the formula?

Answer:—

Yes. In keeping with its policy of progressive development of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, my Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement has developed a rehousing programme both on reserves and in conventional urban areas. During the past six years, more than 1,400 families have been rehoused in conventional homes with minimal breakdown in family or local community social relationships. In the urban areas, the department's policy provides for both the acquisition of existing homes and the erection of new dwellings. In the case of home purchase, the department explores the suitability of the suburb to ensure that the prospective tenant will fit comfortably into the existing community having due regard to all circumstances, including social and economical development. The department equally assesses the local environment to ensure that tensions are not created for the established residents. Due regard is also given to employment needs and proximity to essential services. Where new homes are being erected, they are usually in situations of a developing suburb, so

that in fact the suburb absorbs the home occupied by the Aboriginal or Islander family. Usually not more than two such homes are established close to one another or indeed, for that matter, in the same street. The department is very conscious of, and endeavours to respect at all times, the rights and privacy of all citizens, and will continue to do so. The honourable member is assured that the department will continue to maintain its policy, which has the approval of the Aboriginal and Islanders Advisory Council and which is achieving the progressively successful integration of so many people.

13. PRICE LIMITS ON MINERAL SANDS TRANSACTIONS

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

In view of the refusal of overseas zircon consumers to pay the minimum price required for Commonwealth Minerals and Energy Department approval of new sales contracts, what effect will this and any other price limits have on Queensland mineral-sands producers in their negotiation of forward export business?

Answer:—

I am aware of a report in a southern newspaper claiming that such a situation existed. However, the report was in error. Inquiries made go to show that no minimum prices for beach-sand minerals have been fixed.

14. POTATO PRICES

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

In view of the serious slump in potato prices that has followed the huge surge in imports triggered off by the previous state of shortage and high prices and the apparent indifference of the Commonwealth Agriculture Department, what is the situation confronting Queensland potato growers and is any action being undertaken by the State Government to alleviate prevailing difficulties?

Answer:—

I am aware of the large increase in imports of frozen potatoes and the insignificant protection against imports of these potatoes provided by the current tariff. Unfortunately the upsurge in imports coincided with more than adequate local production and declining market prices. At that time, I urged the Federal Minister for Agriculture to refer this matter to the Temporary Assistance Authority so that a realistic level of protection could be given to the industry. However, no action was taken by the Minister. The matter has now been referred to the Industries Assistance Commission, and officers of my department are preparing a suitable submission.

15. PREFABRICATED HOUSES FOR THE AGED

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

(1) Is he aware that the Victorian Government has considered a scheme of building small prefabricated houses for the aged in their families' allotments in Victoria?

(2) Does his department have any plans to instigate studies to see if such a proposal could be made to operate in this State?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) This matter was investigated as an alternative to the alteration of existing family houses and was raised by my colleague the Minister for Police when he administered the Housing portfolio. Through the Department of Local Government the proposition was referred to the Local Government Association of Queensland. However, the association considered that the proposals are contrary to town-planning principles. Following a further approach, the association advised on 15 September 1975 that its executive had adopted the following resolution—"That the erection of 'Grannie Flats' be strongly opposed and the association re-assert its earlier opposition to such proposals with emphasis." Personally I regret the view adopted by the association. It is very desirable that, whenever practicable, elderly folk continue to live with their families and not be grouped into large institutions, notwithstanding the high standard of accommodation and care provided by the organisations concerned. I am pleased to add, however, that the Redland Shire Council has indicated that, under certain conditions, it would permit the provision of appropriate accommodation for aged relatives, attached to or detached from a family home. That, of course, is due to the representations of the honourable member for Redlands.

16. ACTIONS OF FORMER SENATOR MURPHY IN HIS TWO ROLES

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

(1) What legislation did ex-Senator Murphy support when he was Attorney-General which was later overruled by the High Court?

(2) Was any of the legislation detrimental to Queensland and the other States?

(3) Is there any legislation which ex-Senator Murphy supported when he was Attorney-General which is still under challenge by the States in the High Court?

(4) Has the Commonwealth Government enjoyed greater success in the High Court since ex-Senator Murphy was appointed to the court?

Answers:—

(1) Senator Murphy (as he then was) supported the Petroleum and Minerals Authority Act in 1973, which was recently found by the High Court to be invalid. His Honour Mr. Justice Murphy did not take his seat on the bench upon the hearing of the challenge to the validity of that Act.

(2) Had its provisions been allowed to come into operation, the Petroleum and Minerals Authority Act 1973 would have been detrimental to Queensland and the other States.

(3) Yes. Senator Murphy (as he then was) supported the Seas and Submerged Lands Act of 1973, which is the subject of a challenge by all States of the Commonwealth and a decision is awaited. Although it could not be described as legislation, the Australian Assistance Plan, which was also supported by Senator Murphy, has been challenged by certain States, and I understand that a decision in this case will be handed down in the High Court today.

(4) I am not able to answer this question.

17. BREEDING OF FRESHWATER FISH

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

With reference to the many rivers in Queensland where freshwater fish have become almost extinct, particularly where dams and weirs have been erected and despite the installation of fish ladders—

(1) How many freshwater-fish-breeding farms are in operation?

(2) To what extent is his department acting to restock freshwater rivers and creeks with suitable fish?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) A number of fish-breeding farms operate throughout Australia and my department refers inquirers to seek their requirement of fish stock from Narrandera in New South Wales, where species suitable for most parts of Queensland are available. The numbers of such farms are not known as there is no licensing requirement. Investigations by my department are proceeding to provide a restocking programme for barramundi, which species apparently does not breed in impoundments. Such assessment should reach finality within three years. Other species are also under investigation. The department has available technical data and professional personnel to advise and assist organisations or persons who wish

to develop fish-breeding farms in Queensland, and the honourable member is assured that all encouragement will be given any organisation wishing to develop such a project.

18. PUBLICATION OF NAMES WITH GOLDEN CASSET RESULTS

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

Further to my questions regarding not publishing the names and addresses of major prize winners in the Golden Casket and with reference to the results in "The Courier-Mail" of 16 October, where the casket agents' names, as well as the names of the major prizewinners, have not been published, is this procedure correct?

Answer:—

The publication in newspapers of the names of agents who sell major prizes is entirely a matter for the newspaper concerned. The names of the agents are always published in the Casket Office's official result slips.

19. QUANTUM OF DAMAGES IN FATAL ACCIDENT CASES

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

(1) Is he aware of a Supreme Court case (*Diakogiorgic v. Anastasas*, 1974) wherein a series of problems arose as to the quantification of damages in the case of a fatal accident?

(2) As certain applications were made to the court on behalf of certain children of the deceased under the Common Law Practices Act, has his department taken cognisance of this case?

(3) If this matter has been brought to his notice, and in view of the House of Lords decision (*Taylor v. O'Connor*, 1971), and the minority findings of certain justices presiding in that case, who stated that it would be quite unrealistic to refuse to take inflation into account when determining damages, is he prepared to act on any of the submissions which were no doubt forwarded to him?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) I am not aware of the case referred to and notice of the matter has not been brought to my attention.

(3) No submissions have been forwarded to me in relation to the matter.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE GRAIN FREIGHT RATES

Mr. NEAL: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: As it has been announced that rail freights and fares will increase by an

average of 40 per cent from 1 November, will he inform the House how these increases will apply to the rail transport of grain? If he is unable to do so, will he make an early determination on the matter, in view of the fact that many wheat growers are now harvesting and, for budgetary purposes, wish to know the additional amounts they will be required to pay?

Sir GORDON CHALK: Yesterday the Executive Council approved of the new freight rates, which will be applicable as from 1 November. The new rates will be published either in next Saturday's Government Gazette or, because they are so wide ranging, in a Government Gazette Extraordinary published after Saturday. I assure the honourable member that the new freight rates will be gazetted.

To answer the honourable member's question in specific terms—the rail freight on grain will be increased by 40 per cent.

I have received a deputation from the Queensland Graingrowers' Association, headed by Mr. Don Esther, the acting president, who was accompanied by Mr. Clinton Condon and the association's secretary. I pointed out to them that freight rates on grain have not been increased in Queensland for many years. I also indicated to them that in New South Wales the average increase in freight rates (as a result of five increases over nine years) was a little over 60 per cent and that in Victoria, over the same period, there had been five increases in freight rates and that the total increase was 69 per cent. While the increase that is being applied in Queensland as from 1 November is steep, grain growers, and for that matter all other users of the railway system, have enjoyed a moratorium, as it were, for many years.

I believe that the State did the right thing in the past by trying to absorb as much as possible of the railway loss instead of passing it on to the public. However, the time has arrived when it is impossible to absorb a 183 per cent increase in the wage structure of the Railway Department. Because of that, the Government found it necessary to make these changes. In fairness to the members of the deputation, I want to say that they accepted that basis of argument.

While the industry itself is not very happy, grain prices at present are at what I might describe as a reasonable level. I told the deputation that I was sure that, if or when in the future the industry through some unforeseen circumstances found itself in a plight somewhat similar to that of the beef industry, the Government would be prepared to consider some basis of relief.

I also said that I believed that this year would see a bumper crop in both the wheat and barley areas, and I assured the deputation that, to ensure the maximum return to growers, the Railway Department would lean over backwards to transport every tonne of grain which it was desired to export.

Further, I pointed out to the deputation that, in the long term, in view of the desire of the Government and the people generally to develop new port facilities further down the river, it would be necessary for the grain-growing industry to provide new storage facilities. I said that the expenditure of additional money on grain storage at Pinkenba would therefore be unwise, and that there appeared to be a need to construct what might be referred to as substorage depots on the Darling Downs to which wheat could be brought from the distant areas and then transferred to wherever the new shipping facilities might be.

I also pointed out that today a tapering freight rate applied to the long-distance hauls from the point of pick-up, or the farm, to the Pinkenba area, and that, if it was necessary to provide substations on the Downs, the Railway Department would be prepared to consider a basis on which it would meet quite a portion of what might be described as the change-over costs at a particular depot, such as shunting charges.

I assure the honourable member that the deputation left me in a reasonable mood, appreciating that the problems of the Government were also the problems of the people.

REMOVAL OF DEATH DUTIES

Mr. AKERS: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: As the general public appear to be somewhat confused on the subject, will the Treasurer clarify the position by informing the House the date on which the much applauded first stage of the removal of death duties will take effect?

Sir GORDON CHALK: If my memory is correct, I answered a similar question in the House a few days ago. Perhaps the honourable member was not in the Chamber or missed hearing the answer. The answer I gave was that the concession in death duties would apply from the date on which I presented the Budget to the House—Thursday, 25 September 1975.

RAIL LINKS TO CLEVELAND, SOUTHPORT AND REDCLIFFE

Mr. JONES: I ask the Acting Minister for Transport: As the honourable member for Redlands has promised a rail link to Cleveland to replace the one torn up by this Government, as the Minister for Local Government has promised a rail link to Southport to replace the one torn up by his Government and as the honourable member for Redcliffe consistently calls for a link to Redcliffe, what priority do these projects enjoy?

Sir GORDON CHALK: Promises are made. They are an indication of Government thinking on the desirability of such projects. The question is when finance will be available, and when it is available the priorities will be decided.

Mr. JONES: I have a supplementary question to the Acting Minister for Transport. In that case, will these projects, as the Treasurer has described them, be allotted priority? Will it mean that the electrification scheme already under way will be scrapped to fulfil the promises of honourable members opposite?

Sir GORDON CHALK: I think the alleged shadow Minister for Transport in the Labor Party is being a little facetious. It is true that electrification is proceeding in the Brisbane area. It is equally true that a percentage of the money required is being provided by the Commonwealth Government and the balance is being provided by the State. The planning has gone forward in a most satisfactory manner, but it is true that the Commonwealth has now indicated that we cannot go ahead further than the bounds of certain approvals that were given in and for this financial year. The result is that we could very easily find ourselves with certain track work done in one area, track work done in another area and with no link between them. The Commonwealth Government's attention has been drawn to this matter. All I would like to assure the honourable member of is that the electrification is proceeding within the metropolitan area as fast as funds become available and will have no bearing whatsoever on our desire to provide rail links such as those to Southport and Redcliffe.

LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. A. M. HODGES (Gympie—Leader of the House): 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 Liquor Act 1912–1973 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

POULTRY INDUSTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries): 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 Poultry Industry Act 1946–1973 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Hodges, read a third time.

SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Hodges, read a third time.

URGENT NEED FOR COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT ELECTION

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (11.51 a.m.): I ask leave of the House to move a motion without notice.

(Leave granted.)

Mr. Jones: I wonder why.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes, I wonder why.

Mr. Wright: Chalkie tipped us off.

Sir GORDON CHALK: I rise to a point of order. In view of the statement made in the Federal Parliament yesterday that somebody in the front bench tipped the Opposition off, I take a rather dim view of the interjection made by the honourable member for Cairns—

Opposition Members: Rockhampton.

Sir GORDON CHALK: . . . by the honourable member for Rockhampton that I tipped the Opposition off. I have had no contact with the Opposition. I ask that the honourable member withdraw the statement.

Mr. Wright: I must have been mistaken. It wasn't—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to withdraw the statement.

Mr. Wright: Yes, I withdraw it.

Mr. AHERN: I rise to a point of order. I wish to clarify the situation. On the advice of the Leader of the House, I tendered formal advice to the Acting Leader of the Opposition in this place; I handed him a photocopy and thereby paid him the courtesy of giving him some notice of this motion.

Mr. HINZE: I rise to a point of order. The statement of the Government Whip has made such a liar of the honourable member for Archerfield—an unmitigated liar—that I ask him to stand in his place and apologise. He also said that I made the information available to him. Now he has been shown up in his true light. He's a liar.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: I rise to a point of order. I object to that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is using unparliamentary language which is not allowable in the House. I ask him to withdraw that statement.

Mr. HINZE: If you ask me to withdraw it, Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw it—much against my grain.

Mr. MELLOY: I rise to a point of order. I want to make it clear to the House that it is true that the Government Whip handed me details of the motion to be moved by the Premier this morning. That was handed to me while the House was in session. It is equally true that the Opposition was aware of this business before the House sat.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I rise to a point of order. I draw the attention of the House to the fact that the honourable member for Rockhampton started these innuendoes and slunk out like a big carpet-snake.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The whole question of whether they knew beforehand or not is beside the point. We know that the Leader of the Opposition has the reputation of being a dealer in stolen goods. Of course, that is not the case in this instance.

Mr. BURNS: I rise to a point of order. That is an unmitigated lie, and I will not accept it. I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order and act with the decorum befitting the Parliament. I implore members on both sides to refrain from persistent interjections and to allow the conduct of Parliament to proceed.

Mr. BURNS: On a point of order I ask for the withdrawal of the remarks of the Premier. They are offensive to me and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! As the remarks are offensive to the honourable member, I ask the Premier to withdraw them.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I will in this particular instance. I had already gone on to say that it did not apply in this instance. On many occasions the Leader of the Opposition has publicly admitted the fact that he has hundreds of documents in his possession. He cannot deny that. The main point is that that does not apply to him this morning.

Mr. BURNS: I rise on a further point of order. I have been told by you, Mr. Speaker, and other Speakers in this House that withdrawals cannot be qualified in that fashion. I want a withdrawal without qualification from the Premier of the remarks that he made. They are offensive to me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has withdrawn the remark. I abide by my decision.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The important point is—

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I warn all honourable members that if they persist in interjecting I shall deal with them under Standing Order 123A. I stress that I warn all honourable members.

Mr. Burns interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Including the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I move—

“That this Parliament, having observed with deep concern the increasing tempo of action by the Commonwealth Government to—

(i) erode this State's sovereignty;

(ii) inhibit this State's capacity for effective development of its resources and consequent provision of additional employment opportunities;

(iii) distort the federal partnership concept basic to the Australian Constitution by use of fiscal and other pressures against this State;

(iv) display gross dereliction of duty and incompetence, which have resulted in record inflation and massive unemployment, thereby inflicting consequent hardship and misery on the people of this State; and

(v) permit its Ministers to willingly and repeatedly disregard and evade their legal and constitutional responsibilities, therefore considers

(1) that the opportunity for the electorate to pass judgment on the Federal Government should be provided as a matter of urgency; and

(2) that whatever can constitutionally be done to induce a House of Representatives election should be done, wherever and whenever the occasion for this arises.”

Mr. BURNS: I rise to a point of order. I believe this motion is a misuse of parliamentary privilege. The Government will misuse the privileges of this House to attack persons who are not here to defend themselves. These events have nothing to do with this Parliament. The Opposition cannot support a move designed to overthrow constitutional government, nor can we support the removal of the traditions of this Parliament and parliamentary democracy. We do not believe that the numbers of the Government should be used in this way, so we do not intend to participate in this debate in any shape or form. I will now take the Opposition out of the House and leave the matter in your hands, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I draw the attention of the Leader of the Opposition to the fact that I have already given a ruling in relation to certain privileges of the House. I draw his attention to the fact, too, that certain members of his party have received written speeches from someone outside the House.

Mr. Burns: No, they haven't.

Mr. SPEAKER: My word they have!

Mr. BURNS: I rise to a point of order. You prove that statement, Mr. Speaker. You have allowed Government members to make statements and speeches here for the last week written out by Ministers. We are not copping that from you or anybody else.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the Leader of the Opposition does not behave himself, I will name him under Standing Order 123A.

Mr. BURNS: You can name me, Mr. Speaker. As far as I am concerned this is a misuse of the privileges of this Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Under Standing Order 123A, I now ask the Leader of the Opposition to leave the House.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman withdrew from the Chamber.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The Opposition members have gone, but whether they are inside or outside the Chamber does not make very much difference. Their actions show their utter contempt for democracy and the freedom of this State and nation. Their complete disregard for democracy causes us grave concern. We have seen such behaviour in the Federal sphere, and I am sure that the vast majority of Australians are rejoicing at the step taken by Mr. Fraser in a valiant attempt to rescue Australia and its people from economic and political bankruptcy. In Canberra we have a discredited Government racked by mismanagement and scandal and one that is desperately trying to cling to office. It is using every means at its disposal to remain in power. It has adopted scare tactics, used threats of strike, made claims of violence in the streets and alleged that pensions will not be paid and that members of the Armed Services will be stood down. All of its claims are, of course, completely false and are designed to divert attention from the real issues.

To hear the Prime Minister and members of his party talk, we would never think that there were over 300,000 people unemployed. We would never think that there was 16 per cent inflation; we would never think that our young people are going straight from school to the dole queues to wait for their unemployment benefits; we would never think that the Gair affair and the loan affair had ever happened; we would never think that two acting Prime Ministers had been dismissed for misleading Parliament and four other senior Ministers demoted or sacked, and we would never think that the country was on the verge of bankruptcy. But these are the realities that the scare tactics are designed to cover up—to divert the attention of the people of the nation from all these things.

The Whitlam Government will do anything to avoid letting the people judge it. If it had a sound record of progress or a sound record of management, it would be challenging Mr. Fraser to an election rather than avoiding it. At the same time, the Parliament of Queensland is concerned at actions by the Prime Minister and his Labor Government to throw up a smoke-screen in an attempt to divert attention from the causes of the present economic plight of our nation—and, as I have indicated, it has raised many smoke-screens.

We have reached the stage where more and more people are asking how much longer can the Labor Government in Canberra be allowed to continue in office—to continue the rape of Australia. I say categorically that in his decision to use the Opposition majority in the Senate to reject the Budget, Mr. Fraser acted in a responsible and proper way. Our political opponents, and those politically motivated academics who speak with tongue in cheek about conventions and constitutional anomalies, must think the average Australian is very naive.

The arch manipulator of principles and conventions must surely be the discredited Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Whitlam. Ever since he came to power on gullible promises and half-truths, he has done everything in his power to break convention and water down the Constitution. The Gair affair and the Murphy affair are two glaring examples of how the Prime Minister has prostituted convention and tried to circumvent the Constitution to gain power in the Senate. We know that last week former Senator Murphy (now Mr. Justice Murphy) gave judgment in the High Court on legislation which he himself introduced into Parliament. This High Court judgment concerned territorial Senate representation, which was rejected by the people of Australia in a referendum just last year. Even though a majority of people and States rejected this measure, Mr. Whitlam's Government forced it through a Joint Sitting of both Houses in Canberra after last year's Federal election. Mr. Justice Murphy then sat in judgment on his own legislation. What a mockery of justice! What a breach of convention!

My Government was criticised yesterday by the A.L.P. for allegedly flouting an unwritten convention, but apparently in the eyes of Queensland Opposition members Mr. Whitlam can do no wrong—he can break convention with impunity.

Mr. Alison: Mr. Whitlam tore up the rule book the day he came to power.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: That is true. The day Mr. Whitlam came to power he set about breaking up the conventions and tearing up the rule books that form the basis of constitutional Government. This wrecker

who is parading as our Prime Minister has the hypocrisy to say that, by blocking Supply, Mr. Fraser is breaking convention.

I am sure that the honourable member for Nudgee (Mr. Melloy), who sits in the Opposition benches must feel ashamed of himself, his party and the Federal Labor Government, realising as he does that these things are true.

Despite what Mr. Whitlam and the other A.L.P. critics say, the action taken by Mr. Fraser is perfectly constitutional. All the argument in the world does not alter the fact that the Constitution empowers the Senate to withhold Supply from the Government. That power was inserted in the Constitution by Australians at the time of Federation. It is a power which, of course, is rarely exercised. It is a power which we believe should be exercised only when extraordinary circumstances exist. When those extraordinary circumstances exist (as they do at the moment), when trust in the Government has gone, when allowing this corrupt Government to continue in office will cause increasing hardship and suffering to more and more Australians, then those powers to send the Government to the polls must be exercised; they must be used as Mr. Fraser has used them.

The present political and economic crisis warrants drastic action by a responsible Federal Opposition. I commend Mr. Fraser, Mr. Anthony and their colleagues for the action they have taken. Mr. Whitlam's Government in recent months has been totally and utterly discredited. The Prime Minister has had to admit in Parliament that colleagues have told him lies in a deliberate attempt to mislead not only Parliament but all the people of Australia. Surely it must be some sort of political record that within a period of four months two senior Ministers, both of whom have acted as Prime Minister of the country, have had to be forced by Mr. Whitlam to resign their portfolios.

There are so many angles that one could speak of. For example, I could remind the people of Queensland that, if it had not been for the probing and prodding of a responsible Opposition under Mr. Fraser and Mr. Anthony, the folly and deceit of the loans affair might not have been unearthed until after this country had been committed to a colossal debt.

Mr. Whitlam's Government has shown clearly that it is incapable of managing the economy of this country. I am sure that all members recall the history of claims by Labor in 1972 that inflation and unemployment were too high in those days. They will remember how Labor promised to rectify the situation. Of course, today we all know that the result has been exactly the opposite. Through a splurge of spending by incompetent Ministers following out-of-date socialist theories, this Labor Government has paralysed Australia and plunged it into

the biggest debt in its history; Labor has destroyed confidence; Labor has destroyed initiative; Labor has destroyed convention.

What a tragedy Whitlam's Labor Government has been to the nation. I assume that members of the Opposition are so ashamed of themselves and so utterly ashamed of their colleagues in Canberra and their policies that they have not been prepared to sit here and listen to the criticism; they are so ashamed of themselves that they have left the Chamber.

Mr. Frawley: They have chickened out.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes. In other words, they could not face up to the facts and the justice of our contention. It is not often that one sees an Opposition party so ashamed of itself that every one of its members has to leave the Chamber. They have no courage. They have demonstrated that they cannot stand up to the issues that confront the nation—the issue of unemployment and the issue of intimidation and fear emanating from Canberra.

I repeat: what a tragedy Mr. Whitlam's Government has been to the nation. He has used every device to avoid going to the people. Today he can see the writing on the wall. He is to be condemned for now resorting to scare tactics. To me, it is a great tragedy that a Government is seeking to retain office by so many devious means, the latest being the use of scare tactics.

As I said earlier in my speech, the threats of stopping unemployment payments and the salaries of State Government employees are completely without foundation. The Prime Minister, by design, is trying to convince a large number of people, including pensioners, that Mr. Fraser's action will freeze the payment of pension cheques and servicemen's pay. I want to doubly assure the House that neither of these payments can be stopped and that the State Government is responsible for the payment of State public servants. It is because of the drastic situation we are in and the concern expressed by a greater majority of Australians that Mr. Fraser was forced to make the move that he did.

Three years ago Australia was a prosperous nation with a rich heritage. It seems incredible that in the short space of three years Australia has been forced to its knees, while the wheeling and dealing of Labor Ministers has made this country a laughing-stock around the world. Surely there can be few Australians who would oppose the clamour for a change of management—a change of ideologies—in Canberra.

Our Australian Senate stands in a unique position as a powerful safeguard for the people. It is no accident that it enjoys the right to force a discredited Government to face the people; it is part of our heritage given to us by the deliberate choice of the Australians who framed the Constitution. I

often recall these words of Sir George Pearce, a member of the first Federal Parliament and at one time Acting Prime Minister—

“The Senate was constituted as it is, after long fighting, prolonged discussions, many compromises and many concessions on the part of the various shades of political thought throughout the Commonwealth, and it stands there in the Constitution in a position that has no equal in any Legislature throughout the world.”

The Senate has acted. It cannot remove a bad Government, but it can force a bad Government to face the people. That is what it is doing at the present time under Mr. Fraser. We know that Mr. Whitlam will try to cling to power by all and devious means. We know that he will twist and turn to try to avoid facing the people. But the time is up for the Prime Minister, and I ask the House to support this motion.

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (12.12 p.m.): I second the motion. By its performance in the House this morning, the Opposition has done something so extraordinary and irresponsible that it is almost beyond belief. If ever the word “reprehensible” should be used, it should be applied to the performance of the Opposition in one of Her Majesty’s Parliaments. The Opposition has forfeited all right to expect the respect of anybody in this House or anybody outside it. Opposition members have demonstrated literally that they cannot face the music. It is all right for Labor, with the numbers in the Federal House under Mr. Whitlam, to pass a resolution, and it is also all right for Mr. Dunstan, with his numbers in South Australia, to put a resolution through his House. But when the game runs against Opposition members in this State, they get out. I think that is a dreadful thing.

A Government Member: They run away.

Mr. PORTER: Yes, they run away. They show themselves as poltroons, cowards and cravens. They just could not take it when a motion was introduced here and they do not have the numbers that they have in other places.

Although some of us were taken by surprise by the extraordinary, theatrical performance by the Opposition and its leader the moment this debate was suggested, it quickly became obvious by their various points of order, their screams, their cries and rantings, that this was a deliberate ploy. All of this was thought out and planned merely to provide a smoke-screen to obscure the fact that they were acting as political cowards, political jackals and running dogs for the Canberra extremists. I say that by its absence from the House during this debate the Opposition has abrogated its responsibility to the people of Queensland. It has in effect resigned, and it is a great pity that there is no machinery by means of which the resignation of each and every member of the Opposition could be accepted forthwith.

In view of what is happening in Australia at this very moment, the motion before the House is of tremendous importance. It acknowledges the quite extraordinary situation that exists today. It is part of the great drama that is developing in this country literally day by day and hour by hour, and it is a drama in which we in this State play an integral part. We are deeply concerned in the action, and we are most certainly deeply concerned with the outcome when the curtain falls on the final act.

This is so because we are without a doubt nearing the culmination of a great battle, and it is not just a battle for the reins of power in government; it is for power in a much more fundamental sense. In Mr. Whitlam’s case, it is a battle for power over men’s minds, their hopes, their emotions and their capacities. It is a battle for power to enable him to continue restructuring the whole of the Australian society, to transfer the due rewards for effort and success and to transfer them as gifts to those who, either by misfortune or in many cases by deliberate intent, are dependent and deficient. It is power to fix on us for generations to come the values of a sick society where the prevailing ethic will be for parasitism, for sponging and for the “I’m all right Jack” concept. I say that all of this is being done—indeed, it is not only being permitted, it is in fact being forced—because of an insensate, headlong rush into socialism. This is what the Whitlam grand design is all about. It is a formula for failure, a recipe for misery and a blueprint for economic and social catastrophe. That is precisely what the first five grounds of this motion are all about.

First of all, the motion states that we are deeply concerned by the increasing tempo of action by the Commonwealth Government that has certain effects—first, “to erode the State’s sovereignty”. Does anybody doubt that this has not been tried in a host of ways? Second, “to inhibit this State’s capacity for effective development of its resources and consequent provision of additional employment opportunities”. We have been sadly impaired in our capacity, with the wealth of natural resources we have, to do good things not only for Queensland but also for the remainder of Australia. And this has been helped by the designs of, well, peculiar people. I was almost going to say “lunatic people”, but let us not speak slightly of the politically dead.

The motion also suggests that we are concerned because the Commonwealth Government has done things “to distort the Federal partnership concept basic to the Australian Constitution by use of its fiscal and other pressures against this State”. Nobody possibly doubts this. There are scores of instances of it.

The motion states that the Federal Government has displayed “gross dereliction of duty and incompetence which have resulted

in record inflation and massive unemployment, thereby inflicting consequent hardship and misery on the people of this State". Does anybody deny that? Does anybody imagine that there is at the moment a light at the end of the tunnel? Of course there is not while the A.L.P. are there! Things are going to get worse.

Finally the motion as one of its grounds, states that the Federal Government has permitted its Ministers "to willingly and repeatedly disregard and evade their legal and constitutional responsibilities". If anybody doubts the truth of that, just let him remember all of those people I referred to the other day as the living dead—those Ministers of the Crown, those people in the highest possible places in the Whitlam Government, who have been removed from office. By whom? By Mr. Whitlam, of course! So every word, every phrase in that indictment is a damning one of what Mr. Whitlam and his vindictive bunglers are doing not only to Australia but particularly to this State, where the prospects for achievement are so bright.

I say that we have seen it in the various referendum grabs for power—all of which, of course, were rejected. We have seen it in the unilateral attempts by the Commonwealth to circumscribe the State's role—the Torres Strait islands boundary dispute; the rejection of our right of appeal to the Privy Council, the move to take over the various Agent-Generals of the States and so on. And one has to remember, of course, that the platform of the Australian Labor Party states that there shall be "Constitutional action through State and Commonwealth parliaments, municipal and other statutory authorities", and then directly goes on to say that there shall be—

"Amendment of the Commonwealth Constitution—(i) to clothe the Commonwealth Parliament with unlimited powers and with the duty and authority to create States possessing delegated constitutional powers; (ii) to abolish the Senate;".

So let us be under no delusions about what this plan of action is, what it aims at, and what it eventually hopes to achieve.

What are all the fuss and feathers of the last few days about? What is behind all the histrionics, all the hysteria, all the posturing, all the pretence, all the crocodile tears, all the ranting and raving about conventions and traditions and all the fury? What is behind, indeed, the Government's refusal to face up to the bill for settlement that the electorate wants to present to them? The whole point, of course, is that all this concerns the requirement of Mr. Whitlam that he does not face the people. That is what it is all about. It is all about an election—nothing else. There is no fine story of traditions or conventions really involved here. It is purely a gambit, a ploy, an exercise, a manoeuvre, and a wild attempt to, at the last moment, void the capacity of the electorate to pass judgment on him.

The A.L.P. is doing this totally with tongue in cheek, because in fact the platform of the A.L.P. includes this—

"Amendment of the Commonwealth Constitution . . . To embody the principle of the Initiative—Referendum and Recall."

What does that mean? It means nothing other than that the Labor Party believes that the electorate, given the circumstances, if it believes that a Government has failed grievously in the discharge of its responsibilities, has the right at any time, by using certain machinery, to dismiss that Government or to dismiss a parliamentary representative.

So precisely what is happening at the moment? What is happening is that the Leader of the Federal Opposition (Mr. Fraser), acting in concert with the leaders of the Liberal Party and the National Party, or National Country Party, as it is in other places, throughout the States, is trying to force the Federal Government to an election, trying to implement the policy of the right of recall—the initiative that is in the Labor Party's platform. I find it strange indeed that the Labor Party now is going to deny its own words. Or does it not believe that that principle should apply in these circumstances? Sir Winston Churchill used to pronounce the dictum "Trust the people". But not the A.L.P.! It knows that if it allows the people to speak, it will be swept into oblivion, into the gutters of history.

Now, it has also suggested that there should be a half-Senate poll instead of a House of Representatives election. Mind you, Mr. Speaker, it does not seem to strike Mr. Whitlam as odd when he is talking about the right of his Government to run for three years that he should be calling a half-Senate poll at least nine months early. That is no more than a petty trick of a political bankrupt—a bankrupt certainly in terms of political credit—who will do anything to try to avoid facing up to settlement day. It is no more than a shabby manoeuvre—one that is unworthy of anybody who professes to hold strong constitutional principles. It is merely so much retaliation. Because the Opposition now has Mr. Whitlam to the stage where he is, eyeball to eyeball, facing a Federal election, he wants to retaliate, to try to evade the issue and avoid the judgment by having a half-Senate poll.

I put this question to the House, Mr. Speaker: In fact, just what would Mr. Whitlam gain by such a half-Senate election? He would not gain anything except delay at this point. Let us look very quickly at the Senate position. In New South Wales, two Labor senators, three Opposition senators and one Independent senator would be going out; in Victoria, two Labor and three Opposition senators; in South Australia—and mark this—four Labor and one Opposition; in Tasmania, two Labor and three Opposition; in Western Australia, three

Labor and two Opposition; and in Queensland, two Labor, three Opposition and one Independent (who, of course, is Senator Field).

If he is in his right senses, does anybody who knows anything about political analysis and is aware of all the Gallup Polls which indicate the feeling around at the present time, suggest that the A.L.P. is likely to pick up an extra Senate seat in either New South Wales or Victoria, or that it will not inevitably lose one in South Australia? Mathematically it must lose one in South Australia, and it may lose two. Does anybody not suggest that the A.L.P. runs a very real risk of losing a Senate vacancy in Western Australia? Indeed, the A.L.P. cannot count on getting back the casual Senate position currently filled by Senator Field in Queensland. When there are six vacancies to be filled, the quota is 14.14 per cent. That means that the Labour Party in this State simply cannot fall mathematically below 37 per cent and expect to get the Senator Field position back again. We have to bear in mind that it did not get that in the last Federal election here, and it did not get 37 per cent in the last State election. If anybody is going to tell me that its electoral position is better now than it was last year for the Federal election or for the State election, then I must beg to differ. The prospects of the Labor Party doing any better than two of six senators in Queensland are remote. In real fact any realistic evaluation of a half-Senate poll is that Labor will be down a net two, or possibly even a net three.

As to the new senators from the territories—obviously there will be one each in the Northern Territory, and I should think there would be one each in the Australian Capital Territory. In my view, Mr. Gorton simply will not get off the ground.

Mr. Sullivan: I hope you're right.

Mr. PORTER: One has only to look at it and try to analyse it and one is driven to that inescapable conclusion.

This touted half-Senate poll about which so much is being said is at best a clutching at straws and at worst—I believe it is the worst that we have to look at—it is a deliberate move to foment confusion, concern and apprehension by a series of delaying tactics which will permit all sorts of unhappy forces to generate. It will provide and promote those conditions where literally anything might happen. That this is indeed the hope of Mr. Whitlam and his very merry men is indicated by the statement of Senator McClelland that we may have blood in the streets and the statement yesterday by Mr. Hawke, the A.L.P. president, that there may well be industrial action whereby the unions try to make the Senate come to heel.

Dr. Lockwood: What about the statement in this House by the honourable member for Cairns?

Mr. PORTER: It is part and parcel of the same operation.

There seems to be little doubt that these people are architects of misery. They want to fish in extremely troubled and muddied waters. Those men must have gone out of their tiny minds. Are they so blinded by passion for power that they will foment insurrection rather than allow people to divest them of that power by the proper method through the ballot-box? Do any of them really think that in the present mood in the electorate this will help Labor's cause? The talk about blood in the streets and to suggest that unions should use their muscle to force the Senate to do what the unions want, at a time when Labor is facing a Federal election—Labor needs that sort of help like it needs a hole in the head!

The A.L.P. is screaming that the Senate move is improper and unconstitutional. There is not one single legal expert in Australia who does not concede that the Constitution provides that what is being done can be done. All the argument turns on whether one thinks it should be done. I suggest that that turns totally on whether one is looking at the scene through Labor spectacles or through libertarian spectacles.

The other argument is that the House of Representatives is the true people's House and therefore nothing should be done in the Senate to upset the people's House. What a load of hog-wash this is! What are we when we vote for the Senate? Are we non-people? Do we suddenly vanish?

The plain fact of the matter is, of course, that the Senate is elected by totally popular franchise. There is no restrictive franchise for the Senate; everybody votes. Everybody is compelled to vote, and people vote on the same day, in the same booths, at the same time. The same people vote in the same election. To try to create this difference between the capacity of a Lower House and the capacity of an Upper House in terms of the Australian Constitution is quite obviously nonsense. It holds no water at all.

We can judge the real value of comments of this type by analysing the sources from which they come. A number of them come from academics—a great many of whom are radicals—who operate in the ivory tower of their academic fastnesses. They don't have to deal with the real facts of life, so it is very easy for them to think in theoretical terms about highly practical political matters.

As for Mr. Whitlam, we know why he makes these comments. He will do anything to avoid facing his masters. These days the Labor Party loves to quote Mr. John Gorton. Mr. John Gorton has his motivation, too. Mr. Gorton hopes to be elected as a senator in the A.C.T. and to hold the balance of power in the Senate. If there is any more immoral position in politics than that, I would like to know it. But he looks forward to it. Why? So that he can get his own back, as he sees it, on Mr. Fraser!

I believe that Mr. Gorton is now like an ageing matinee idol who can no longer play juvenile leads and has to descend to doing sleazy burlesque parts to keep himself occupied.

Then there is Mr. Steele Hall, the Liberal Movement senator from South Australia. I regret very much having to speak in these terms of him, for I have known him for a long time and once regarded him as a friend and colleague. He has become a kind of political Holy Joe and believes that he alone is the only true repository of Liberal principles. He sees himself as some sort of knight of the Liberal holy grail, possessing a divine right to use the grail like a bucket to tip muck over his former friends and colleagues.

I do not think there is any better quotation I can offer on these and other gentlemen than by saying, "No-one is more eloquent than the politician who is trying to equate public good with private advantage."

Another nonsense is being freely used to try to justify Mr. Whitlam's dodging, twisting and evading; that is, that there is a three-year contract in an election. He asserts that he was elected and therefore he is entitled to govern for three years. Again I say this is a nonsense. Queensland, for example, went to an election three-quarters of a year ahead of time; South Australia only a couple of months ago had one a year ahead of time; in 1963 the Federal Government went to an election a year ahead; and in the Mother of Parliaments in the United Kingdom, Governments seldom run their full term. So to suggest that there is some sort of unwritten contract that merely because a Government is elected it is entitled to three years is rubbish. Three years is the maximum term; the minimum term depends on how a Government behaves. If any contract exists, it is with the electorate to govern well, to act with responsibility, to be fair, to maintain the country's basic institutions, and to keep faith with the electorate. Does anybody suggest that this contract has not been callously and cynically abrogated by Mr. Whitlam?

I would advert once again very briefly to the claim by Mr. Whitlam and others, such as the academics, that the Senate should not refuse Supply and that there is something strangely improper about refusing it. Because I believe it should be put on record I shall quote once more—I have quoted this previously—what Mr. Whitlam said in June 1970 as reported in Federal "Hansard" of 12 June 1970. He said—

"Any Government which is defeated by the Parliament on a major taxation Bill should resign. This Bill will be defeated in another place." (meaning the Senate)
"The Government should then resign."

That was what Mr. Whitlam said five years ago. What has changed since then? What is new or different now? I think we will all have noticed that no servile TV commentator or interviewer who fawns so lovingly

over the Prime Minister has ever bowled this googly up to him. Not one has ever asked him directly, "Did you say that, and if you said it why don't you hold now to the principles that you espoused then?" If the principle was right in 1970, why is it wrong now? We all know why Mr. Whitlam has turned his back on the words that he used in 1970. There is a difference: the difference is that he was then on the outside looking in. Then he wanted to defeat a Government because he was in Opposition. Now he is on the inside looking out, and he and his Government are spinning like a dizzy Catherine-wheel, shooting off sparks in all directions. They will do anything to maintain power.

No-one should be in any doubt about what the passage of this motion means if it is passed by the House. I would reasonably anticipate that the deliberate absence of the Opposition makes it possible that it will be passed. If the motion is passed by this House, let no-one be in any doubt about what it means. If it is passed, it means that this Parliament has spoken out bluntly and forthrightly on behalf of the people of Queensland whom it represents. This Parliament will have said that in this State writs will not be issued for any half-Senate poll. The enormous significance of that must be recognised by everybody. What we are saying to Mr. Whitlam now—as he makes his plans and prepares his manoeuvres and digs deeper into his bag of tricks—is, "Forget it; the horse won't run; you will not get your half-Senate election in at least one of the two States where it is absolutely necessary that you have it if you are to have even the slimmest chance of securing your Senate majority for the next eight to nine months." We have served notice on the Prime Minister that we will stop him in his tracks if he tries to evade or delay his settlement with the people of Australia.

The Prime Minister, who has quite extraordinary delusions of grandeur, has developed what I regard as the Hitler-bunker mentality. He has now ensconced himself in the last little shrinking citadel of his power. He is serving notice on the Labor Party and on the people of Australia that if he is to go down to destruction, everything will go down with him. This man is a megalomaniac. It is high time that Australians recognised him for what he is.

The House has a duty and a responsibility—and a tremendous opportunity—through this motion to say something in a clear, unequivocal voice which will be heard throughout Australia; to say something which will contribute enormously to the prospect of freedom and individual initiative being restored and revived again in this country. I commend the motion to the House.

Hon. J. D. HERBERT (Sherwood—Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport) (12.40 p.m.): I support the motion. It was no surprise to me to see the rats of the Opposition slipping out of the House. Before the House resumed

this morning I was aware that they were to do just that, irrespective of the motion to be put before the House. A street demonstration is currently under way in King George Square, and the Labor members of the House had already undertaken to their Communist bosses that they would join in that demonstration. That is where they are. This display of walking out was not a matter of principle at all. It was only a reflection of obedience to the dictates of their Communist bosses to be up there—"Front and be shown."

We realise that most of them are experts in street demonstrations—sitting down in the street and yelling out four-letter words. That is about all they are capable of. It is probably just as well for the House that they are not here. I understand that they had arranged for one of their members to stay this morning as some sort of representation of Opposition feeling. But the rest of them have gone to the demonstration in the city square. We can appreciate that. We are used to having a nominal one or two Opposition members here while the real speeches come from the Government side.

I suggest to the speech writers who carefully prepare the speeches for members of the Opposition that they be a bit more careful. In the first place, they should not include words of more than two syllables, because most of the members opposite are incapable of reading and pronouncing them correctly. More importantly, we can now pick the style of the various ghost writers. They should give their speeches to the same member all the time. It is a bit disconcerting to see one member using a style that can be recognised as previously having been read very badly by another member. I hope that no-one has the mistaken idea that the gentlemen opposite absented themselves because of some high point of principle. They went to join their rat mates in the streets, which is probably where they belong.

Let us have a close look at the present situation in Canberra. In 1974 the then Leader of the Opposition threatened to block Supply in the Senate. The Prime Minister had a pretty close look at the situation and thought he could win. So he called a double dissolution. He did win in the House of Representatives. This time we have precisely the same situation—but there is no way in the world Whitlam will go to the people now. It has nothing to do with all this high-handed talk of convention. It is because he is beaten and he knows he is beaten. He is a bit like the little boy who was dragged screaming out of the candy shop. We are going to have to drag this man screaming to the polls, because he will not give up the prestige and the fringe benefits that he enjoys in his present position.

He has no right now to that position. He has been rejected by the people quite definitely in the various elections that have been held recently. The public opinion polls

demonstrate quite adequately what will happen to him when we get him there. He can scream, he can writhe and he can wriggle—and he has his friends in the A.B.C. helping him—but he cannot avoid facing the ultimate decision at the hands of the people. That is all we want—to get him in the firing line.

Let us forget the talk of political immorality and all the other things that the Labor writers are now producing in various sections of the media. This all started when Senator Gair was appointed as Ambassador to Ireland. That was the greatest piece of political immorality that has ever been perpetrated in this country. Whitlam started this game. In politics there is only one way to play. If the opposition is using gutter tactics, unfortunately those tactics must be countered if the country is to survive. So let us not countenance any talk about our side of politics having something to do with initiating this action. We didn't. Whitlam tried to defeat the will of the people of Australia by having Senator Gair bought out to give Labor an extra senator. It didn't work. His present ploy won't work, either. Whitlam has the choice of resigning gracefully or being forcibly removed.

The next few days will tell. In any case, he knows, as the member for Toowong has pointed out, that he has no chance of winning a half-Senate election. He does not have a chance of winning any election, so he wants to hang on for as long as he can.

He is claiming that his Government has been tried by the newspapers. The fact is that it has been tried by public opinion. The people have been aroused, and they are very vocal. They realise how they have been duped and tricked, and the rosy socialist dream has turned into a ghastly national nightmare. Everywhere members of Parliament go now, they get the message loud and clear. I have been in this House for 20 years, and I know the places in which I can talk politics and those in which I cannot. But nowadays everyone wants to talk politics, and they all have the same message. They all ask, "When are we going to get them out? When are we going to get some stability again?" Whitlam knows this, and so, too, do all the men around him, who are prepared to support him in anything if it will give them a few more weeks' pay, irrespective of the damage that might be done to the national economy.

Let us have a close look at the claim that by delaying Supply the Senate is departing from convention. I always thought that the Senate was a States' House. I might be old-fashioned, but I thought that it was created to ensure that actions of the House of Representatives did not disadvantage the States. I think it is fair to suggest that never before have the States and their people been subject to such disadvantage, and solely because of the action, or inaction, of the Federal socialist Government. Is that not what the Senate is all about? I thought it

was. As a matter of fact, the Federal socialists recognise this, which is the reason behind giving a few thousand electors in the Northern Territory two senators to represent them, the reason behind dangling the big carrot of a loaded superannuation scheme before Federal public servants, the reason behind providing two senators for Canberra. The whole idea behind the superannuation scheme was buying votes. When the election is held, we will see if Federal public servants can have their votes bought by the promise of a massively unfair and loaded superannuation scheme.

There is no validity in the claim by the A.L.P. that, because the Federal Government was elected for a three-year term, it should be allowed to run its course. One could agree with the socialists on that proposition if there were in the Government in Canberra at the moment men of responsibility and integrity whose promises were binding. But if a Government bogs itself in a morass of lies and deceit, it does not deserve to see out its term. Whilst the Federal A.L.P. talks about its democratic right to govern for a full term, what about the infinitely more important democratic right of the people who should, and will, be given the right of recall?

This Kathleen Mavourneen Government deserves to be kicked out, and it will be. A nation fed on a diet of ineptitude, record inflation, record unemployment, record interest rates, is now ready to regurgitate, and this will be the end, we hope, of socialism in this country for a long, long time. Disenchantment with the socialist rabble has turned into revulsion, and the Constitution provides the only avenue of removing them before they do infinitely more damage.

The worst part about it is that this is a Government that pretends to be looking after the worker. Its greatest—indeed its only—asset is probably the name "Labor", because it certainly does not represent the workers in the direction that it has taken. It is when one travels overseas and is told by international groups that they are not interested in Australia because it is in the Communist camp that one becomes seriously worried about the direction that this country is taking.

I do not believe that the average Australian even understands what is happening now. When he is told that in international eyes Australia is moving into the Communist camp, he thinks that that is just another red herring drawn across the trail. He does not realise the great danger of the situation. If by some mischance Whitlam could have another couple of months in office, he would get his gerrymander through the Parliament and the socialists would be in power for ever. Within the lifetime of many of us here, there would then probably be a socialist president of Australia. That, of course, would be the end of the line. The only consolation is that some of us would at least get a dry corner in the concentration camp before the big wave came through the gates.

One of my problems is listening to Mr. Hayden. I have never seen so many somersaults from anybody in such a short time as I have from the Federal Treasurer. What is happening, of course, is that he has had a Budget forced upon him—although he is the architect of the Budget—and now he has the hide to say that if the Opposition pursues its course there will be a major economic collapse. Although I happen to be an accountant, there must be something wrong with me, because I thought we were in the middle of a major economic collapse now. I did not think we were heading for one; I was darned certain it is with us, and anyone who has a close look at his family finances would, of course, agree. But Hayden has changed his mind so often. His pattern is apparent. He agrees with people on most subjects after they have spoken to him for 10 minutes. Now he is changing his tune over and over again, particularly on some financial aspects, and people are now saying there is not much difference in the two parties in their financial policies.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: He says the bigger the deficit, the more certain they are that their policy is working.

Mr. HERBERT: The Premier is quite right. How shallow can they get? They could not get much shallower than they have with some of the statements they have come out with recently.

Back in 1973 the Federal Government told us it would control inflation. It did not take long for that chicken to come home to roost, even if the socialists had bred such a bird, because the inflationary situation in this country has placed us in the top half-dozen nations in the world as far as inflation goes. It is a shocking situation that we should now be lumbered with the same situation as some of the underdeveloped nations which do not have the expertise to do anything about the problems they face. But ours is a country with all the wealth and all the resources in the world, and the brains and the capacity to develop them, but the Federal Government has the stupid sort of notion with minerals that we are better off to leave them in the ground—"Don't tamper with the people's assets." How ridiculous can one get?

If we had a Prime Minister who did not spend so much of his time looking at ancient ruins overseas, we would be a lot better off. What he should have done, of course, was to say at home investigating the ruins his Government has created. It took the Inca structures, which he admired so much in South America, thousands of years to disintegrate, but Mr. Whitlam managed to do that here in just under three years. He might go down in history as a mediocre Prime Minister—we still have to record his name in that capacity, I suppose—but he should be assured of a place in the Guinness Book of Records as a demolition expert because if anyone had told the average Australian three years ago that Australia would be ruined within three

years, he would have been laughed at, as a lot of us were when we made that prediction from the stump. But now the people who laughed are very, very sorry, because they are paying the price for the vote that they cast, and in particular the decision that they made in the last election 18 months ago. The only bright spot is that at least the majority of Queenslanders could see what was coming and did the right thing politically. But it is not only Queensland now; it is the whole of Australia. The situation is desperate and needs desperate remedies.

We had no talk from Whitlam when the Leader of the Opposition threatened to withhold supply just before the last election. He went into it happily, but now, of course, he is dingoing out because he is finished. He knows he is finished and he just wants to hang on to the fringe benefits of office. I would not be surprised if he went on another overseas tour. That would be par for the course after the way he has been behaving in recent years. After all, when we suffered the Darwin cyclone, the greatest national disaster in Australia, he could take only a few hours off to call in casually on his way elsewhere.

When we had the flood here, where was he? Overseas! And what help did we get from the Federal Government at that time? None at all! But, my goodness, we have had promises, all sorts of promises broken one after the other—R.E.D. scheme projects not completed and the wonderful Australian Assistance Plan that would not employ men unless they promised undying allegiance to the socialist cause. But then the Federal Government sucked in all sorts of people—voluntary workers for charity all over the country, with the carrot of money to come, "If you help us in this grand socialist experiment." What happened? Not a cracker for anyone but the socialists who ran them!

Then there is the plethora of commissions wandering round the countryside. Any time a problem arises anywhere, the Federal Government says, "We will appoint a commission. We will pay the members of the commission big money and require them to report back in five years' time." A good way to shelve a problem—an even better way to look after the loafers and misfits that the Government can appoint to a commission without having to comply with any of the Public Service requirements that usually have to be met before appointments are made to such important positions!

People from the South with no knowledge of the subject in which they are supposed to be experts have come to see me in my ministerial office. They are on big salaries; they stay in the best hotels, and they have open aircraft tickets. At least now they have to travel tourist class, which saves the taxpayers some money.

There are all those fantastic examples, and I could continue for an hour giving the House other examples of mismanagement by the Federal Government in Queensland. Leaving all the political implications aside, I suggest that the Government in Canberra deserves to be dismissed because of its total inability to control the finances of the country or to manage in a proper fashion the finances remaining.

It withdrew \$10,000 that was being made available to the Council of Social Service in Queensland—an organisation that was struggling in the welfare field—and, at the same time, gave Germaine Greer \$100,000 to make a dirty picture overseas—not even in Australia! People in the media have been saying, "Well, at least the Federal Government has been supporting the local media and film industries." If Germaine Greer's dirty picture was the sort of thing the Federal Government should interest itself in and on which it should spend \$100,000 of taxpayers' money, at least the money should have been spent on making it in Australia. Possibly the back streets of Cairo are better suited for making a film of that nature than using decent Australians in its production.

Another instance of mismanagement is the waste of money on so-called but very dubious works of art. If a Government is very affluent, it might provide money for works of art that would be approved by some people. But spending millions of dollars on them when money is being cut off from all sorts of very important welfare activities is completely improper.

I give all sporting organisations in the country a word of warning. They will not get a cracker out of the Federal Government this year. The total provision for sport in the Federal Budget this year was eaten up last year. Sporting organisations that apply now will be told, "Yes, your project is approved but payment will not be made until July 1976." The Government in Canberra has not only spent its entire Budget for this year before it was due to be spent; it is now mortgaging next year's Budget. If sporting clubs have been promised, "Yes, \$100,000 will come from Canberra in July 1976", the incoming Liberal Treasurer will have many problems to solve.

Whitlam has his hand on the political faucet again; perhaps it would be more accurate to say "the political-principle faucet". In 1974 he did not mind going to the people with a double dissolution; he knew he could win. Now, however, he has turned the faucet off because he knows he cannot win this time. How unprincipled about a principle can one get?

I do not think the Australian people care a fig about the machinations that are going on in Canberra at present. They want this mob out and they want a say on who goes in. That is what this motion is all about—to give the people the right to say at an election who should govern this country, and govern it well. The people of Australia will give the A.L.P. an answer that it will never forget.

I only hope that the memories of young people today are similar to those of the people who were young in 1947-49. People who were young in those years got the message very clearly and would never vote Labor again. I am sure that the young people of the 1970s will still be voting against the Labor Party in 1990 because it has indicated very clearly that it is incapable of governing. It has indicated to the people of Australia that its politics are wrong. The rosy dream has gone, and all the little organisations that came in because they had some ray of hope have been sadly disillusioned. Socialism will not work in a country such as Australia—a free country—with the resources that it has.

This Parliament, excluding the rats who shot through—let them have their run in the streets—is the place where we should speak for our people. Members who usually sit on the opposite side of the Chamber talk in the streets rather than voice their opinions here. Up town they will have their little Communist brief to read from.

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

Mr. GREENWOOD (Ashgrove) (2.15 p.m.): There has been a great deal of comment in the Press in recent weeks by political commentators and academic lawyers concerning the right of the Senate to amend or reject money Bills. Some have gone so far as to suggest that the Senate has no right to reject a money Bill; others have argued that because the Constitution deliberately takes away the right to amend a Bill, that carries with it automatically a prohibition against rejection. Necessarily the comments in the Press have been brief, and have not explored the detailed considerations which ought to be taken into account when we form our opinion on this difficult constitutional question.

I should like to take up a little of the time of the House this afternoon in exploring these propositions in some detail, and to look at the history of both the amendment and rejection of money Bills, and see whether the statements which criticise the actions of the Liberal and National-Country Parties in the Senate can be sustained.

First I should like to deal with the right of an Upper House to alter money Bills and send them back with an amendment to the Lower House. One has to commence an inquiry with the resolution of the House of Commons passed in 1678. That resolution was to the effect that the House of

Lords had no power to alter money Bills. That proposition was never conceded by the Upper House. It contended that it had a constitutional right to amend, and from time to time in fact it made amendments and sent amended money Bills back to the Commons. In its turn, the Commons upheld the sentiments of the resolution of 1678. It contended that the Upper House had no such right. It refused to accept Bills amended in this way.

But, recognising that the House of Lords would not pass money Bills without the amendments, the Commons usually adopted a typically English compromise which preserved the rights of both Houses. Instead of accepting the Lords' amendments to a Bill the Commons would withdraw the Bill and then introduce a new Bill—a fresh Bill altogether. The new Bill would contain the various provisions which the Lords had endeavoured to achieve by amendment. So the Lords had its way, but it could not be said that the Lords had amended the money Bill. The Bill that became law was a new Bill introduced by the Commons which passed through without amendment.

That practice was referred to by Lord Chelmsford in the great debate on the Paper Duty Repeal Bill in the House of Lords. In the Debates of the House of Lords of 21 May 1860, Vol. 158, section 3, folio 1,504 and the following folios, Lord Chelmsford is reported as saying—

“There are many instances since 1678, in which your Lordships have made Amendments in Money Bills. Those Bills have then gone down to the Commons, and supposing the Commons have not thought those amendments improper, they have preserved their privileges and asserted their dignity by refusing to assent to those amendments, but have introduced another Bill embodying the amendments proposed by the Lords. In that way the privileges of both Houses of Parliament have been maintained.”

It will be seen that what happened is that the Commons adopted an elaborate fiction, that it would treat the amendments by the Lords as merely requests for amendments rather than something involving a right to amend. In practice, the result was the same because the Lords could keep sending the money Bills back until the amendments were made by the Commons itself.

Australia adopted the same solution and embodied it in the Constitution. May I now turn to section 53 of the Constitution, which, in paragraph 4, says this—

“The Senate may at any stage return to the House of Representatives any proposed law which the Senate may not amend, requesting, by message, the omission or amendment of any items or provisions therein. And the House of Representatives may, if it thinks fit, make any of such omissions or amendments, with or without modifications.”

So there we have it. The formula used is that the Senate should be entitled to make requests for amendments. The important thing is that, if the requests for amendments are not then accepted by the House of Representatives, the Senate may renew its request. To use the expression appearing in the relevant Standing Orders, it may press its request. In that way, it may insist that it will not allow the money Bill to pass until the House of Representatives complies with its wishes.

The next point I make concerns the Standing Orders of the Senate, which are made under the authority of section 50 of the Constitution. It gives to each House power to make rules and orders with respect to the conduct of its business.

Standing Order 256 of the Senate Standing Orders provides—

“If the Bill is returned to the Senate by the House of Representatives with any request not agreed to, or agreed to with modifications, any of the following motions may be moved”

And there follows a list of the things the Senate can do if the House of Representatives persists in rejecting the Senate's requested amendment.

The first thing that the Senate may do as embodied here in the Standing Order is to press its request. Like the House of Lords, the Senate can press its request and insist on its adoption. For how long can it continue this process? In the 1898 Federal Convention held in Melbourne, an amendment was proposed to what is now section 53 of the Constitution. It was moved that the word “once” be substituted for the words “at any stage”. If the amendment had been carried, the Senate would have had but one chance to send back a money Bill. But that proposed amendment was defeated. The right of the Senate to request an amendment at any stage was therefore expressly preserved by the 1898 Constitutional Convention.

We should see how this has worked out in practice. This is not a right that is rarely used as some would have us believe. It is not a right that has been dormant and unexpectedly resuscitated. It is a right that has been exercised frequently from the very beginning of our Federation. We became a Federation on 1 January 1901 and on 14 June 1901 the Consolidated Revenue Supply Bill 1901-1902 (No. 1) was introduced and the Senate requested an amendment to that Bill. The Bill was not returned by the House of Representatives. The House forwarded instead a second Bill showing the items as requested. In other words, the old method—the traditional device of the Commons which I mentioned earlier—was adopted.

The next occasion on which this problem arose was on 21 June 1901, when the Supply Bill 1901-1902 (No. 2) came up. Here, the Senate made a request and the House of

Representatives complied with that request subject to a modification which was accepted by the Senate.

The next occasion was on 24 July 1902. This is important because there was a debate on whether the Senate could press its claims and repeatedly send requests to the House of Representatives and repeatedly send back the money Bill until those requests were complied with. The Bill in question was the Customs Tariff Act 1901-1902. Some of the amendments requested by the Senate were made, while others were made with qualifications and the remainder were not made. It came back to the Senate. Some of the requests were pressed by the Senate and others were modified. Here we have an example of the Senate making a second request, pressing its requests.

What happened in the House? The House accepted some of these pressed requests but then raised the question of the Senate's right to make repeated requests for amendments and to hold up money Bills until that occurred. So the Senate debated the matter and it passed a motion—I am speaking of as early as 1902—that the action of the House of Representatives in receiving and dealing with reiterated requests was in compliance with the undoubted constitutional position and rights of the Senate.

I refer honourable members to some of the things that were said on that occasion. Senator Sir Josiah Symon pointed this out, and I refer to his speech at pages 15,813 to 15,828 of the 1902 volume. He said—

“There is no limitation in the Constitution in regard to the number of times a request may be repeated.”

He went on to argue that—

“Power to request means to request as often as necessary till the request is granted, unless there is some prohibition and penalty against its repetition.”

Of course, there is no such prohibition.

In the same debate—and I refer to page 15,829—there is a contribution by the then Senator R. E. O'Connor. Honourable members will remember that Senator O'Connor was appointed one of the first justices of the High Court at the time of its institution in the following year, so his views on constitutional and legal matters deserve a great deal of respect. Senator O'Connor said—

“Therefore, there is given to the Senate power to make suggestions, and by the words of the section this power seems to me to be limited only by the discretion of the Senate itself in exercising it.”

However, I do not rest only upon distinguished members of the Senate in defending senators' rights. There can have been no greater exponent of the rights of the House of Representatives than the late

William Morris Hughes. Might I refer to Mr. Hughes in the 1902 sessional debate at page 15,705, where he said—

“I firmly believe that the Senate is acting quite within its rights.”

When somebody argued that the Senate had power to make only one request and that it did not have power to send a Bill back again and again, William Morris Hughes said this to the Senate—

“If any man had dared to stand up and tell the smaller States that the Senate had only such a power”—

that is, the power to make only one request—

“the Constitution would never have been accepted.”

These are the authorities.

Later still Hughes went on, dealing with the difference between the power to amend a money Bill and the power to request the Representatives to amend the money Bill of its own volition, and he said—

“We have been told that there is a great difference between the power of request and the power of amendment. But the difference is merely in the manner in which the question is put from the Chair; it is a verbal difference.”

That appears at page 15,706.

The argument that is sometimes advanced against the Senate's power repeatedly to make requests on money Bills is that if the Senate can repeat its requests, the distinction between that practice and the power to make and insist on amendments on ordinary Bills is purely formal, whereas the Constitution (the argument goes), by denying the right of amendment and conferring the right of request, intended a substantial difference.

As I have already pointed out, the origin of the distinction between an amendment of a money Bill and a mere request for an amendment by the Lower House derives from the niceties of conduct in the controversy between the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Far from intending there to be a substantial difference in the practical effect, the notion of a request rather than an amendment merely gave formal recognition to the device that had already been adopted at Westminster.

Before I leave this subject, I mention the view of Lord Forrest. He said in 1898, when what is now section 53 was being considered by the Convention—

“This is the best compromise we can get between those who wish the two Houses to have equal powers, and those who wish the House of Representatives to be paramount in regard to financial legislation.”

It is obvious from the convention debates that in practical terms the delegates saw little, if any, difference between the power of amendment and the power of suggestion. In fact, the only difference was on who ultimately should be responsible for the alteration. Sir Edmund Barton, the first Australian Prime Minister, said, as Leader of the convention, as appears at page 557 of the record of the Adelaide convention debates—

“If the procedure is by way of suggestion, which is insisted upon, the Senate must take the responsibility of the veto. If it is by way of amendment, and that amendment is disagreed with, it is the lower House that must take the responsibility of the destruction of its own work.”

The idea of the use of repeated suggestions by the Senate had, in Sir Edmund Barton's view, the practical effect that the Senate thereupon assumed the responsibility for what virtually amounted to a veto.

What has been the practical effect of this situation? Since Federation there have been at least 11 occasions on which the Senate has pressed requests on the House of Representatives and, with only five exceptions, the House, on receiving such reiterated requests, has passed a resolution refraining from the determination of its constitutional rights before taking the Senate's message into consideration and thereupon dealing with the matter and sending it back again.

In respect of the five exceptions, the House met the reiterated requests of the Senate on two occasions without constitutional protest. In two cases it laid the Bill aside but gave effect to the request in a new Bill. In the fifth case, a conference of representatives of both Houses was appointed to deal with the matter in disagreement. In consequence, the request of the Senate was not further pressed.

The details are set out in Odgers at pages 354 to 362. I seek leave of the House to table those pages and have the details incorporated in “Hansard”.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! It is the usual practice for a member to discuss beforehand with the Leader of the House the incorporation of documents in “Hansard”. On this occasion the honourable member seeks leave. Is leave granted?

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leave is granted.

“ LIST OF BILLS IN WHICH THE SENATE HAS MADE REQUESTS FOR AMENDMENTS, AND RESULTS OF SUCH REQUESTS, 1901-1971

Votes and Proceedings page on which Senate's Schedule appears	Date	Title of Bill and Nature of Request	How disposed of
61	14 June 1901	<i>Consolidated Revenue (Supply) Bill 1901-2 (No. 1)</i> —Request that the House of Representatives will so amend the Bill that it may show the items of expenditure comprised in the sums which the Bill purports to grant to His Majesty	Bill not returned by House of Representatives, but a second Bill forwarded, showing items as requested
67	21 June 1901	<i>Consolidated Revenue (Supply) Bill 1901-2 (No. 2)</i> —Request to alter Bill so that Supplies should be joint grant of two Houses	Request complied with by House of Representatives, with a modification which was accepted by the Senate
472-481	24 July 1902	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1901-2</i> —Requests for alterations of duties, additions to free list, etc.	Certain requested amendments made by House of Representatives, others made with modifications, remainder not made. Certain requests pressed by Senate and others modified. Bill returned by House of Representatives with question raised as to right of Senate to press requests, and with certain requested amendments made, others not made, others made with modifications, etc. Motion passed by Senate that action of House of Representatives in receiving and dealing with reiterated requests was in compliance with the undoubted constitutional position and rights of the Senate. Modification of requests agreed to by Senate, and requests not acceded to by House of Representatives not again requested
55	9 July 1903	<i>Sugar Bounty Bill 1903</i> —Returned to House of Representatives with amendments as to bounty to be paid	One amendment disagreed to by House of Representatives on Constitutional grounds, viz., that it would increase the proposed charge or burden on the people, others agreed to
68	23 July 1903	Amendment disagreed to by House of Representatives altered into the form of a request for amendment	Requested amendment made by House of Representatives with a modification which was agreed to by the Senate
172	14 October 1903 ..	<i>Appropriation Bill 1903-4 (No. 1)</i> —Requests for restoration of salaries of Senate officers which had been reduced by House of Representatives, etc. Requests pressed	One requested amendment made, others not made House of Representatives laid aside Bill, but gave effect to Senate's requests in a new Bill, which was agreed to by Senate without requests
158	3 October 1906 ..	<i>Excise Tariff (Spirits) Bill 1906</i> —Requests for amendments Requests pressed Requests further pressed	Some requested amendments made by House of Representatives, others not made, and one made with modifications One requested amendment made, others made with modifications Requested amendments made as originally requested
166	5 October 1906 ..	<i>Excise Tariff (Stripper Harvesters, etc.) Bill 1906</i> —Requests for omission of paragraphs from proviso as to application of duties	Requested amendments made
172	10 October 1906 ..	<i>Customs Tariff (British Preference) Bill 1906</i> —Requests for alteration of date of operation of certain provisions, and a request for re-insertion of item previously omitted by House of Representatives	Two requested amendments made (including request for re-insertion of item), one not made, and further amendments made by House of Representatives. Amendments disagreed to by Senate as not being modification of requests, and request pressed. House of Representatives made requested amendment of Senate
302	2 April 1908	<i>Excise Tariff Bill 1908</i> —Request for alteration of duty	Requested amendment made

LIST OF BILLS IN WHICH THE SENATE HAS MADE REQUESTS FOR AMENDMENTS, AND RESULTS OF SUCH REQUESTS, 1901-1971—continued

Votes and Proceedings page on which Senate's Schedule appears	Date	Title of Bill and Nature of Request	How disposed of
303-369	2 April 1908	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1907-8</i> —Requests for alterations of duties, and for additions to free list, etc.	Some requested amendments made by House of Representatives, others not made, others made with modifications, and consequential amendments made in Bill. Certain requests pressed, others pressed in part, or modified. Bill returned by House of Representatives with protest as to right of Senate to make further requests, and with requests made, modified, and not made. Motion passed by Senate that the action of House of Representatives in receiving and dealing with reiterated requests was in compliance with the undoubted constitutional position and rights of the Senate. Requests not pressed by Senate, and modifications agreed to
107	11 December 1908	<i>Appropriation Bill 1908-9</i> —Requests for amendments to salaries schedule	Requested amendments not made. Senate did not press its requests for amendments, and agreed to Bill
95	26 August 1910	<i>Surplus Revenue Bill 1910</i> —Request for amendment regarding the period of payment of subsidy to Western Australia	Requested amendment made
251-2	25 November 1910	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1910</i> —Twenty-two requests for alterations of duties, alterations in wording, etc.	Requested amendments made
202-203	20 December 1911	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1911</i> —Thirty-one requests for alterations in duties, altered wording of items, etc.	Some requests agreed to, one disagreed to, one made with modification. Request disagreed to not pressed by Senate and modification agreed to
136	15 December 1914	<i>Land Tax Bill 1914</i> —Six requests for amendments in rates of tax	Requested amendments made
537	15 December 1916	<i>Supply Bill (No. 3) 1916-17</i> —Request for reduction of total amount of vote with consequential amendments in Schedule	Requested amendments not made; Senate pressed requests; Bill laid aside; another Bill brought in, giving effect to requested reduction, and passed by both Houses
145	26 September 1917	<i>Income Tax Bill 1917</i> —Two requested amendments which would have the effect of exempting certain persons from tax	Requested amendments made
344	6 November 1918	<i>Entertainments Tax Bill 1918</i> —Requested amendment to exempt certain children's payments from Entertainment Tax	Requested amendment made
429	20 December 1918	<i>Income Tax Bill 1918</i> —Requested amendment to reduce tax in certain cases	Requested amendment made
183	21 May 1920	<i>War Gratuity Bill 1920 (No. 2)</i> —Requested amendments to alter rate of gratuity in certain cases	Requested amendments made
713-732	13 October 1921	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1921</i> —Ninety-two requested amendments for alterations in the tariff	Some requested amendments made, some made with modifications, and others not made. Certain requests pressed or modified by Senate. Bill returned by House of Representatives with question raised as to right of Senate to press requests, and with original requested amendments made, made with modifications, made as modified by Senate, and not made. President made statement <i>re</i> unusual terms of Message, and Senate passed motion that action of House of Representatives in receiving and dealing with reiterated requests was in compliance with constitutional rights of Senate. Modifications made by House of Representatives agreed to and remaining requests not further pressed by Senate

LIST OF BILLS IN WHICH THE SENATE HAS MADE REQUESTS FOR AMENDMENTS, AND RESULTS OF SUCH REQUESTS, 1901-1971—*continued*

Votes and Proceedings page on which Senate's Schedule appears	Date	Title of Bill and Nature of Request	How disposed of
771	11 November 1921 ..	<i>Excise Tariff Bill 1921</i> —Request for alteration in an item	Requested amendment made
855	9 December 1921 ..	<i>Appropriation Bill 1921-22</i> —Request to increase a salary vote and to reduce another salary vote	Requested amendments not made, but Senate's request for the increase given effect to in new Bill (Supplementary Appropriation). Remaining request pressed by Senate, but not made by House of Representatives. Informal Conference of representatives of both Houses appointed to deal with matter in disagreement; in view of this, request not further pressed. (And see footnote on page 362)
126	15 September 1922 ..	<i>Meat Export Bounties Bill 1922</i> —Requests for amendments to extend payment of bounty	Requested amendments made
202	11 October 1922 ..	<i>Superannuation Bill 1922</i> —Request for amendments to extend superannuation benefits. (This is a case where both requests and amendments were made in the same Bill)	Requested amendments made
391	9 September 1924 ..	<i>Wine Export Bounty Bill 1924</i> —Request for amendment to extend payment of bounty	Requested amendment made
199-201	25 June 1926	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1926</i> —Nineteen requests for alterations of duties, alterations in wording of items, etc.	Some requested amendments made, others made with modifications, and one not made. Senate agreed to modifications and did not press requested amendment not made
242	23 July 1926	<i>Judiciary Bill 1926</i> —Requests to vary conditions of pensions of justices	Requested amendments made
520-521	23 March 1928	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1927</i> —Nine requests for alterations of duties, alterations in wording of items, etc.	Some requested amendments made, others made with consequential modifications. Senate agreed to consequential modifications
178	30 May 1930	<i>Wine Export Bounty Bill 1930</i> —Request for amendment as to eligibility of certain returned soldiers to receive bounty. (This is a case where both a request and an amendment were made in the same Bill)	Requested amendment made
386	8 August 1930	<i>Appropriation Bill 1930-31</i> —Request that the appropriation be reduced by the amount of £1—as an intimation to the Government that, in the opinion of the Senate, the expenditure upon the Parliament, the Government, and the Public Service should be reduced by at least £1,000,000	Requested amendment not made. Senate did not press request and agreed to Bill
465	12 December 1930 ..	<i>Income Tax Bill (No. 2) 1930</i> —Requested amendment to exempt shareholders of a company from certain super tax	Requested amendment made
757	21 July 1931	<i>Customs Tariff (Canadian Preference) Bill 1931</i> —Request for minor drafting amendment	Requested amendment made
797	31 July 1931	<i>Income Tax Bill 1931</i> —Request for verbal amendment	Requested amendment made
816-7	6 August 1931	<i>Sales Tax Bills (Nos. 1 to 9) 1931</i> —Requests for verbal amendments	Requested amendments made

LIST OF BILLS IN WHICH THE SENATE HAS MADE REQUESTS FOR AMENDMENTS, AND RESULTS OF SUCH REQUESTS, 1901-1971—*continued*

Votes and Proceedings page on which Senate's Schedule appears	Date	Title of Bill and Nature of Request	How disposed of
740-752	25 October 1933 ..	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1933</i> —Forty-seven requested amendments for alterations in the tariff	Some requested amendments made, some made with modifications, and others not made. Senate did not again request House to make certain amendments, agreed to certain modifications made by House, and pressed certain requests. Bill returned by House of Representatives with question raised as to right of Senate to press requests, and certain requested amendments of the Senate made with modifications. President made statement <i>re</i> terms of Message, and motion passed that action of House of Representatives in receiving and dealing with reiterated requests was in compliance with the undoubted constitutional position and rights of the Senate; requests not further pressed, and modifications made by House of Representatives agreed to
770	2 November 1933 ..	<i>Excise Tariff Bill 1933</i> —Requests for alterations in items	Requested amendments made, and made with modifications. Modifications agreed to by the Senate
802	22 November 1933 ..	<i>Customs Tariff (New Zealand Preference) Bill 1933</i> —Request for drafting amendment	Requested amendment made
876	8 December 1933 ..	<i>Flour Tax Bill (No. 1) 1933</i> —Request for verbal amendment	Requested amendment made
110	14 December 1934 ..	<i>Flour Tax Bill (No. 3) 1934</i> —Requested amendment to omit certain invalid and children's foods from the list of goods subject to flour tax	Requested amendment made
530	18 March 1936 ..	<i>Primary Producers' Relief Bill 1936</i> —Requested amendments extending the date for lodging applications for fertiliser subsidy	Requested amendments made
612-614	21 May 1936	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1936</i> —Nine requested amendments for alterations in the tariff	Some requested amendments made, others not made, one made with modification. Senate did not again request House to make certain amendments, agreed to a modification made by House, and pressed one request. Bill returned by House of Representatives with question raised as to right of Senate to press requests, and a requested amendment not made. Deputy-President made statement <i>re</i> terms of Message, and motion passed that action of House of Representatives in receiving and dealing with reiterated requests was in compliance with the undoubted constitutional position and rights of the Senate. Request not further pressed
631	22 May 1936	<i>Customs Tariff (Exchange Adjustment) Bill 1936</i> —Requested amendment regarding exchange adjustment in connection with cement duty	Requested amendment made
174	29 June 1938	<i>National Health and Pensions Insurance Bill 1938</i> —Requested amendments to provide for the payment of sickness benefit on the fifth day of sickness, instead of on the seventh. (This is a case where both requests and amendments were made in the same Bill.)	Requested amendments made
333	8 December 1938 ..	<i>Apple and Pear Tax Bill 1938</i> —Requested amendment for alteration of date of operation of tax	Requested amendment made

LIST OF BILLS IN WHICH THE SENATE HAS MADE REQUESTS FOR AMENDMENTS, AND RESULTS OF SUCH REQUESTS, 1901-1971—*continued*

Votes and Proceedings page on which Senate's Schedule appears	Date	Title of Bill and Nature of Request	How disposed of
358	29 May 1942	<i>Widows' Pensions Bill 1942</i> —A request for a verbal amendment, and a requested amendment to provide that the rate of institutional pension shall be adjusted in accordance with the cost of living variation. (This is a case where both requests and amendments were made in the same Bill)	Requested amendments made
509	11 March 1943	<i>Income Tax Bill 1943</i> —A requested amendment to leave out certain words which the Senate considered constituted a clear case of "tacking" in that the inclusion of such words in a tax Bill was an infringement of s. 55 of the Constitution (and see p. 335); and two requested amendments for alterations to the tax provisions relating to life assurance companies	Two requested amendments relating to life assurance companies made; requested amendment for omission of provision which Senate claimed infringed s. 55 of the Constitution not made. Senate pressed request for amendment. Bill returned by House of Representatives with question raised as to right of Senate to press requests, and requested amendment made. Statement by President <i>re</i> terms of Message, and pointing out that Senate's action under S.O. 252 was not in conflict with legal opinion circulated by Government that Senate can make a given request but once at any particular stage of a Bill. Motion passed that action of House of Representatives in receiving and dealing with the reiterated request of the Senate was in compliance with the undoubted constitutional position and rights of the Senate
536-7	25 March 1943	<i>Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Bill 1943</i> —Requested amendments relating to the conditions of payment of pensions. (This is a case where both requests and amendments were made in the same Bill)	Requested amendments made
518	24 October 1952	<i>Customs Tariff Bill 1952</i> —Two requests for amendments of tariff	Requested amendments made
616	30 October 1963	<i>Phosphate Fertilizers Bounty Bill 1963</i> —A request for amendment relating to the rate of bounty in respect of super-phosphate	Requested amendment made
75	23 April 1964	<i>Live-stock Slaughter Levy Bill 1964</i> —Requested amendments to impose a maximum on the levies that could be charged under the Bill	Requested amendments made
235	17 November 1964	<i>Television Stations Licence Fees Bill 1964</i> —Requested amendment relating to concessions for Australian content in television programmes	Requested amendment not made. Senate did not press request and agreed to Bill
601-2	12 May 1966	<i>Customs Tariff Bill (No. 2) 1966</i> —Three requests for amendment of tariff on peas and beans in connection with the New Zealand-Australia Free Trade Agreement	Requested amendments not made. Senate did not press requests and agreed to Bill
140	19 May 1967	<i>Homes Savings Grant Bill 1967</i> —Two requests that savings with credit unions be accepted for the purposes of the homes savings grant scheme	Requested amendments not made. Senate did not press requests and agreed to Bill
316	22 November 1968, (a.m.)	<i>Parliamentary Allowances Bill 1968</i> —Two requests: one to provide an allowance to the leader of the second non-Government party in the Senate, and the second to increase by \$150 the electorate allowance of Senators	First requested amendment made, second not made. Senate did not press second request and agreed to Bill
166	21 May 1970	<i>Homes Savings Grant Bill 1970</i> —Request for an amendment to reduce from \$7,000 to \$5,000 the proposed minimum amount of a prescribed housing loan. (The amendment had particular relation to credit unions)	Requested amendment made

LIST OF BILLS IN WHICH THE SENATE HAS MADE REQUESTS FOR AMENDMENTS, AND RESULTS OF SUCH REQUESTS, 1901-1971—*continued*

Votes and Pro-ceedings page on which Senate's Schedule appears	Date	Title of Bill and Nature of Request	How disposed of
200-1 210	10 June 1970 11 June 1970	<i>National Health Bill 1970</i> — Seven requests, the most important being to provide the Commonwealth benefit of \$2 a day for all patients, whether or not the individual patient is insured. (This is a case where both requests and amendments were made in the same Bill)	One requested amendment made and six not made. Senate did not press its requests, but two further requests made to provide for the payment of Commonwealth benefit of \$2 a day to hospitals in all cases in which no charge is made to patients. These two requested amendments made
218	12 June 1970	<i>States Grants (Financial Assistance) Bill 1970</i> —Request to amend a typographical error. A sum intended to be \$1.5m appeared as \$1,000,500	Requested amendment made

Mr. GREENWOOD: The learned author at page 354 says this—

"In response to the House of Representatives resolution reserving the determination of its constitutional rights, the Senate has always replied with a motion affirming that the action of the House of Representatives in receiving and dealing with the reiterated requests of the Senate was in compliance with the undoubted constitutional position and rights of the Senate."

The learned author goes on—

"The hopelessness of the House of Representatives position is manifest in the very fact that, notwithstanding its 'without prejudice' resolutions, it continues to receive and consider the Senate's reiterated requests, stubbornly refusing to admit the Senate's undoubted right to press a request. Their attitude can only be explained by a desire to be regarded as masters of finance, but that is only wishful thinking. The Constitution clothes the House of Representatives with no such powers. Indeed, the very essence of section 53 of the Constitution is compromise—compromise (as Sir John Forrest told the Convention) between those who wished the two Houses to have equal powers and those who wished the House of Representatives to be paramount in regard to financial legislation.

"To those who, despite all other argument, refuse to admit that the Senate can repeat a request, it is suggested that practice warrants the conclusion that the right to repeat a request has, at the very least, been established by usage."

The next point to which I wish to turn concerns the other right of the Upper House, which is the right to reject money Bills altogether. Of course, it is a right which perhaps rarely need be exercised in view of the rights which the Senate possesses, and with which I have already dealt, to modify money Bills by means of requests. But it

should be dealt with because the present situation—one in which a Budget may be rejected outright—is an example. Of course, the object of the exercise is to force a bad Government to go back to the people.

When we discuss this question, the events of 1911 and their effect on the powers of the House of Lords tend to colour our thinking, and it is something that we should be wary of because we should remember two things. The first thing we should remember is that those who framed our Constitution intended to create a Chamber far more powerful than the House of Lords and, indeed, far more powerful than any other second Chamber in the world. The second thing that we should remember is that, even if the framers of our Constitution had intended to limit the powers of the Senate to reject Supply to be co-extensive with the powers enjoyed by the House of Lords, they would have been thinking of the powers enjoyed by the House of Lords in 1901 and not thinking of the limited powers which the Lords were left with after the events of 1910 and 1911 and the passage of the Parliament Act. On the first point—the point that the fathers of our Constitution wished to create a Senate far more powerful than any other second House—I would simply refer to a statement by the Right Honourable Sir Edmund Barton, the Leader of the Australasian Federal Convention 1897-98, the first Prime Minister and a justice of the High Court of Australia. He said this—

"We cannot fail to remember that the Constitution designed the Senate to be a House of greater power than any ordinary second chamber. Not only by its express powers, but by the equality of its representation of the States, the Senate was intended to be able to protect the States from aggression."

I shall turn now to the powers of the House of Lords and discuss the proposition that, even if the power of the Senate was intended

to be limited to that enjoyed by the House of Lords in 1900, it still gave ample power to the Senate to reject the Budget.

As far as the House of Lords is concerned, the question is best stated by reference to the debates in 1910 and 1911 before the passage of the Parliament Act and, in addition, by reference to the Paper Duty Repeal Bill in 1860.

The House will remember that the Paper Duty Repeal Bill was intended to remit paper duties, and the thing which caused the controversy was that the heavy duties on tea and sugar were to be maintained—indeed, would have to be maintained—if the Government was to lose the revenue involved by repealing the paper duty. The Bill passed its second reading in the Commons with a majority of 53, it passed its third reading in the Commons with a majority of nine and it was rejected in the Lords.

The speech which is often referred to as defining the right of the House of Lords to reject money Bills is that of Lord Lyndhurst. I do not propose to refer to Lord Lyndhurst's speech; I do propose to refer to a short passage from Lord Chelmsford's speech.

Lord Chelmsford referred to the precedents that Lord Lyndhurst had mentioned in his speech and then went on to say—

“The precedent of 1811, which my noble and learned Friend tries to disable, he has, I think, found too strong for him. That was the case both of the remission and imposition of taxation; and on that occasion this House rejected the Bill. The Commons, instead of making any complaint that there had been an infringement of their privileges, silently introduced another Bill, and that Bill became law.

“My noble and learned Friend appears to have been reading the journals of the day, and to have adopted the argument I saw in the leading article of one of them, to the effect it is the duty of the Commons (as undoubtedly it is) to provide the ways and means for the supply of the year, and that this House has no right to interfere at all with those ways and means, but is bound to adopt them. Now, suppose one of the ways and means devised by the Commons should be a tax highly objectionable and known to be one which the people at large regard with no favour or satisfaction; though it is admitted that the assent of this House is required for the Bill, and, though it is equally admitted that this House has the power not to assent to it, yet we are told that we must not touch the ways and means provided by the Commons.

“So that, in the same breath, we are told that we have the power to express concurrence or dissent, and that we have no such power. Is it possible that such an argument can prevail with your Lord-

ships, and yet what other arguments have been advanced by the noble and learned Lord?

“But it is admitted that we have the power and the right to dissent from a Money Bill. If, then, your Lordships have the power and the right, you have also the corresponding duty to decide upon this Bill; the one cannot be without the other. And if, as I believe, not one in a thousand of the people, if polled, would vote in favour of the remission of this tax while the tea and sugar duties are maintained, then I ask your Lordships whether, having the power and the right, you are not bound to reject this Bill, seeing that the taking off of this tax will render necessary an increase of the income tax and the maintenance of the duties on tea and sugar. If we have the right, what better opportunity can there be for its exercise than the present? If we forbore to exercise it now when there is a necessity for such a step, then indeed it will be said that we have established our inability ever to exercise it.”

Of course, the Lords did exercise it and it rejected the Bill. The House of Commons passed a resolution which attempted to castigate the Lords for it. The final form of the resolution used expressions such as “to guard for the future against an undue exercise of that power by the Lords”. Within it it carried the implication that in a proper case the Lords would still retain the power. Certainly it was said that Disraeli was so far satisfied that the resolution preserved the right of the House of Lords to reject a money Bill in a proper case that he was able to vote for the resolution in the Commons.

There is only one other speech in the House of Commons to which I wish to refer. It is a speech made in the 1909-10 crisis by A. J. Balfour in the House of Commons on 2 December 1909. It is to be found in Volume 13 of the House of Commons Debates, section 5, at folio 558 and the following folios. In defending the right of the House of Lords to reject a money Bill and to force the Government to go to the polls, the right honourable member said—

“The statement of the House of Lords that they do not think the Bill ought to pass until it is submitted to the people, undoubtedly a statement of that sort, an arrangement of that sort, is one which must be of rare occurrence. Some honourable gentlemen may think differently; they may think it should be of annual occurrence. In my opinion it is not a part of our ordinary procedure. It is, from the very nature of things, exceptional, and because it is exceptional naturally it is rare; because the occasions of its exercise must be exceptional, therefore they must be rare. You have no right to claim that rarity, which is an essential part, as showing that the power itself ought to fall into disuse. I hope those occasions

will be very rare; I also hope the power will never be abandoned; I do not think it will ever be taken away."

Those words by one of the greatest parliamentarians who have lived and worked in the last 300 years are significant. He hoped that the occasion for the rejection of a Budget by an Upper House would be very rare, but he also hoped that the power would never be abandoned. The circumstances in which he thought the power ought to be used were "exceptional" circumstances. That opinion is shared by another great parliamentarian—one in Australia at present. That is the very test that Mr. Malcolm Fraser has repeatedly used—a test that today is so adequately met.

(Time, on motion of Mr. Lane, extended.)

Mr. GREENWOOD: I thank the House for its indulgence. Instead of referring to a number of eminent authorities on the Constitution, I would simply refer to two who, whatever one might think of their reputations, would be regarded, I am sure, by members of the A.L.P. as men possessing some expertise and some right to attention in these matters.

I refer first to the Senate debates of 18 June 1970, at page 2647, where the Leader of the A.L.P. Opposition in the Senate, then Senator Murphy, presumably in expressing the considered view of the A.L.P. in the Senate, said this—

"The Opposition will oppose these measures" (the States receipts duties). "In doing this the Opposition is pursuing a tradition which is well established, but in view of some doubt recently cast on it in this Chamber, perhaps I should restate the position.

"The Senate is entitled and expected to exercise resolutely but with discretion its power to refuse its concurrence to any financial measure, including a tax Bill. There are no limitations on the Senate in the use of its constitutional powers, except the limitations imposed by discretion and reason. The Australian Labor Party has acted consistently in accordance with the tradition that we will oppose in the Senate any tax or money Bill or other financial measure whenever necessary to carry out our principles and policies."

How very different from the attitude adopted by the Liberal and National Parties! For us it must be a matter of the utmost rarity—one requiring exceptional circumstances or the gravest danger to this nation—before the Senate should exercise its power and block Supply. Senator Murphy and the A.L.P. are prepared to block any tax or money Bill or any other financial measure whenever necessary to carry out the A.L.P.'s principles and policies.

I would also refer to the House of Representatives debate on 12 June 1970 in relation to the same Bill, where, at page 3491, Mr.

Whitlam was more than happy to see the Senate reject the measure. In the first column of his speech he says—

"This Bill and its associated Bills will be rejected by the Parliament."

Later, at page 3495, he says—

"Any Government which is defeated by the Parliament on a major taxation Bill should resign. The sooner this Government resigns, the sooner the people can elect a Government which can make a reasonable financial agreement with the States and can take into account the still more severe financial situation of the States' creations—their local government and semi-government authorities."

There Mr. Whitlam, the leader, was the architect of this device in encouraging and urging the Senate to reject this money Bill with a view to forcing the House of Representatives to the polls. This is the very proposition that he now denies.

I thank members of the House for their indulgence and their extension of time. The propositions advanced by the A.L.P. against the course taken by the Senate cannot be substantiated in law, nor can they be substantiated if we refer even to their own views on former occasions. Only the most unusual circumstances justify this measure. But those circumstances exist today and it is time that this Federal Government was forced to go back to the people and take their verdict.

Mr. LOWES (Brisbane) (3.2 p.m.): At two minutes past 3, I point out that it is now some two hours since the meeting of the urban guerillas ceased in King George Square. As yet no Opposition member has returned to this Assembly from King George Square where, I am informed on very good authority, the Leader of the Opposition, who chaired the meeting in the manner that might have been expected after witnessing the performance of the Opposition this morning before leaving this House, attacked in a cowardly and scurrilous fashion His Excellency Sir Colin Hannah, the Governor of this State.

At the outset I wish to refute the proposition put up by the Prime Minister of this country that there is a constitutional crisis. I submit that the argument put forward by previous speakers in this debate has shown clearly that there is, in fact, no constitutional crisis. It is true that there is a crisis—but constitutional it is not. It is purely a political crisis brought about by the political ineptitude of a Government that has been in office almost three years—and almost three years too long. It is the Prime Minister who is complaining about a constitutional crisis. He is a self-stated protagonist of the Constitution, but what has he done about it in the time that he has been there? Firstly, he held a referendum in the hope of changing the law in the way that it should be changed; that is, by referendum.

The Prime Minister has always been one to talk about mandates. He was given a very clear mandate by the people of the whole of Australia—that they did not want to change State rights. In this instance, it did not suit the Prime Minister to accept the people's mandate. On other occasions, when it suits him, he accepts it. This is a clear instance of the duplicity and deceit of the Prime Minister.

Having been defeated at the polls when he wished to change the Constitution by way of referendum, he had to seek other ways of doing it. His first attempt to circumvent the Constitution was the shameful Gair affair, when he appointed a former Labor Premier of this State—a then Senator—to a high office outside Australia. The result that he wished to gain by that tactic was foiled by our Premier—to his great credit. Having been defeated on that turn, the Prime Minister was faced with the dilemma of how to get out of it. He thought it was better to have a friend upstairs than downstairs with him; therefore his next step was to appoint someone who he knew would be a tame cat. He appointed Senator Murphy to the High Court. What was the cost of that move? It was successful, but the cost is immeasurable! The cost of that appointment is a loss of prestige to the High Court and the destruction of public confidence in it.

The Prime Minister has spoken as a constitutional lawyer. He poses as one, although he never was one. In fact, he was a small-time landlord-and-tenant counsel round Sydney—and then only for a short time. But he poses as a constitutional lawyer. In that pose he refers to the House of Representatives as being the people's House, as he did in the House yesterday. If the House of Representatives is the people's House, what must the Senate be? Surely the Senate is what we have always believed it to be—the States' House. It is not the States and territories' House or the territories and States' House or any other combination such as that. It is the States' House, and there are after all only six States.

Now we are to have a Senate consisting of 64 members. In the decision handed down last Friday by the Full High Court, no limit was placed on the number of senators, on which territories may return senators or on how many senators each of those territories may return. We might just as well have senators appointed without limitation of number from some of the Barrier Reef islands.

Yesterday in the House of Representatives the Prime Minister said that the House of Representatives—"the people's House"—alone determines who shall govern Australia. That is not so. It is simply, as the Prime Minister himself might say, not so. It is not the law. He should know that it is not the law. I believe that he knows it is

not the law. Therefore, knowing that it is not the law but saying that it is, he is guilty of duplicity and deceit.

When referring to the Senate, he said that it cannot, does not and must never determine the fate of the Government. Again, he is clearly wrong at law, yet he poses as a constitutional lawyer!

Mr. Herbert: Just a congenital liar; that's all.

Mr. LOWES: That is borne out by what a constitutional lawyer of some repute—one who makes no pretence of being anything else—would say. I refer to Dr. Kevin Ryan of the University of Queensland, who is a constitutional lawyer of renown. He said that there is no doubt that the Senate had the power to reject Supply. That is in complete conformity with what was said by the previous speaker, the honourable member for Ashgrove. It is supported by numerous reports and authorities.

Not only may the Senate reject Supply; it may also defer it. That is all the Federal Opposition is doing—deferring Supply—and deferring it until such time as it can get an assurance of a general election from the Prime Minister, who has led the country into a state of turmoil and a state of uncertainty; who has caused inflation at a rate that has been unknown for such a sustained period; and who has caused unemployment at a rate that has been unheard of for 40 years. This is the Prime Minister who talks about what is the law. It is obvious that he has little knowledge of what is the law, and certainly what is the law of the Constitution. It is a further example of his deceit—an extension of his deceit in appointing Gair and his deceit in appointing Murphy—and the duplicity with which he operates.

The honourable member for Toowong, when speaking before the luncheon recess, referred to the statement made by the Prime Minister when he was in Opposition about the right of the Senate to block Supply. In 1970 the Prime Minister knew that it was quite proper for the Senate to block Supply. Now in 1975 he does not think so. Either he has a short memory, or he is deceitful. The people of Australia can make up their minds which it is.

With his deceit, duplicity and obstruction, and actions that are contrary to the clear wishes of the people, the Prime Minister is causing a state of turmoil and uncertainty in the minds of the people. This is, of course, being supplemented all too efficiently by some of his cohorts such as Senator James McClelland, who spoke yesterday and threatened violence in the streets. The same things were being said yesterday by Senator Bowen. There was also the reprehensible conduct of Mr. Hawke yesterday in Canberra. It is bad enough when any person incites people to break the law in retaliation against what is a constitutional and proper

parliamentary procedure. It is particularly bad when this is done by a person such as Mr. Hawke, who, like the Prime Minister, should know the law because he has been trained in it.

Worse still was the action of the obsequious Mr. Gorton. His conduct was nothing short of nauseating. In this respect, Malcolm Fraser has shown himself to be a sound judge of men. One quality essential to a Prime Minister is the ability to pick men of character for his Cabinet. And what have we seen in the present Government? There has been reshuffle after reshuffle in the Cabinet. Ministers have been sacked and others have been taken out to the Governor-General, like small boys to the head-master, to have their portfolios changed. We saw that happen to Mr. Cameron.

Dr. Crawford: Lance Barnard got out from under.

Mr. LOWES: Barnard went overseas, and Murphy went to the High Court. In 1971, Malcolm Fraser referred to Mr. Gorton in these terms—

“This man is unfit to be the Prime Minister of Australia.”

That was a clear pronouncement of fact then, and the truth of it has been borne out clearly by the conduct of that gentleman since.

The honourable member for Ashgrove spoke at length on the law and the Constitution as they relate to the power of the Senate. It is true that the Senate may not introduce money Bills, but it certainly may request their amendment, rejection or postponement. That is as much as it has done now. There is no question of there being a constitutional crisis. It is purely a matter of politics, and that is the way the election will be fought. We cannot shun politics or run away from them, as Opposition members ran away this morning and have remained absent.

Mr. Whitlam is a great believer in mandates. He claimed to have a mandate in 1972 and again in 1974 when he took it upon himself to go to the polls to seek re-endorsement. He is a man who says that he believes in bowing to the will of the people. Obviously in 1975 he has changed his mind because now the only way to get him to vacate his office will be to drag him away.

The Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport said this morning that the people are demanding action. Clearly that is the case. Gallup Polls have shown overwhelmingly the attitude of the people. There can be no doubt that Malcolm Fraser spoke the truth when he said, “We must do it to revive Australia.” He said—

“We are dealing with a chain of improprieties which constitute one of the most extraordinary and reprehensible episodes in Australia's political history. To revive

Australia, we will now press, with all our strength, to force the Government to face the judgement of the people.”

For that reason I endorse this motion.

Mr. CHINCHEN (Mt. Gravatt) (3.16 p.m.): I welcome the opportunity to add my whole-hearted support to the motion before the House. I must say that I have never seen such an hysterical display as we witnessed today from the Leader of the Opposition, who, after his few hysterical words, shamefacedly left this Chamber. Of course, he is noted for leaving things. We remember the occasion when, having been appointed to the front bench, for some unknown reason he left it. Today, when an important motion was about to be discussed—a motion which I maintain should be supported by a large majority of Queenslanders—he didn't even endeavour to support his leader in the Federal area; he walked out, indicating full well that he could not refute what has been said today by members on this side of the House. He left in a shamefaced way which, I think, indicates conclusively his awareness that the majority of Queenslanders find it impossible to support the present management of our nation.

Mr. Herbert: But he issued a prepared statement to the Press gallery immediately after he left the Chamber and before the House began the debate.

Mr. CHINCHEN: Typical! Not prepared by him, of course; prepared by one of his masters. He is just the purveyor of somebody else's written material.

Having listened with great interest to the speeches of other honourable members on this side of the House, I should like to deal generally with the disastrous situation in which Australia finds itself, and particularly with the “major success of the Federal Government”. When I use the term “Federal Government”, I do so advisedly. We are still a federation, we have been one since 1901 and I trust we will still be one in the future, but if the people in Canberra remain in Government we will end up being a socialist republic and, of course, this is the intention of these people. And when I speak of “success”, I feel that their greatest success has been the gradual destruction of the free-enterprise system in this country, the private sector which is being deliberately and systematically destroyed, the system which built this country over a period of 200 years into possibly the most stable country in the world with the highest standard of living that one could find. This has been done carefully and, I believe, systematically, after great preparation and forethought. This is the area where these people have been successful.

As I said when speaking in the Budget debate last year, I do not believe for a moment that this is purely the result of mismanagement. This is studied, this is prepared, and it is happening according to plan.

When I speak about the breakdown of the system, I do not mean just in urban areas; I mean in rural areas as well. The rural areas in particular have been crucified, as have the urban and industrial areas. This has been done through a manipulation of our financial system by liquidity control. One of the Federal Government's first actions was to push up the interest rates and manipulate the banking system. It took the lid off certificates of deposits, thereby steering money from the free area to the controlled banking area. It instituted profit control, and that control has, of course, been exercised through the Prices Justification Tribunal. It is not a prices control system. It is a profit control system, and without profit, of course, there is no possibility of expansion. Because this has happened most industries have had to draw in their horns and consolidate, and so we see a lack of development.

Mr. Armstrong: Many of them have gone broke.

Mr. CHINCHEN: A great number of our major companies and organisations have gone out of business, as well as literally thousands of smaller organisations. But this is part of the scheme.

We have seen the implementation of this plan through tariff reductions, which have forced a lot of small companies out of business and placed enormous pressure on major companies. All this has created severe unemployment, yet the strange thing is that the A.L.P. Government is saying, "What can we do about unemployment?" It has created it! Here is what we are told is the Government of the people sacrificing people to make sure that the system which it detests—the successful free-enterprise system—is destroyed.

Of course, the replacement for the free-enterprise system is a socialist system in which the State controls all. Honourable members have seen the implementation of that system by an enormous amount of money being taken out of the private sector and thrust into the public sector, willy-nilly, helter-skelter, to almost anybody who will accept it. We have seen an increase of 12 per cent in the Federal Public Service in the last financial year; the introduction of an enormous number of task forces, committees and commissions, all highly paid, living at the best hotels and travelling by air throughout Australia—first-class, of course! This is the development of the socialist scheme that is coming into being.

The Government is developing its controls through the exercise of export licences. Because of the power of the Federal Government in withholding export licences, again part of the scheme to stop the free-enterprise system from working, industries that have wanted to begin operations and develop in this State have not been able to do so. The Federal Government says, "We must do all this ourselves." It must be realised by any thinking person that Australia has not

sufficient capital to do that. It must have overseas capital, and that is anathema to the socialist.

The banana-republic nationalism that seems to have captured the minds of the A.L.P. Government in Canberra will not work. It will work, of course, if we all want to be peasants, if we all want to put on the one uniform, if we all want to have the equality that members of the A.L.P. speak about. I remind the House that it is always equality down, never equality up.

Mr. Armstrong: And a low standard of living.

Mr. CHINCHEN: Of course a low standard of living. It is equality down; the norm is that of the lowest. Under the free-enterprise system, the people who wish to work and produce can do so, and they can prosper by doing it. Surely that is the system we want for our children and our children's children. It seems to me to be rather disgraceful that this stage has been reached in such a short time.

We have seen the removal of incentives. Although the world is not yet really short of oil, the price of oil is fantastically high. It is well known that Australia will be running into difficulties with oil supplies in about 8 or 10 years' time. But no research is being carried out, no exploration is being undertaken, because incentives have been removed. It can cost hundreds of millions of dollars to find and develop one well. People will not invest money in exploration when they know that any well that is discovered probably will be nationalised. All incentive has gone because of the heavy socialist hand existing in Canberra.

Honourable members are well aware how Queensland has suffered because of this. We have seen the duplication of State departments. We now see the Federal Government moving into the local government area and making money available direct—in other words, duplicating the Department of Local Government that exists in each State. We have seen it establish its own priorities for main roads. Queensland had to agree to that, otherwise it would not have received any money. Again the Federal Government had to set up another department to establish priorities when the Main Roads Department had already determined the priorities in this State.

In the field of legal aid and consumer affairs one again sees duplication of departments. This, of course, is building up the Public Service, which ultimately, in the opinion of the socialists, must dominate the country. Eventually we must all be members of the Public Service, Mr. Speaker, or perhaps peasants, in the rural areas. This is the future to which we can look forward; it is now well known to the people of Australia.

This power-hungry man in Canberra, the Prime Minister (Mr. Whitlam), is hanging onto power in a situation where he knows

that he cannot afford to go to the people. He has created a climate in which he knows full well that he will be rejected, but he intends to hang on. He is doing a Hitler job and hanging onto power till the last minute. If he persists in this line of thinking he will bring about the destruction of the whole country.

It is difficult to know how Mr. Bob Hawke, a very important man at this moment, will react. He is the man responsible for the Australian Labor Party. He is also responsible for union organisation. Does he want to see all that dragged down by that strange character in Canberra? They will all fall together. I am inclined to think that before very long there will be a divorce. Mr. Hawke will say, "It is the parliamentarians who are carrying on this way. It has nothing to do with us. It is not the A.L.P." He will try to salvage something from the wreck, but I don't think he'll be successful. That man in Canberra won't give up. He wants to see us disappear in a great mess, trusting that from the mess maybe something will come. But I cannot see that that is possible.

During last year's Budget debate I quoted from Dr. Cairns's book "The Quiet Revolution". One statement he made is very interesting and I will again quote it because I think it is extremely valid at this moment. On page 110 of his book, talking about change, he said—

"How might this be done? First of all—what about revolution? How do revolutions take place? (1) By a serious national crisis and breakdown."

We are heading for that at the moment, brought about by a man in a powerful position who will not allow himself to realise that he must face the people. They don't want him. But he is using a manoeuvre to give himself time to bring about this disaster, with the thought that from this maybe there will be revolution, and that out of that crisis socialism in a minor form and Communism in the ultimate form will take over this country. I am convinced that the average Australian is too wise for that.

I strongly support the motion before the House. I trust that the people of Australia will be given their right in the very near future to decide who should govern this country.

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (3.27 p.m.): I rise to support the motion. I note with interest the last paragraph to the effect that this Parliament considers—

"that whatever can constitutionally be done to induce a House of Representatives election should be done . . ."

I stress the word constitutionally. That is the difference between this Government (and Liberal and National Party politicians all over Australia) and the Federal Government and A.L.P. politicians. We saw the incidents in the Chamber this morning. A.L.P. members walked out rather than defend the Federal

Government. They can't defend it, and that is why they would not remain here to debate the motion. I take up where the Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport left off when he said that people laughed at those who said when Labor first got into power that Australia would be ruined in three years. We are all wide awake to what has happened to Australia in the last three years. The man who has done more than anyone else to alert the people of Australia to what has happened is our Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen.

We must ponder a moment and wonder why the Prime Minister will not go to the Governor-General and offer to take the House of Representatives to an election. Is it just that he likes power? Is it just that he likes prestige? Is it just that he likes money and everything else that goes with the job of Prime Minister? Is it that he just wants to keep his wife in all of the positions that she has taken on? Is it just that he is afraid that he will lose the battle?

I think it goes deeper. I think the disgraceful loans affair that everybody in Australia is shocked about has some bearing on why the Prime Minister will not go to the people. He is scared that, when the inevitable change of Government comes about, the new Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, will have the power to dig deeper. Further things might come to light when the new Prime Minister has the power to demand all of the relevant documents involved in the disgraceful loans affair. There is no doubt in the minds of many people that the Prime Minister is just as deeply involved as Mr. Connor. He has run out on his old-time friends, which is not an Australian thing to do, apart from its being a very deceitful attitude. This man is not fit to be Prime Minister of this nation for one more day.

Today members of the Opposition in this Parliament, by their actions, showed they would rather march in the street than debate this motion.

During the Budget debate I tried to alert the people of Queensland to the fact that the Prime Minister would use any excuse at all for suspending the Constitution. He would go to any lengths not just to hang on to power and prestige but to try to cover up his own complicity in this disgraceful loans affair.

Incidentally, I challenge the A.L.P. members in this Parliament to deny the charge that the Prime Minister is endeavouring to suspend the Constitution. They know they cannot deny it; that is why they walked out today. This thought is uppermost in the Prime Minister's mind. He knows that the only way he can succeed in subjecting Australia to total socialism and Communism is by suspending the Constitution and creating turmoil and strife in the streets.

A.L.P. members have claimed that the Federal Opposition is forcing jungle warfare on the nation. The Prime Minister, not the

Federal Opposition, is doing this by refusing to accept the fact that the people are sick of his corrupt and incompetent Government.

Mr. Whitlam's Government was elected only because he lied and managed to convince the people of Australia that inflation had turned the corner. He convinced the people that his Government was beating inflation. But what has happened since then? Inflation is running at a record rate and we have the highest level of unemployment since the depression.

I alert the people of Queensland and Australia to something that I suspect might be going on at this very minute. In doing so, I wish to read the following extract from a Press report published recently in relation to the Consumer Price Index—

"And in the June, 1975 quarter, the health services component accounted for 8.33 points in the index figure of 180.2.

"Based on the 1973 weights and medical and hospital component would have been 73 per cent of the total health services weight and therefore would have accounted for 6.08 of these points.

"If the medical and hospital element had been reduced to zero in the June quarter there would have been no net movement in the CPI, and a zero overall price movement for wage indexation purposes would have been recorded.

"But it is likely that the increased weight of the health services item, and the more rapid increase of medical and hospital charges than dental charges over the last couple of years, would make the actual weight of the medical and hospital element even greater than suggested.

"Hence it could be large enough to more than offset a 3.5 per cent increase in prices generally and bring about an actual pricefall in the index as a whole.

"The Government will naturally be watching closely whether the Bureau of Statistics attempts to follow the December 1974 precedent and use the introduction of Medibank as a reason for deleting medical and hospital charges from the index, thus removing an element which could mean that the September quarter CPI would show hardly any increase, or even possibly a fall, by comparison with June."

The figures are due to be released in a few days' time and I believe the Prime Minister will use them to try to convince the people of Australia that he has beaten the problem of inflation.

Mr. Ahern: He's used to fraud.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Very used to it!

I hope the point will be taken up and the people of Australia warned—before the announcement is actually made—that this is what could be on. I have no spies in that department but I suspect that this is what will happen. If when the figures are released, they disclose that there has been fiddling with the medical side of the Consumer Price Index, we should point out very

forcibly to the people of Australia that the Prime Minister once again is trying to mislead them and to be re-elected on a lie.

Mr. Porter: Would you regard him as a ruthless man?

Mr. McKECHNIE: He is a very ruthless man, who will stop at nothing to bring this country to the brink of Communism and further.

Mr. Porter: Would you believe he is so ruthless that, when he goes out to greet his Ministers at the aerodrome, they dodge him thinking that he may want to shake them by the throat?

Mr. McKECHNIE: That would be true. He would probably stab them in the back, too.

Australia is becoming like China, where Chairman Mao's picture is hung on all the walls. The Prime Minister believes in democratic socialism but, as I said during the Budget debate, there is not much difference between democratic socialism and Communism. The only difference between them that I can see is that the democratic socialists believe in elections and the Prime Minister is trying even now to avoid an election. The difference is narrowing very quickly. He is a man who condoned the action of a Minister who conducted a dawn raid on A.S.I.O. and later found it very appropriate to appoint him to the High Court. He is a Prime Minister who is keen to corrupt the youth and the women of our country. He is using tactics similar to those employed by the Communists in all of the overseas countries that they have tried to take over and have succeeded in taking over.

At this stage I shall read part of a letter I received the other day from one of my constituents about this matter. She wrote—

"I am one of the many who, just recently, has viewed the various shows on television regarding the Women and Politics Convention. It has left me utterly disgusted with these women (they could not call themselves ladies) who could participate in this and I feel that our sex is being degraded because of it. How can such a few claim they are speaking for all women?

"I feel that this present Government"—this is the Federal Government led by Mr. Gough Whitlam—"is making women a mockery and scapegoats, through these off-beat females, to further their radical and mischievous disruption of our democratic and Christian country. Salt is rubbed into the wound, too, when one thinks that this Flo Kennedy was subsidised with taxpayers' money. Children living in isolated areas where an acceptable standard of education is deprived them because of economic hardships, thousands of miles of substandard roads, or the many people living in substandard conditions are but a few things where this money could surely benefit so much more.

"I hope there have been many more women write to you showing their disapproval and that you can make it be known in quarters where it might do some good."

I am sure that if the people of Australia are given a chance, they will make known just what they think of a Government that goes on spending money wastefully in this way. It is time that people stood up and were counted. People in any place or position should be game to point out to their friends and colleagues that it is time for an election and time for the Prime Minister to go.

Motion (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 3.39 p.m.
