

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 24 OCTOBER 1975

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

PAPERS

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

Report of the Water Quality Council of Queensland for the year 1974-75.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Report of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations for the year 1974-75.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE**1. SURVEY OF CANCER RISKS IN EMPLOYMENT**

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

(1) As Dr. John Goldsmith of the Californian Health Department has stated in Sydney that, after analysing surveys conducted in the U.S. and the U.K. to find whether workers in certain jobs have higher cancer figures than average, metal workers have up to 85 per cent more chance of getting cancer because of their jobs, what surveys, tests or inquiries have been undertaken in Australia relating cancer risks to employment?

(2) What results have such surveys indicated?

(3) If no surveys have been undertaken, will steps be taken to ensure that Queensland boilermakers, sheet-metal workers,

smelting industry workers and others in the metal trades are not endangering their lives by increasing cancer risks?

(4) As the media reports of Dr. Goldsmith's statement are causing concern to workers in many industries and to parents planning apprenticeships, what industries and occupations are considered risks as far as cancer is concerned?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) Surveys of defined risks have been undertaken in Queensland and in Australia in the known cancer risk situations. There is no evidence to support the statements made that boilermakers, sheet metal workers, smelting industry workers and others in the metal trades are in fact endangering their lives. As far as Queensland is concerned, the industries reported to be at risk have been and will continue to be surveyed. This applies particularly in the asbestos industry.

2. NORTHERN RAILWAY LINE

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

(1) Has he seen the statement in "The North-West Star" of 9 October that, when the Duchess phosphate deposits come on stream, the northern railway line between Bungalien and Townsville will be over-taxed?

(2) Can he give an assurance to this House that all sections of that line are now safe?

(3) How many derailments have occurred on the northern railway line in 1974 and so far in 1975, and at what places did they occur?

(4) What work has been done on the tracks to put them in good order after the 1974 floods?

(5) Is it a fact that maintenance on the section of the line between Collinsville and Mt. Isa has been left to local gangs and that they do not possess the capacity to do the maintenance work properly?

(6) Did the Mt. Isa sub-branch of the Australian Railway Union express its concern over the state of the track between Cloncurry and Mt. Isa to his department's Townsville manager when he visited Mt. Isa recently?

Answers:—

(1) No, but I refute any suggestion that the Railway Department will not be able to satisfactorily handle, in addition to normal traffic, the tonnage of phosphate which it is, at present, committed to carrying. The meeting of this commitment will involve the running of eight additional trains per week.

(2) The track is maintained in safe condition for authorised speeds.

(3) These details are not separately recorded and the clerical hours and additional expense involved in their extraction could not be justified.

(4) Reconstruction work was undertaken to ensure the integrity of the railway and structures which were damaged. Additional flood-protection work was also put in hand and this is now virtually completed.

(5) With the exception of the Collinsville-Merinda section, the track maintenance of this railway is undertaken by mechanised resurfacing and sleeper-renewal gangs fully equipped with modern track machinery and working over a section on a routine cycle. These gangs are supplemented by fettling gangs which undertake necessary day-to-day work. The section of track between Collinsville and Merinda is maintained in a completely satisfactory condition by adequately equipped fettling gangs. Hard-working members of fettling gangs employed on the Collinsville-Mt. Isa Railway will, I am sure, share my resentment at the gratuitous insult handed out to them by the honourable member, who has cast such a reflection on their capacity.

(6) The General Manager, Northern Division, is at present on annual leave but a perusal of minutes of a deputation which waited on him at Mt. Isa on the occasion of a recent visit, does not reveal any record of the matter referred to having been raised.

3. AID TO PARENTS AND CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS

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

(1) With regard to the laudable assistance provided by his recent Budget to school parents and citizens' associations, when may they expect to receive their first payments under this scheme?

(2) Will the amounts be paid annually, half-yearly or on some other basis?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) The increased petty cash and postage allowances and the new general-purpose grant to primary schools will be effective from 1 January 1976 and payments will be made to the school principal each term. The increased subsidies to be paid on school assembly halls, activities buildings and swimming pools are effective from the date of the announcement of the Budget and apply to work in progress and future approvals.

4. STANDARDS FOR IMPORTED FOODSTUFFS

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. Hartwig**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

As imports of tomatoes and other foodstuffs from Brazil and Argentina have

recently been found to contain mould and constitute a health risk, I again ask him to request the Commonwealth Government to insist that a more satisfactory standard be placed on such imports or to ban them all?

Answer:—

I am aware of a report in a consumer magazine regarding the presence of excess mould in some samples of imported tomato paste, and share the honourable member's concern. However, the matter of satisfactory health standards in food is the province of the Honourable the Minister for Health, to whom the question should be referred.

5. GREAT KEPPEL ISLAND JETTY; ROSSLYN BAY BOAT HARBOUR

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

Following representations to his department extending over the last three years and specifically those concerning the construction of a jetty at Great Keppel Island—

(1) What is the position regarding forward planning of this much needed facility, as the present situation cannot be tolerated because there could be a serious accident, particularly in relation to old people?

(2) What work has the Harbours and Marine Department in hand this year for further extensions and improvements to the Rosslyn Bay Boat Harbour?

Answers:—

(1) Preliminary designs and cost estimates for a tourist landing jetty on Great Keppel Island were completed by the Department of Harbours and Marine some time ago. Under present policy, the local authority, the Livingstone Shire Council, would be responsible for 25 per cent of the actual cost. The council has recently informed my department that, while it agrees in principle to financing its share of the cost, it has not yet concluded arrangements whereby it might be reimbursed for its contribution from jetty users. When final agreement is notified by the council, my department will proceed with final design and, subject to availability of funds for the State's share of the cost, arrange for the construction to be undertaken.

(2) The work provided for in the 1975-76 Small Craft Facilities Trust Fund Budget for Rosslyn Bay Boat Harbour comprises—concluding the present contract for dredging the mooring basin and associated reclamation; topping of reclaimed areas with dry fill; installation of a lifting davit on the commercial wharf; drainage of a low spot in the

breakwater access road; further investigation of possible methods of protecting the boat ramp from wave action; and maintenance of the boat ramp.

6. Q-FEVER

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

(1) Will he advise me of some of the history of Q-fever?

(2) Is it possible for a person to have a recurrence of Q-fever and, if so, how common is it?

Answers:—

(1) Q-fever was first recognised as a new clinical entity by Dr. E. H. Derrick in Brisbane in 1935 following a study of a febrile disease in abattoir workers. He isolated the causal agent from blood. Independently and almost simultaneously, the causal agent was isolated from ticks in Montana, U.S.A., and the presence of Q-fever in the human population of western U.S.A. was demonstrated by finding specific antibodies in sera tested from individuals in widely separated areas. During World War II there were epidemics in several countries in Europe and it has since been recognised in other countries. The disease is of no significance in animals but infections in man are common as a result of direct or indirect contact with infected animals.

(2) An attack of Q-fever usually confers life-long immunity. I shall be only too pleased to forward to the honourable member a summary of details of the disease if he so desires.

7. WORKS AT MABEL PARK SCHOOL

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

(1) Is he aware of the problems being experienced by the Mabel Park School because of a large open drain through the schoolground?

(2) What plans are there for permanent works to be carried out on this drain and when will the work take place?

(3) When will a new toilet block and covered ways be constructed?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) Yes. However, I am not in a position at this stage to indicate when funds for the necessary ground work, which is of some magnitude, are likely to become available.

(3) It is unlikely that funds will be available this financial year for this work to be undertaken.

8. NEW BURNETT RIVER TRAFFIC BRIDGE,
BUNDABERG

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

(1) Further to his answer to my question on 21 August 1973 regarding the traffic bridge over the Burnett River, have any recent traffic counts been made and, if so, what is the present average daily traffic count?

(2) What progress has been made in the establishment of a new site for a future bridge?

(3) When does his department expect to commence the new bridge?

Answers:—

(1) No, but a new count is at present being undertaken.

(2) It is hoped to commence a Bundaberg traffic study this year which will supplement local information in selecting the final location of the proposed new structure.

(3) At the present funding levels for rural arterial roads, it is not possible to forecast a likely date for construction.

9. TABLING OF TELEPHONE ACCOUNTS OF
MEMBERS' ELECTORATE OFFICES

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

Will he table the telephone accounts for the period 1 January to 31 July for the electorate office of each member of this Parliament, showing separate amounts for (a) local calls, which would include S.T.D. calls even though no official approval has been given for them, (b) trunk-line calls and (c) telegrams?

Answer:—

No. The cost of telephone usage by individual members or their staff from their electorate offices could be misleading as comparisons and wrong conclusions could be drawn about the extent of usage, the volume of calls, or the industriousness or otherwise of the member. The need to use the telephone and the unit cost of calls varies according to electorate size and distance from Brisbane. I am satisfied that the great majority of the honourable members in this House do not make unnecessary telephone calls themselves, nor do they sanction this in their electorate offices.

10. ITINERANT SCHOOL-CHILDREN

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

(1) Is he aware that many State schools are subject to a floating population of pupils owing to their location near caravan parks?

(2) Does his department make any special provisions for schools subject to these turnovers or for the pupils who, because of their parents' occupation or economic circumstances, find themselves shunted from school to school and thus often fall behind or never gain an established base in their educational growth?

(3) Will he appoint a special teacher at schools subject to these local circumstances, specifically for assisting these children so that they are not unnecessarily and exceptionally prejudiced because of their parents' circumstances?

Answers:—

(1) Pupil attendance is affected by a number of factors. A caravan park may well be one of these factors, but no research is available which establishes a causative link between such residential conditions and pupil attendance.

(2 and 3) No special provision is made to schools just because they have a high pupil turnover. However remedial-resource teachers are appointed to schools wherever there is a significant number of pupils in need of their services.

11. DOUBLE-PARKING OF BUSES IN
CREEK STREET, BRISBANE

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

(1) Is he aware that prior to the bus peak-hour period, waiting buses double park in Creek Street, Brisbane, thus creating serious safety hazards?

(2) Will he take such measures as are necessary to have this practice ceased in the interests of public safety?

Answers:—

(1) No.

(2) As the honourable member has drawn my attention to a potential hazard, appropriate police attention will be given the subject and the attention of the Brisbane City Council drawn to the matter.

12. FLY-BY-NIGHT DARWIN BUILDERS
REGISTERED IN QUEENSLAND

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to reports of a debate in the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly on fly-by-night builders fleecing the people of Darwin following cyclone "Tracy"?

(2) Is he aware of allegations that one company named Seatoun had received deposits totalling some \$70,000 for home construction and repairs and that this company had now disappeared?

(3) Is he aware that this company and another enterprise called Family Joy Enterprises are registered in Queensland?

(4) Who are the principals of Seatoun and Family Joy Enterprises, what is their issued capital, and who are the shareholders?

(5) Will he give an assurance that his Government will ask the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs to investigate and report to this House on any company whose activities are brought to light by the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly if the Assembly makes such a request?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) The company is still registered in Queensland, the registered office of the company being 126 Wynnum Road, Norman Park.

(3) Yes.

(4) Records held in the Office of Corporate Affairs indicate that the current directors of these companies are as follows:—Seatoun Pty. Ltd.—Garry Bowden Stephens; and Dale Elizabeth Stephens. Family Joy Enterprises—Roy Herbert Crombie; Joycelyn Crombie; Edward James Smith; and Edith Olive Smith. The issued capital of Seatoun Pty. Ltd. is two \$1 shares and of Family Joy Enterprises eight \$1 shares. The only shareholders of these firms are the directors as listed above.

(5) As a matter of Government policy, full and prompt attention would be given to any such request from the Northern Territory House of Assembly.

13. PAMPHLET "HANSARD" AND INDEX

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

(1) With regard to the printing of the blue-covered proof-copy booklet of Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), how many copies of each blue book are printed?

(2) How many copies are sent to schools throughout Queensland?

(3) Does he share my view that they would be of greater value to the community in general and students in particular, if the last book for each Parliamentary session had an index for the particular session?

(4) Will he give consideration to this suggestion and provide an index of similar format to that contained in the bound red copy of Queensland Parliamentary Debates recently presented to members?

Answers:—

(1) In excess of 3,230 copies are printed, varying according to the demand and the established distribution list furnished to the Government Printer by the Honourable the Speaker.

(2 to 4) The honourable member might direct his inquiries on such matters to the Honourable the Speaker.

14. T.A.B. HEADQUARTERS, ALBION; FACILITIES GENERALLY

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

(1) How is the construction of the large T.A.B. headquarters at Albion being funded?

(2) What benefit will the building be to the T.A.B. investors in the Everton electorate?

(3) In view of his understandable concern regarding the increase in illegal S.P. betting, in what ways does he propose to upgrade T.A.B. facilities in order to attract Queensland gamblers back to the T.A.B.?

Answers:—

(1) Basically, the new T.A.B. complex is being financed from the board's own reserves and will be completed without recourse to borrowings and thus will function with no debt costs to be financed from future board operations.

(2 and 3) The new headquarters will house sophisticated computer equipment which will allow an automated system for the selling and processing of cash and telephone betting. It will also provide modern, centralised accommodation for the T.A.B. The total facility will provide for future expansion and will give a smoother, better and faster service to its Queensland-wide customers, which of course include those who reside in the honourable member's electorate. The computerised system will, for instance, allow up to five bets on a cash ticket and will permit tickets bought at automated agencies to be paid at any other automated branch. T.A.B. investors and race clubs alike will undoubtedly benefit from a facility that improves efficiency and service, and when in full operation the period of closing time prior to an event will be reviewed and I hope considerably reduced.

15. SANDGATE MEDICAL CLINIC

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

(1) What is the approximate date of completion of the Sandgate Medical Clinic?

(2) Why were drab-coloured bricks used in the construction of the building, instead of clean light bricks which would be in keeping with the bright sunny climate?

Answers:—

(1) The approximate date of completion of stage 1 of the Sandgate Medical and Dental Clinic comprising dental clinic facilities is 30 April 1976.

(2) I am advised that the selection of bronze bricks was a matter of architectural preference to tone with the white pre-cast concrete used for window hoods.

16. MEDIBANK AN EXCUSE TO REDUCE
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

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

(1) As a spokesman for the Commonwealth A.L.P. Government has claimed that the September Consumer Price Index will show the lowest rise for some years, does he regard as accurate my statement that the Commonwealth Government may use Medibank as an excuse to reduce the Consumer Price Index?

(2) Is this a deliberate move by the Commonwealth Government to mislead the people of Queensland and the rest of Australia regarding the rate of inflation?

(3) Is this also a deceitful way of destroying the arguments of wage earners for wage justice in the various Industrial Courts?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The release of the September Consumer Price Index figure yesterday without a qualifying explanatory comment confirmed the honourable member's warning to the House last week that the Commonwealth's Medibank manipulations would produce a misleading index result. This action, of course, is in complete conformity with the unscrupulous, unprincipled and unethical methods used by the Prime Minister in his obsessive desire to retain the high office he has so discredited and dishonoured during the three disastrous years he has occupied it.

17. PASSENGERS ALIGHTING FROM
COACHES IN ONE-WAY STREETS

Dr. Lockwood, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware that motor-coaches park in the right-hand lane of one-way streets in Brisbane to allow passengers to alight on the roadway, often at night, where the passengers attempt to remove luggage into the centre lane of the busy roadway?

(2) Will he take steps to see that all drivers of coaches are made aware of the extreme danger to their passengers by so doing and that the situation does not occur again?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) I am not aware of the circumstances to which the honourable member refers. I shall certainly take whatever steps are available to ensure the safety of the passengers boarding or alighting from these coaches.

18. MISUSE OF WACOL PRISON LABOUR
AND FUNDS

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

(1) Did the woodwork shop at the Wacol prison fail to show a profit for the 1974-75 financial year?

(2) Was this the first time for many years that this has occurred? If so, were equipment and labour from the woodwork shop used extensively for work on the new bowls club at the Wacol Prison?

(3) Is the Auditor-General's Department investigating the alleged misappropriation of prisoners' funds at this prison, the funds allegedly having been used in the carrying out of works at the bowls club?

Answers:—

(1) The audit report on the books and accounts of H.M. Prison, Wacol, for the period 12 September 1974 to 11 August 1975 discloses that trading from 20 August 1974 to 25 August 1975 in the carpenter's shop resulted in a loss. However, it must be pointed out that it is not the primary objective of prison workshops to show a profit, as gainful employment of prisoners is considered to be an equally important factor.

(2) A check of audit reports for each year since 1967-68 reveals that no reference was made to a loss in the operation of the carpenter's shop until this year. Some items were made for the bowls club at Wacol in the prison workshop and payment for them has been received from the club.

(3) The audit report does not indicate that an investigation is being made into transactions covering prisoners' trust accounts at Wacol. In fact, the audit inspector has stated that these accounts were properly reconciled.

19. FIRM, INVESTMENT CENTRES OF
AUSTRALIA

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

Who were the directors and shareholders of Investment Centres of Australia, from the date of incorporation to 20 October?

Answer:—

This is a matter which does not come within the ambit of my portfolio.

20. FINANCE AND COMMERCE
CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD.

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

(1) Is Finance and Commerce Co-operative Society Ltd., a society registered under

the Co-operative Societies Act with a paid-up capital of \$3 million, a very minor finance organisation?

(2) Will he authorise the staff of the Corporate Affairs Office to obtain urgently from this society's records full details of borrowers and when loans were made to any corporate bodies in excess of \$7,000 between 11 August 1971 and 22 October 1975?

(3) What interest rate is offered to investors by the society from on-call and various fixed deposits?

(4) What is the amount of borrowings from the public and the amounts advanced to borrowers as at 30 September and what was the profit or loss of this society for the year ended 30 June?

Answer:—

This is a matter which does not come within the ambit of my portfolio.

21. HOUSING COMMISSION RENTAL HOUSES

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

(1) Further to my question of 21 October, how many houses does the Queensland Housing Commission own in Cairns, Townsville, Mt. Isa, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Maryborough and Gympie?

(2) How many of the houses are currently being rented in each place?

(3) How many of the houses are currently vacant in each place?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) Other than houses constructed on applicants' land with commission loans, the commission has provided houses and units as in column 1. Excluding houses sold or in course of sale, the current stock of rental houses and pensioner units is shown in columns 2 and 3. Vacancies as at monthly return dated 30 September 1975 are shown in column 4.

Town	1. Houses and Units Provided	2. Rental Houses	3. Pensioner Units	4. Vacancies
Cairns	442	165	15	1 house
Townsville	2,307	1,594	40	2 houses and 3 flats
Mount Isa	901	381	5	1 house
Mackay	342	159	11	Nil
Rockhampton	667	195	17	1 pensioner unit
Gladstone	1,024	481	10	6 houses 1 pensioner unit
Bundaberg	221	88	12	Nil
Maryborough	237	103	22	Nil
Gympie	127	49	8	Nil

All vacancies have since been occupied except one house at Townsville and a pensioner unit and a house (damaged by fire) at Gladstone.

Answers:—

(1) Details of the numbers of applications received for the positions of Advisory Teacher—Secondary Schools—are:—

22. ADVISORY TEACHERS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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

(1) With reference to the advertisement appearing on page 196 of the Education Office Gazette, how many applications have been received for the positions of advisory teacher, secondary school, in the secondary subjects of English, history, geography, economics, mathematics, science, commercial, art, agriculture, and alcohol education?

(2) When will the appointees be notified of their appointments?

(3) Will an advisory teacher in each of the above subjects be appointed to the Wide Bay Regional District?

Subject Area	Number of applications
English	4
History	2
Geography	3
Economics	6
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Commercial	3
Art	8
Agriculture	2
Alcohol Education	1
Total	35

(2) Before the end of the school year.

(3) No. A number of applicants have not had sufficient experience to act as advisory teachers. Some of the applicants will probably be promoted to classified positions in schools and it is desirable that

they take up these appointments next year rather than be seconded as advisory teachers.

23. INQUIRY INTO CITY WATCH-HOUSE KING-HIT INCIDENT

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

(1) Is it envisaged that Mr. C. D. Sheehan, Q.C., who begins his investigation into the City Watch-house king-hit incident on 27 October, will have all the powers of a royal commissioner?

(2) Will witnesses be able to deny answering questions because of self incrimination?

(3) Is Mr. Rankmore to be provided with legal aid when he appears before Mr. Sheehan?

(4) When is it expected that Mr. Sheehan's report will be completed?

Answers:—

(1) No. The investigation is being conducted in pursuance of the provisions of the Police Act and Rules.

(2) Yes. This general principle is equally applicable in proceedings of this kind.

(3) If Mr. Rankmore is required to attend, it will be as a witness for the purpose of giving evidence. It is not usual for witnesses to be legally represented.

(4) The length of time the investigation will take will depend upon the availability of witnesses, length of evidence and other factors. I am sure that Mr. Sheehan will furnish his report as expeditiously as circumstances permit.

24. MINIMUM ADEQUATE POLICE STRENGTH; MARYBOROUGH MEETING

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

(1) What is the minimum number of police available and required for general duties per 1,000 head of population to adequately provide for fast and efficient police service in a provincial area such as Maryborough?

(2) Will a senior representative of the Police Union be invited to attend the meeting in Maryborough on Friday evening, 24 October, and will he ensure that such representative is not treated in the same shocking manner as Mr. Callaghan, the Police Union Secretary, was treated in Toowoomba recently?

Answers:—

(1) It is not possible to indicate a minimum number of police per 1,000 head of population on the basis suggested. Population is only one factor in allocating police strength. The basis for assessing

how available police resources are distributed must be related to work-loads as affected by all phases of police responsibilities.

(2) Persons attending the meeting in Maryborough will be those invited by the Maryborough City Council.

25. TIMBERS IN MARYBOROUGH DISTRICT

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

(1) What volume of hardwood was cut in the Maryborough district, including Fraser Island, and the Gympie district, respectively, for the years ended 30 June 1974 and 1975?

(2) What are the areas under softwood plantations at Tuan, Toolara, Como and the area between Gympie and Imbil, and what are the types of softwood and their respective areas?

Answers:—

(1) The volumes of hardwood log timber cut were:—

	Maryborough District (including Fraser Island)	Gympie District (including Imbil Sub-District)
Year ending 30-6-74	m ³ 39 712	m ³ 17 509
Year ending 30-6-75	26 033	10 697

(2) The areas of softwood plantations are:—

Areas of Plantations	Exotic (Pinus) Species (predominantly Slash)	Native pines (predominantly Hoop)
	ha	ha
Tuan	15 260	Nil
Toolara and Como ..	15 126	336
Area between Gympie and Imbil ..	460	5 415
Imbil and Kenilworth Areas	206	5 091

26. NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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

(1) How many meetings of the Northern Development Council have been held since it was formed in 1973 and what were the venues of these meetings?

(2) Has a special section been set up within his department to handle the affairs of the Northern Development Council? If so, who is its principal officer, and, if no special section has been established, who handles that council's affairs within his department?

(3) Have any schemes been put forward by Queensland at these council

meetings for special consideration and, if so, what are they and what has resulted from their submission to the council?

Answers:—

(1) One meeting has been held in Canberra. It has not been possible to arrange further meetings of the council.

(2) No. The Co-ordinator-General is a member of the standing committee which services the council. Details of affairs are handled by the Regional Co-ordinator (Northern) of the Co-ordinator-General's Department.

(3) Specific projects which were referred to the Northern Development Council were: (i) Development of the Burdekin and Bowen Basins; (ii) Mount Isa Water Supply Scheme; (iii) Development of the port of Karumba; (iv) Improvement of east-west road communication in the North of Australia. Joint Federal/State studies are at present in progress on the Bowen and Burdekin basins. Although previous requests have been refused, a further approach is being made to the Commonwealth for additional financial assistance for the Mt. Isa Water Supply Scheme. A financial offer was made by the Commonwealth to assist towards the infrastructure at Karumba, but the financial conditions attached were such as to make the offer prohibitive. A study being carried out in the north-west of Queensland is examining the future industrial potential and the associated infrastructure needs.

27. FRUIT, VEGETABLE AND PLANT QUARANTINE SERVICE

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

(1) Does his department operate a fruit, vegetable and plant quarantine and inspection service either at the State's border crossings or at certain locations within the State, as is the practice in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, to prevent the transmission of fruit, vegetable and plant diseases from interstate or from or into certain growing areas and, if so, at which locations?

(2) Does his department have any such service in the Torres Strait islands area to prevent the movement of disease-affected fruit, vegetables and plants from Papua New Guinea into Australia?

(3) What action has been taken to eradicate the mango fly which was discovered recently for the first time in Australia at Weipa and on the northern extremity of Cape York Peninsula, where it had probably been introduced from Papua New Guinea some time during the last two or three years?

(4) What proposals does his department have to prevent future infestations of this and other exotic insect pests from the same source?

Answers:—

(1) My department has inspectors stationed at all prescribed places of entry of plants, fruit and vegetables to the State. Additionally my department has inspectors stationed at the Brisbane Market, Rocklea, and in the main cities where fruit and vegetables are sold. If diseased fruit and vegetables are detected in any of these places, irrespective of source, they are withdrawn from sale and destroyed.

(2) The department has an inspector at Thursday Island to intercept any prohibited material, and watch for any doubtful traffic.

(3) The range of occurrence of this pest was promptly determined and it was found to be too widespread for eradication to be practicable.

(4) My department, acting as agent for Commonwealth Plant Quarantine, has commenced a special monitoring service at the extremity of the Cape and in the adjacent islands to detect exotic pests as early as possible. An officer is at present in the Torres Strait area carrying out this work.

28. MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT FUNDS

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

(1) What was the Main Roads Department expenditure in each of the five divisions in Queensland for 1972-73, 1973-74 and 1974-75 on (a) ordinary maintenance and (b) special maintenance?

(2) What amount was contributed by the Commonwealth towards the maintenance funds in each division (a) by way of general grant and (b) by way of grant to repair flood damage?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) This is very detailed information which will take some time to prepare and I will forward it to the honourable member when completed.

29. RECONSTRUCTION OF SOUTH TOWNSVILLE ROAD

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

Has the Main Roads Department received advice that South Townsville Road has been gazetted as an export road by the Commonwealth Minister for Transport, as recommended by the Queensland Government? If so, when is it expected that work will commence on the reconstruction of this presently inadequate arterial road?

Answer:—

No advice has been received from the Commonwealth Minister for Transport regarding approval of this road as an export road. As soon as advice is received, work can commence on services adjustments to allow the road works to proceed.

30. YACHTING FACILITIES, TOWNSVILLE

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

As a consortium of yachting and sailing clubs in Townsville has been offered a lease of foreshore land by the Townsville Harbour Board in order to erect launching facilities and a club-house to cater for the demands of yachting enthusiasts in Townsville, as a plan indicating proposed developments was sent to the Queensland Yachting Association earlier this year for submission to him, seeking State and Commonwealth Government financial assistance and as the Townsville yacht clubs have had no reply to their submission and the availability of the land for leasing is limited in time, has the proposal received his favourable consideration and to what extent will finance be made available for the construction of these much needed facilities in Townsville?

Answer:—

An application from the Townsville Yacht Squadron for subsidy assistance from the sporting funds for projects to be carried out in the 1975-76 financial year was received through the Queensland Yachting Association by the closing date for receipt of applications. This application, as well as the extremely large number of others received from the various sports, is receiving consideration, and I expect to announce shortly the approvals given for subsidies and grants for the present financial year.

31. HELICOPTERS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICE IN THE WET, NORTH QUEENSLAND

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

As the wet season is approaching and as the Commonwealth Minister for Transport has practically cut off all road-money allocations for rural local and rural arterial roads in the country areas, will he make an approach to the Commonwealth Government to have helicopters now stationed at Townsville positioned in areas such as Cairns, Cooktown, Normanston and Mt. Isa, for emergency services throughout the wet, as the roads will be impassable and lives could be lost if the arrangements are not made prior to the wet?

Answer:—

As a result of a joint survey by Commonwealth and State authorities conducted last year, the Commonwealth has now made arrangements to supplement State and local government resources for the type of disaster situations suggested, and this includes helicopter support based at Townsville. Servicing and logistical problems make it extremely difficult for the stationing of these highly sophisticated aircraft in isolated areas.

32. COAL DELIVERIES TO SWANBANK AND TENNYN SON POWER HOUSES

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

(1) Over the past six weeks, what weekly tonnages of coal were delivered to Swanbank Power House from the West Moreton coal-fields?

(2) Over the past six weeks, what weekly tonnages of coal were delivered to the Tennyson Power House from the West Moreton coal-fields?

(3) What stockpile is now held at Swanbank Power House?

Answers:—

(1) Deliveries from West Moreton to Swanbank Power Station for week ending—

	tonnes
14 September 1975 ..	46 076
21 September 1975 ..	38 797
28 September 1975 ..	39 832
5 October 1975 ..	43 805
12 October 1975 ..	51 343
19 October 1975 ..	50 155

(2) Deliveries from West Moreton to Tennyson Power Station for week ending—

	tonnes
14 September 1975 ..	3 701
21 September 1975 ..	3 410
28 September 1975 ..	4 636
5 October 1975 ..	766
12 October 1975 ..	677
19 October 1975 ..	1 390

(3) Stockpile at Swanbank at 19 October 1975—323 999 tonnes.

33. NEW AMBERLEY STATE SCHOOL

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

When will the new Amberley State School be built?

Answer:—

I am not in a position to indicate a date. The negotiations between the Commonwealth and State Governments have not been completed.

34. POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF FEDERAL POLITICS ON STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

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

(1) Will the operations of the State Emergency Service in the coming cyclone season be affected by the so-called Supply crisis in Canberra?

(2) As the Commonwealth Labor Government is carrying out the usual filthy Labor trick of playing on the fears of people, will he give the House an assurance that the State Emergency Service will continue to function?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) The phrasing of the honourable member's question aptly sums up the attitude of the Federal Government. There have been reported statements from Federal Labor politicians that Queensland would be defenceless during the coming cyclone season unless the so-called Supply crisis is not soon resolved. This is absolute rubbish. It is typical of the dubious, politically motivated statements of the Federal A.L.P., which generally give scant regard to facts but are made at the expense of people's fears and hopes. Let me give the House and the people of Queensland this assurance: if the Federal Labor Government is prepared to leave Queensland defenceless in the coming cyclone season, the State Government is certainly not prepared to do so, and cannot accept its "Sydney Line" concept, which seems to regard any area north of the Hawkesbury as foreign country. Let me give this further assurance: the State Emergency Services and the Counter-Disaster Organisation, which played their parts so well during and following the tragic Australia Day floods, will be at maximum preparedness for the coming cyclone season, regardless of the outcome of events in Canberra. Indeed, such is the structure of our emergency and counter-emergency systems that the bulk of the finance and effort is expended by two tiers of government—local and State. The Federal Government is involved only if requested. But let me assure the House that if, for those same dubious political purposes, such a request was to be turned down, then the State is adequately prepared to go it alone—and go it alone it would very successfully. As previously mentioned, the S.E.S. and the Counter-Disaster Organisation will be at maximum preparedness for the coming season, irrespective of what might transpire in Canberra. It might be appropriate to remind honourable members of what has transpired in this field since the 1974 floods. Trained men have been stationed as permanent S.E.S. operatives in all major disaster areas; new equipment—flood boats, rescue trailers, and the like—has been distributed; additional S.E.S. volunteer branches have been formed (there are now 91 of these); a new Brisbane city operations centre and central

control has been established; a system to warn low-lying coastal towns of storm tides in the wake of approaching cyclones has been implemented; State-wide communications have been upgraded; a public education programme to prepare householders to help themselves in the event of disaster is well under way; and, of course, legislation to formalise what has occurred, and to give the authorities involved in disasters adequate powers to tackle any situation, has been presented to the House. None of these plans and moves will be in any way affected by the so-called Supply crisis. Queensland will be ready, as far as possible, to tackle any situation the coming cyclone season may bring.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

AEROPLANE CRASH AT CAIRNS

Mr. JONES: I ask the Minister for Transport: As he is no doubt aware of the plane crash at Cairns last night, has he any knowledge of whether any Queenslanders were on board and can he give the House any details about the crash?

Mr. K. W. HOOPER: There is no information at this stage.

ATTENDANCE OF CAIRNS SCHOOL-CHILDREN AT WEST INDIES—QUEENSLAND COUNTRY CRICKET MATCH

Mr. JONES: I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: If it is the practice on such an occasion, will he give consideration to allowing school-children in the Cairns district to attend the once-in-a-lifetime cricket match (with their parents' permission, of course) when the West Indies versus Queensland Country game is played in Cairns on Wednesday, 19 November?

Mr. BIRD: A request did come forward from the Cairns Cricket Club for me to give consideration to allowing the schools to alter their time-tables on that day to enable school-children, with parental permission, to attend the match. I have replied that I would most certainly give that authority. I have not written to the schools concerned, but my regional director has been advised, and no doubt he will advise the schools through his usual circular.

AREAS FOR SKATEBOARD RIDERS

Mr. FRAWLEY: I ask the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads: In view of the growing popularity of skateboard-riding which, like any other sport, has its share of injuries but will continue as a sport for young people, will he give consideration to making representations to local authorities to set aside areas for those young people to practise their sport, as at present they are using garage forecourts and any other suitable concrete areas on which to skate, causing danger to themselves and the public?

Mr. HINZE: I have very few pleasures left in life. If you are going to take my skateboard away from me, brother, I'm going to get real upset!

PRISONERS OF WAR IN VIETNAM

Mr. McKECHNIE: I ask the Premier: As today's "Courier-Mail" has confirmed that an Australian journalist is being held prisoner in Vietnam, will he indicate if he knows whether Vietnam is holding any Queenslanders captive, and will he request the Prime Minister to withhold all Australian aid from Vietnam until it releases all prisoners of war?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The item in the Press highlights the fact that, in spite of all the financial aid which the Commonwealth has supplied to North Vietnam and the Viet Cong, it has not had much effect in producing a conciliatory attitude towards Australians as is demonstrated by the arrest of this A.B.C. man. I do not know whether North Vietnam has other prisoners of war, including Queenslanders. I hope that the Prime Minister, with his very close association or affinity with these people, knows the answers and will take immediate action to see that prisoners, particularly this A.B.C. man, are released. The Prime Minister should be pulled up with a jolt when he realises that his aid does not seem to have much effect so far as the winning of a friendly attitude to himself is concerned.

FUNDS TO COUNTER FEDERAL PROPAGANDA ON BLOCKING OF SUPPLY

Mr. GYGAR: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: In view of the large number of blatant lies or untruths being told by the Federal Government in an attempt to dupe the people of Queensland into believing that pensions, apprentice payments, emergency services and many other services will cease because of the so-called Supply crisis, will he as Treasurer make finance available to publicise the true facts and expose the duplicity of the Commonwealth Government?

Sir GORDON CHALK: The honourable member asked if I will make finance available to publicise the true situation. I doubt whether there is any need to publish the true situation. As a matter of fact, as I understand it, the position is that certain funds are provided in the House of Representatives and certain other funds are provided under the Budget. Yesterday an indication was given that pensions would be paid but that no increase in pensions would be paid. I cannot answer for the other matters that concern the Commonwealth. As to those funds controlled under our State Budget—we in Queensland will be able to make our payments in accordance with our undertakings. I can only say to the people of Queensland that this State will honour its obligations. I hope that the Commonwealth Government will honour its own.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (11.48 a.m.), by leave: Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw the attention of the House to an article in the "Telegraph" of Thursday, 23 October, written by Mr. Ian Miller and headed with the caption "Drink-driving ease-up call", in which I am quoted as having spoken out strongly against moves to amend the Traffic Act.

As the subheading implies that the State Government is under strong pressure to relax drink-driving laws by this group of backbenchers, and as I am one of those who are reported to be exerting this pressure, I believe I should make my position very clear in relation to this article. I spoke against legislating retrospectively but qualified my statement by saying I held no brief for drink-drivers and that I would support any moves which strengthened any law against drink-driving without withdrawing the democratic rights of individuals.

RACING AND BETTING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Deputy Premier and Treasurer): 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 Racing and Betting Act 1954-1974 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

QUEENSLAND PHOSPHATE LIMITED GUARANTEE BILL

INITIATION

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Deputy Premier and Treasurer): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to authorize the Treasurer to guarantee on behalf of the State the repayment of certain moneys borrowed by Queensland Phosphate Limited in connexion with the mining of phosphate rock deposits in North Queensland and for matters incidental thereto."

Motion agreed to.

MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Deputy Premier and Treasurer): 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 Motor Vehicles Insurance Act 1936-1975 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

INSURANCE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Deputy Premier and Treasurer): 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 Insurance Acts, 1960 to 1968 in a certain particular.”

Motion agreed to.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. K. W. HOOPER (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport): 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 Traffic Act 1949–1975 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

PROPERTY LAW ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.52 a.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Property Law Act 1974 in certain particulars.”

The law of property is founded on common-law principles, and to these principles there have been added numerous statutory enactments dating from the year 1266. The Property Law Act, which is to come into force on 1 December 1975, effects a major reform and codification in this branch of the law. It provides a permanent code of principles of property law, simplified and expressed in modern language all in the one statute.

The commencement of this Act was postponed for a period of some 12 months after its enactment with a view:—

(a) to enable the legal profession to prepare itself for the commencement of what is almost certainly the most far-reaching measure of reform in the field of property law which has taken place in Queensland in this century; and

(b) to permit the Act to be amended prior to its commencement so as to eliminate or resolve any problems or errors which were disclosed upon closer examination and discussion of the Act.

There have been no radical criticisms of the Act in its present form. However, there are a few provisions which require amendment, and the provisions of this Bill are designed

to effect these amendments and also introduce a new Part into the Act dealing with public rights of way.

Section 80 of the Property Law Act enables a mortgagor to compel a mortgagee to produce instruments of title to permit the registration of a second mortgage. However, it appears that it may be possible to evade the provisions of this section by providing in the first mortgagee's instrument of mortgage that, upon execution of a second mortgage, the whole sum due under the first mortgage will become due and payable.

Such a provision would avoid the statutory provisions in section 80 and will defeat the purpose of the section because no “breach” is involved. To prevent this result it is proposed to repeal subsection (4) of section 80 and replace it with provisions which will cover clauses in mortgages of the kind envisaged.

Section 82(1) limits the power of first mortgagees to “tack” further advances to their existing security except in the case where an arrangement has been made with the subsequent mortgagees or where the first mortgagee had no notice of the subsequent mortgages at the time when the further advance was made by him. It appears that the power to tack is particularly important where, as often happens in practice, money is agreed to be lent for a long-term development and advances are made from time to time, as required by the mortgage instrument, as the development proceeds. An amendment is proposed to this subsection to allow a mortgagee to make such further advances where the mortgage imposes such an obligation.

Sections 105 and 106 relate to the obligations of lessees and the fitness of certain premises for human habitation. Under these sections as they presently stand, there is an obligation, except where the lease provides to the contrary, on the part of the lessee to keep leased premises for a term in excess of three years in a good state of repair. In the case of a lease of three years or less, there is an obligation on the part of the lessor to keep the premises in a good state of repair notwithstanding any agreement to the contrary. However, business premises are commonly held under short leases, and invariably there is an obligation included in the lease for the lessee to keep the premises in repair. The effect of the proposed amendments to sections 105 and 106 will be to allow this practice to continue except where the provisions of the lease itself provide to the contrary.

It is proposed to amend section 124, which extends the court's power to grant relief against forfeiture of a lease for contravention of any of the provisions of the lease. At common law it was universally believed that relief could be granted only in cases of non-payment of rent. However, a recent decision of the House of Lords has upset this principle by a ruling which suggests that relief against forfeiture is generally available

and not confined to cases of non-payment of rent. In view of this decision, it is desirable that subsection (7) of this section be repealed and re-enacted in a form which makes it clear that the statutory power of relief is available in all cases in addition to any independent power of granting relief. The same situation exists in relation to section 127, which relates to the special form of statutory relief against notice to effect decorative repairs, and a similar amendment to this section is also incorporated in the Bill.

Under section 169, a power of attorney is required to be executed under seal. It has now been revealed that this will be a source of considerable inconvenience in the case of powers of attorney contained in instruments of mortgage in accordance with common practice. In the case of a mortgage of land registered under the Real Property Acts, the problem is avoided as that Act deems the instrument to be a deed upon registration. But the same is not true in the case of a memorandum of mortgage under the Land Act nor of an instrument of mortgage of a miners homestead lease. It is therefore proposed to amend this section by exempting powers of attorney in mortgages from the general requirement of sealing imposed by the section.

Section 175 of the principal Act provides a means whereby an instrument creating a power of attorney may be proved by the production of a photostat copy of the original certified by the donor of the power, a solicitor, a conveyancer, a trustee corporation or a stockbroker. The proposed amendment to this section will allow a notary public to certify as to the correctness of such a photostat copy in addition to the classes of persons which I have mentioned.

The law in Queensland with respect to the English doctrine of prescription—that is, the acquisition of rights of way or easements over land resulting from enjoyment of the privilege or continuous long user—is rather complex and uncertain. It is generally accepted that the law will remain uncertain until legislative provisions are enacted or the matter is taken to the High Court for decision. It is proposed to insert a new part in the Property Law Act dealing with rights of way to resolve the uncertainty in this area of the law. These rights of way arise under various circumstances. A common example would be where the owner of private property permits members of the public to have access upon or through his land. Under the doctrine, the implication may arise that this way over private property has been dedicated to public use. To rebut this presumption, some owners of the private property to which the public are allowed access close off the way to the public at least once in every year.

The provisions of the Bill will provide that user of a way over land, after the commencement of the Property Law Act, will

not of itself be sufficient evidence of an easement of way or a right of way having been acquired by prescription or the fiction of a lost grant.

Several other amendments to correct certain drafting defects or errors are also contained in the Bill. I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (11.59 a.m.): As most honourable members will know, this legislation was debated at length on two previous occasions. On those occasions the codification of property law was welcomed because we knew there were statutes in this State which went back some seven or eight centuries. So the Law Reform Commission was given the rather arduous task of cleaning up and simplifying the law. Most people have been very impressed with the final result.

The last time this Bill came before the Parliament, the Minister stated that he intended to delay it until 1 December as this would enable wider discussion. It is obvious that this delay has been of great benefit because we now see some proposed amendments. The Opposition will consider these amendments in the light of the original Act and also in the light of the original recommendations contained in the report of the Law Reform Commission.

This Bill just proves the tremendous value of having a Law Reform Commission. All credit must be given to this group of experts who have done so much for the law in Queensland as it pertains not only to property law but to all aspects of our statute law. The introduction of the Bill says a tremendous amount for the drive and enthusiasm of these men. That does not mean that the job is finished. We all realise that other laws in this State should be codified, too. Codification makes things much easier for members of the legal profession and also for laymen.

As I said, the Opposition will support the introduction of the Bill. However, members on this side of the Chamber are really more interested in what the Minister intends doing about the supplementary Act that is tied so closely to this legislation. I refer to the Residential Tenancies Act.

The Minister promised honourable members that they would have the legislation before them prior to the Christmas recess. As Christmas is only eight weeks away, honourable members will not have very long in which to debate that amending Bill, particularly as Parliament will be in recess in the first week of November. I hope that the Minister does introduce the legislation, because I believe that a similar policy should be followed. The Property Law Bill was printed and copies of it made available to all those involved so that they might express their views and their criticisms, and it is again being brought before honourable members so that certain problems may be overcome. In my opinion, amendments to the

Residential Tenancies Act will pose similar problems and there will be a similar need for careful consideration of them.

Old laws such as the Landlord and Tenant Act and the Termination of Tenancies Act are no longer applicable, and there will be a brand new Act. It concerns me—and I know that it also concerns many other people in the community—that the new Act may take away many of the existing rights of tenants. I admit that I am only guessing, but sometimes one should heed what is being said in certain legal quarters.

I ask the Minister to introduce the Bill as early as possible. I hope it will be introduced before the week's recess. As I said earlier, the Opposition does not oppose the motion. It supported the Bill that was introduced originally; it supported it when it was introduced a second time, and it supports it again. However, honourable members on this side of the Chamber will look very closely at the amendments proposed in it.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (12.2 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Rockhampton for his remarks in support of the motion. I think he will find that not a great deal of time will be needed to study the proposed amendments. If the business of the House is dealt with in the usual way, he will have adequate time to consider what might be described as minor amendments. However, if some difficulty arises, he needs only to bring it to my attention and I will see what can be done about it. As the Business Paper has quite a lot of legislation on it at the moment, it will probably be some days before he sees the Bill again.

I assure the honourable member for Rockhampton that the Law Reform Commission has examined the legislation quite closely and that a number of people have examined the reports of the Law Reform Commission on the amendments now proposed. I have not received opposition to them from any quarter up to this stage. Now that they have been published, I will make sure that no problems arise.

It is important that this law should be settled and that it is not necessary to make frequent amendments to it. People rely heavily on the immutability of property law in order to carry on transactions that may affect their interests and the interests of others for many years to come. An alteration of property law creates difficult problems of adjustment for people who have made long-term commitments in regard to property. That is why the Government has taken so much time—four years, in fact—from when the Law Reform Commission first examined the matter till 1 December of this year before proclaiming the new Act. It was for that reason that it was held over another 12 months to ensure that there were no errors in it. If there are any shortcomings in the amendments now proposed, I shall be glad to hear of them promptly so that they can be examined.

As to the termination of tenancy—the honourable member for Rockhampton pointed out that as from 1 December the provisions in the existing Act will automatically be repealed and a new Act will be required. It will be necessary for honourable members to see the Bill before 1 December; in fact, it will have to be proclaimed before 1 December.

I assure the honourable member for Rockhampton and other honourable members that there is no need for public alarm about the proposed Bill relating to the termination of tenancies. The honourable member had something to say in a newspaper about what might be in the Bill. I assure him that the matters to which he referred are not matters of concern.

Termination of tenancies is a matter of general concern to all members of the public. I will endeavour to give honourable members the maximum time possible to study the Bill. It should be settled in draft form very soon. If it is at all possible, I will introduce it next week so that honourable members will have an opportunity to study it. It is something that I cannot promise at this stage. I can give the assurance that the Government parties have settled the Bill and it is now in the hands of the draftsman.

Mr. Wright: If it can't be next week, as long as we have it for at least two weeks to go through it.

Mr. KNOX: I would not like a Bill of that scope and political sensitivity, with enormous ramifications to the community, to be introduced too late in November, having in mind that it must be proclaimed before 1 December. It has been my endeavour to see that it gets into the Chamber as early as possible. Members on the Government side are just as concerned as Opposition members that the legislation should be equitable to all parties to tenancy agreements. The maximum possible time will be given to honourable members. Bearing in mind that 1 December is the starting time, I would like to have the Bill in the Chamber next week so that all honourable members can study it. I do not think there is anything more I need reply to.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Knox, read a first time.

LICQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (12.8 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Liquor Act 1912–1973 in certain particulars.”

The 1976 Budget provides for increases in a wide range of State taxes, fees and charges. It is necessary that the Liquor Act be amended so as to provide for the increased licence fees prescribed by that Act.

Briefly the Bill provides—

(a) an increase from 6 per cent to 7 per cent in the general licence fee;

(b) an increase from not less than 6 per cent to not less than 9 per cent in respect of tavern licences;

(c) an increase from 6 per cent to 9 per cent in respect of vigneron's licences and spirit merchants' (retail) licences; and

(d) an increase from 6 per cent to 15 per cent in the fee payable by spirit merchants and registered brewers.

With the exception of the fees payable by vigneron's, spirit merchants and registered brewers, the increases are to apply for two-thirds of this financial year. In the case of vigneron's, spirit merchants and registered brewers the fees will remain the same this financial year and the increases will apply for two-thirds of the financial year commencing 1 July 1976.

It has been clearly apparent to this Government for some time that spirit merchants have entered in a large way into the retail field in competition with hotels. The Licensing Commission's annual reports show that the growth of private sales by spirit merchants has been rapid over the past few years and, although certain hotels have increased their bottle sales, the increase has not been such for the hotel-keeper who does not "price cut" liquor. It has been necessary to look at the retail liquor industry with a certain amount of concern in the light of these figures.

A spirit merchant's licence is one of the most lucrative and sought-after licences under the Liquor Act. There are, at present, in Queensland 136 spirit merchant's licences and in Brisbane, 33. Most of the holders of these licences trade with the licensed trade, with ever-increasing emphasis on the private trade.

The extent of trade of most Brisbane merchants goes as far west as the border of the Northern Territory, north to Bundaberg and into the northern parts of New South Wales. A few Brisbane holders of these licences trade throughout the whole of Queensland. It is a fact that many of the well-established merchants are selling quite a quantity of liquor to the private trade, and this they are allowed to do. Hotels are bypassed in this regard, and liquor prices are frequently cut by some merchants.

During the year ended 30 June 1974, sales by licensed spirit merchants in Queensland showed—

(a) sales to licensed persons of over \$200,000,000 and

(b) sales to unlicensed persons of over \$23,000,000, giving a total of over \$223,000,000.

It is a well-known fact that for many years, because of the tied-house system operating within the hotel industry, many spirit merchants were not able to sell to the licensed trade outlets. The degree of influence the Trade Practices legislation would have on this is still to be determined. Meanwhile, in order to survive as a viable business, some spirit merchants have engaged in the business of selling direct to the general public. Figures reveal that this practice has now been generally adopted by all spirit merchants including those who, in the past, have confined their activities to the operation of a wholesaler supplying retail outlets.

It is considered that the increase in the sales volume to the public by spirit merchants is doubtless due to a number of factors—

(a) increase in population;

(b) competition in prices; and

(c) a growing reluctance by some members of the public to go to hotels for supplies, especially when the prices at some merchants are substantially lower than those charged by the hotel trade.

For these reasons it is considered that the right of a spirit merchant to trade with the public as presently enjoyed under existing legislation, should not be restricted, and in order to place this type of trading by a spirit merchant on a more competitive basis with that of a licensed victualler, bearing in mind the overheads attached to the trading of a hotel-keeper and the lack of such overheads attached to the trading of a licensed spirit merchant, a higher licence fee is proposed in this Bill. This would provide a foundation for, and perhaps an incentive to, hotel-keepers to supply their customers with liquor at a more competitive price, and, at the same time, benefit the revenue of the State.

This Bill gives effect to the proposed increases provided for in the 1976 Budget.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the Committee that the amendments outlined by the Minister are consequential upon those proposed in the Budget. They do not indicate a widespread debate on all of the ramifications of the Liquor Act but rather one on only the specific items outlined by the Minister.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (12.14 p.m.): I accept your intimation, Mr. Hewitt, and I intend to stick very closely to the matters outlined by the Minister.

No doubt many other honourable members have received a submission from the Wine and Spirit Merchants' Association of Queensland, as wine and spirit merchants have engaged in intense lobbying in an attempt to do something about the increases

of which the Minister has just given notice. The very first statement in the submission is as follows:—

“The Wine and Spirit Merchants’ Association of Queensland and the Wine and Brandy Producers’ Association of Queensland are gravely concerned at the increase from 6 per cent to 15 per cent for Spirit Merchants’ Liquor Licence fees.”

Next—

“This staggering 150 per cent increase for Wine and Spirit Merchants compares with an increase of 16½ per cent for hotels and between 11 and 20 per cent for taverns.”

The submission goes on to put up a very strong case as to why wine and spirit merchants should retain the somewhat privileged position they presently hold.

I find myself in total agreement, however, with the Minister. Having spoken to many hoteliers, I believe the competition has become too rough and it is time that this Chamber did something to protect—that is what it really is—the hoteliers, who do at least make some contribution to our community.

On other occasions I have questioned the quantity of liquor that is consumed in our society, and the effect it has on people generally. I have asked how the community must eventually pay for road accidents, broken homes and so on. In this debate, however, we have to put aside those considerations and come back to certain aspects of the industry. Do we allow a large number of people in it to go to the wall? That is virtually what is happening.

The Minister stated that in the last year, the private sales by wine and spirit merchants increased by \$23,000,000, which is a phenomenal amount—an amount taken from the trade of the hotelier. We know how tough it is for the hotelier today when he has to compete with the supermarket type of liquor store, two of which we have in the Central region creating grave problems for the hoteliers.

However, I think we ought to return to the other point. Whichever side one stands on in the liquor debate, it must be admitted that the hoteliers make a contribution to the community. They sell a product that is consumed, sometimes with great rejoicing by many people. In addition, they employ many people in our community. I do not know how many people are employed by the 43 or so hotels in Rockhampton. I would say it would be many hundreds—probably 500. No doubt my colleague the member for Port Curtis could give me some statistics on the part that hotels play in employment.

In recent times, too, they have made a significant contribution to a form of recreation in the provision of steak houses, which are usually ideal places to take friends.

Mr. Katter: One minute you are criticising them for getting people drunk and the next minute you are praising them.

Mr. WRIGHT: What a ridiculous statement—but typical of the member for Flinders.

Mr. Katter: You said that the hoteliers are causing destruction on the roads. This trade is taking people home to drink.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. WRIGHT: I take the point that he has made, Mr. Hewitt. I did not say that the hoteliers are causing the destruction on the road.

Mr. Moore: Of course you did. We heard you.

Mr. WRIGHT: I said that liquor is causing it, and I stand by that. It is the consumption of alcohol that is doing it.

Mr. Katter interjected.

Mr. WRIGHT: He wouldn't know. He should take the hair out of his ears. That would enable him to hear better. I am told that he gets his hair permed every second week. The hair stylist didn't do much of a job last week, did he?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. WRIGHT: The colour doesn't suit him. I suggest he picks a different colour next time—possibly red.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will return to the Bill.

Mr. WRIGHT: Getting back to the legislation—I suggest that this is a serious threat to the hotels in our State. I support what the Minister is trying to do. At present the competition is unfair. As I started to say before I was so rudely interrupted by the honourable member for Flinders, the hotels play an important role in providing some type of facility where people can go to relax and eat in comfort. I refer particularly to the steak houses that have sprung up throughout the State.

One member said that the wine merchants simply sold their wares from the proverbial tin shed. Maybe that is so. They certainly do not have to pay the costs that the hotelier is faced with, nor do they have to maintain the standard required by the Licensing Commission of hoteliers.

I support the legislation. We should not be allowing one group, which already has with the licensed dealers a trade of the order of \$200,000,000 a year, to interfere with that normally left to the hoteliers and the tavern proprietors. It is time that we backed the hoteliers.

I am sure other members will be making comments on the legislation. As I said, Mr. Hewitt, I am sticking to the points made by the Minister. We could raise many matters, such as the tied-house concept, noise from taverns, and so on; but they are not matters to be raised in this debate, and I shall mention them on some other occasion.

Mr. KATTER (Flinders) (12.20 p.m.): It is very important that we appreciate the significance of a few of the relevant statistics. The measure provides for a jump from 6 per cent to 15 per cent on the selling price of the product sold by wholesale merchants, as opposed to an increase for hoteliers from 6 per cent to 7 per cent on the purchase price of the product.

Mr. Hanson: To the public, not to the trade. Be honest.

Mr. KATTER: I am sorry, I missed the point. Say it again.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Port Curtis will undoubtedly speak later on, and we will then listen to his comments with great interest.

Mr. KATTER: I am sorry that I missed his point. I would be only too happy to take it.

This measure means that a small outlet in Charters Towers employing three people—it is not a particularly big or lavish business—faces an increase in costs from \$8,000 to \$25,000 a year. I have studied the books of this business in great detail. The owner approached me previously in relation to a serious problem that is not connected with this measure, so I am very familiar with his trade. Until now he was making a fairly decent margin of profit—there is nothing wrong with that—but, following this decision, he will be forced to close his doors. The same situation applies to two other outlets in Hughenden.

The Government is consciously taking a decision to throw the employees of 20 or 30 business houses in North Queensland onto the scrap-heap of unemployment. I, for one, am not particularly happy about the legislation—not one single shred of it. We are supposed to represent the free-enterprise system. If one business is able to sell to the consumer more cheaply than another business, the first one will survive and the second one will go to the wall. That is what competition and consumerism are all about.

The honourable member for Rockhampton, who purports to be the head of a consumer group in Queensland, spoke about trade. Mr. Hawke, his federal president, has gone on and on about competition. He skites about Solo petrol and how he can get it to the consumer more cheaply than the oil companies. This Government is turning

a full somersault and in the interests of some very wealthy hotel interests in this State is selling out the consumer.

Mr. WRIGHT: I rise to a point of order. I take the remarks of the honourable member for Flinders—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Flinders will resume his seat while I am listening to the point of order.

Mr. WRIGHT: The honourable member for Flinders is not quoting me correctly. I said that I supported the Minister in this matter. He said clearly that the competition should help the consumer. I support him in that view.

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

Mr. KATTER: The other argument put up was that the hoteliers provide a service—and indeed they do. I have never been down to the local wine and spirit merchant to drink a beer. If a big party or function is to be held and the alcohol is being bought in bulk, the organisers naturally go down to the wine and spirit merchant, who is also a wholesaler.

The hotels—call them community gathering centres—provide alcohol and a service. People who go to a hotel pay for the service and are prepared to do so. That is what it is all about. A service is being provided and the customer is expected to pay a little more for it.

But what is happening is that one group of business houses that obviously has far stronger appeal and pull with the powers that be is favoured by the Government to the detriment of another group that does not exert the same power and pull as well as influence on the people making the decision.

Another concept that is involved is whether the Government can in good conscience make a decision to throw people out of work. I say this in all sincerity. Anybody who has read the pamphlets put out by the various wine and spirit merchants and yet doubts the feelings of those people should look at the action they took. When this decision was announced, I was dragged out of bed at 10 o'clock at night by not one but two people who rang to say, "Bob, you will just put us out of business." I personally was very upset. Three people flew from North Queensland to see the Treasurer and various other honourable members in this Assembly. Honourable members should have no doubt that something like 100 people will be thrown onto the scrap-heap of unemployment if this decision goes through. God help us if it does! In my humble opinion, no Government should arrive at a decision to throw

100 people out of work. That is a callous and undemocratic act, and I am most strongly opposed to it. If a convincing argument can be advanced for the increase proposed, at least impose it gradually rather than throw all these people out of employment in one fell swoop. If it were imposed gradually, they would be able to make other arrangements over a period of time. I therefore plead with the Ministers concerned to review this legislation, and to consider a drastic reduction in the 15 per cent proposed. To my mind, a more rational figure would be about 8 or 9 per cent.

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (12.26 p.m.): I always become very suspicious and alert when I see notice given of an amendment to the Liquor Act. On this occasion, the Minister has not followed his usual form of saying, "This is a very simple amendment. It will not take up too much time." I know, Mr. Hewitt, that you have ruled that this is a budgetary item because its purpose is to increase revenue. Of course, there will be no difficulty in obtaining this increased revenue. Liquor is one of the easiest items from which to gain revenue, because there are in the community so many mugs who consume so much of it. They are the ones who, because of their addiction to the drug alcohol, will provide the increased revenue sought.

Mr. Moore interjected.

Mr. DEAN: The honourable member who interjects is one of those who are addicted to this drug.

The increased percentage proposed by the Bill will not in any way reduce the consumption of alcohol. It has been pointed out by the honourable member for Flinders that there has been a falling off in the trade of hotels. A decrease in trading in alcohol does not concern me. In fact, it would please me to see a widespread reduction in liquor trading. What really concerns me is the policing of the Act.

Mr. Moore: You're a prohibitionist. Why don't you admit it?

Mr. DEAN: I never thought that the honourable member would be affected by this drug so early in the day. Apparently he was taking samples of it early this morning before entering the Chamber.

It is not so much the percentage increase that worries me as the policing of the Act. There is tight control over hotel trading, and hoteliers must comply with very strict regulations, but the law is not being observed in places such as clubs and the numerous sporting organisations that are in direct competition with hotels. How often are prosecutions launched for under-age drinking in the community? As I have already said, the increased percentage in licensing fees will not cause any decrease in the consumption of this very dangerous drug.

Mr. Moore: Do you know of any cases of under-age drinking?

Mr. DEAN: Yes, and I have reported them. However, Mr. Hewitt, I am not going to engage in cross-fire with honourable members opposite. I have too much respect for your chairmanship to be a party to brawling in this Chamber.

Mr. Lane: What about the Young Labor Association in Sandgate—a big grog-up?

Mr. DEAN: There speaks another alcohol addict; I refer specifically to the honourable member for Merthyr.

I have very little to say at this stage, but I would be failing in my conscience and my duty if I did not raise some of these matters. I do so despite the fact, as I said, that it is only a percentage increase in the revenue received from alcohol consumption in the community. It will not reduce the evil influence of alcohol on teenagers or in the community in general.

Mr. TENNI (Barron River) (12.30 p.m.): I oppose very, very strongly the proposed increase in licensing fees in Queensland. I do not agree with the remarks of the honourable member for Sandgate or the honourable member for Rockhampton, as the effect of this legislation will be felt by people north of Rockhampton, not those south of Rockhampton. Merchants operating south of Rockhampton can purchase direct from the manufacturer and can in turn increase their margin of profit by 7½ per cent and more. An increase from 6 per cent to 15 per cent will break the wholesalers in the area north from Rockhampton. It will put them out of business.

Together with the honourable member for Mulgrave, I brought down to Brisbane four representatives of the wholesalers in the North. We explained the problem very clearly to the Treasurer and I am sure he agrees that the effect of the increase on merchants north of Rockhampton will be greater than on those south of Rockhampton. There are in my electorate three wholesalers who employ 14 people. This Bill will put those 14 people out of a job, and I am not going to support deliberate sackings. I do not belong to the Gough Whitlam party and I will not be a party to that type of action. The sooner we look at this problem from a sensible point of view the better. I ask the Minister for Justice and the Treasurer to use a little bit of common sense as far as the merchants operating north of Rockhampton are concerned. I agree that the publican is copping a hiding because of the pressures being brought to bear on him by the unions. As we all know, the unions are controlled by Communists.

Mrs. Kyburz: They're running the country.

Mr. TENNI: We know they're running the country. We know that the high cost of wages that the publican has to cop is killing his business, and I sympathise with him. I am sure that we could review the increased fees payable by spirit merchants. I suggest that the increase be something like 9 per cent on the wholesale price so that the publican will pay 7 per cent on the wholesale price. That would give equal opportunity.

I have heard comments around the place that the wholesalers are selling out of tin sheds. Let me assure honourable members that one of those tin sheds in Mareeba cost \$250,000. That's some tin shed! I imagine the other building in Mareeba cost about \$100,000—again a very expensive tin shed. All I ask for is the use of a little common sense so that each and every person is given the opportunity to exist. I do not say that the fees of the wholesaler should not be increased and that the publican should pay a couple of per cent less, but what we are presently trying to do to those people operating north of Rockhampton is break them, and I cannot be a party to that. That is all I have to say at this stage, but I will certainly be making a very solid contribution to the debate on the second reading and I will not be supporting an increase in fees to 15 per cent.

Mr. ALISON (Maryborough) (12.35 p.m.): I shall try to bring a little sanity back to the debate by showing the relationship and relativity between wholesale spirit merchants and hoteliers in the retail trade.

Comments by honourable member suggest that some wholesale merchants will be going out of business, but no facts or figures have been given in support of that argument. No doubt all honourable members have received, as I have, figures and lobbying submissions, mainly from certain sections of the wholesale trade. Some of the information has been not only downright misleading but straight-out lies.

Sir Gordon Chalk: They have not produced in support of their arguments figures showing what licence fees they paid last year. I have them all—every one of them.

Mr. ALISON: That is quite correct. It has been said that wholesale merchants cannot compete. As I see it, there are two sides to the argument that has been put forward by some honourable members. The first point they make is that the wholesale merchants cannot compete because of the increase in licence fees. I maintain that there is another side to that story. In the main, wholesalers were not intended to compete with the retail trade on the basis of price, and they were not intended to compete with the retail trade for sales.

However, be that as it may, I wish to correct a few wrong impressions that have

been given in the Chamber this morning, and I shall look first at the price structure in Brisbane on 26 oz. bottles of beer.

The price of one dozen 26 oz. bottles of beer to the hotel trade in Brisbane is \$5.60. The new licence fee of 7 per cent will mean the addition of 39c, which will give a cost of \$5.99 on the basis of cost plus licence fee. I understand that in Brisbane the selling price of a carton containing one dozen 26 oz. bottles is \$7.42. That gives the hotelier a margin of \$1.43 out of which to meet his overheads—and they are considerable in the hotel trade today. As honourable members are aware, in recent years there has been a trend—and rightly so—towards requiring hoteliers in general to improve the facilities they offer. They have had to provide better accommodation, improve bars and toilets and update lounges. In some instances they have also had the Department of Health, the Local Government Department and others on their backs.

Let me return now to the price structure on a carton of 26 oz. bottles of beer. The merchants have tried to imply that their buying price is the same as that of hoteliers. That is absolute rot. My information is they buy a carton at a price not less than 10 per cent lower than that paid by the hotelier. That is \$5.60 less 56c, which gives a buying price to the merchant of \$5.04. I understand that the average price at which wholesale merchants are selling one dozen 26 oz. bottles in Brisbane is about \$7, which is 40c or 50c below the price that most hoteliers are asking. The new licence fee of 15 per cent will mean the addition of \$1.05, so that the all-up cost to the wholesale merchant will be \$6.09, giving him a margin of 91c.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. ALISON: He is a wholesale merchant in name if not in deed.

Let me now compare the margins. On the average, the hotelier in Brisbane has a margin of \$1.43 on one dozen 26 oz. bottles of beer. The wholesale merchant—the bottle merchant, the 2 gallon merchant, or whatever one likes to call him, Mr. Hewitt—has a margin of 91c. I am speaking of the margins that will apply under the proposed new licence fees. I submit that 91c is more than sufficient to cover all the expenses of a wholesale merchant, which would not even represent one-quarter of those that hoteliers have to meet, and provide him with more than a reasonable profit.

Mr. Doumany: Is that a common selling price?

Mr. ALISON: Yes, it is. I have done some research, and that is as near as I can get to the average situation in Brisbane at present.

Mr. Houston: I take it that you want the merchant and the hotelier to sell to the public at the same price?

Mr. ALISON: Not really, no. What I am concerned about in the long term is that the public will get a better service if the hoteliers are able to provide the facilities.

We have heard a fair bit about North Queensland so far in this debate. The honourable member for Flinders said that 100 people will be put out of work if the increase in licence fees is approved. With all due respect to him, that is absolute rot. I know he is well meaning, but he simply has not researched the subject.

I think we have to get down to figures to look at the matter rationally. The cost of a carton of stubbies to the North Queensland hotelier is about \$7.02. Add the licence fee of 49c, or 7 per cent of the purchase price, and the cost comes to \$7.51. The hotelier is selling for round about \$10, which gives him a margin of \$2.49. The merchant can buy the same article at not less than 10 per cent below what the hotelier pays. That is not mentioned in any of their paraphernalia.

Mr. Moore: But the hotels' dozens are sometimes 14's—very queer dozens.

Mr. ALISON: I am not aware of that at all. It does not go on as far as I know.

The wholesale merchant in North Queensland, just like his brothers in Brisbane, is able to buy the same article for not less than 10 per cent below what the hotelier pays. That gives him a cost price of \$6.32 for a carton of stubbies. Add the 15 per cent licence fee on sales—\$1.42—and that gives a cost of \$7.74.

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

Mr. ALISON: He is selling the carton of stubbies for about \$9.50. That is about 50c less than what the hotelier is asking for it. It gives him a mark-up of \$1.76 on the new licensing fee structure compared with the hotelier's mark-up of \$2.49. In my opinion, the wholesale merchant would not have a quarter of the overhead the hotelier would have.

Mr. Houston: Probably one-tenth.

Mr. ALISON: That would probably be nearer the mark. There is still plenty of margin in it for the wholesale merchant.

Wholesale merchants, through their retail trade, have been ripping off the public for far too long. Certainly they have been selling liquor cheaper than the hoteliers, but their cost price has been less and their overhead has been only a fraction of the

overhead of the hoteliers. They have been ripping off the public, but now they are squealing like stuck pigs because the day of reckoning has come and they are going to be brought back to the field—not all the way but to a very large extent.

I very much regret that the people concerned—N. H. Turner and Sons, Bartlems and the North Queensland Liquor Traders Association—are just not being factual in their submissions to State members. I respectfully suggest to them that, in future when they are putting up a submission to members, they be just a little nearer the mark. Then we will not have members in this Chamber shooting their mouths off and not talking facts at all.

I certainly support the proposal to increase the licence fee, not just for the sake of increasing a tax—frankly, on general principle I do not like seeing taxes go up—but because it will not only raise additional revenue for the State, which is very sorely needed, but also to a large extent it will correct an anomaly in that through a loophole in the Act wholesale merchants have been unfairly trading in competition with hoteliers, who are expected to provide a much wider service to the public than the wholesale merchants are.

Mr. POWELL (Isis) (12.45 p.m.): When addressing myself to the Budget I made some reference to the matter under debate this morning. The honourable member for Maryborough, with his very extensive knowledge of the hotel trade, has been able to explain to us in some measure the reasons for increasing this licence fee. However, I suggest that there is a degree of unfairness in the way in which the measure is to be implemented. For example, I cannot understand why wholesale wine and spirit merchants are charged a licence fee on sales rather than on cost. I have no doubt that there must be a reason for that, but I have not yet been informed of it.

I ask that the tax be levied on cost rather than on sales. In my city of Bundaberg there are three of these merchants—the Bundaberg Co-operative, Campbell and Amos, and Christen's. These three merchants have to pay transport fees to get their goods to Bundaberg. But when the tax is levied on sales rather than on the cost of the liquor in the first place, tax is paid on the transport cost which, in any event, is expensive enough. These merchants are paying extra tax and costs that the merchants in Brisbane do not have to pay. I understand that probably an objection has been raised in Brisbane, but this legislation will cover the whole of the State. I am speaking about the affected areas in my electorate.

I understand quite well that the hotelier has a much larger overhead than most of the spirit merchants. The co-operative in Bundaberg has just completed a new shop,

which was built specifically for the sale of liquor. I understand also that the advantages gained by people when they buy liquor from such outlets are many. As I do not partake of alcoholic liquor, I personally do not know anything about buying it.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You are certainly demonstrating that.

Mr. POWELL: Through you, Mr. Hewitt, I make the point to the Treasurer that this measure is totally unfair to the merchants.

Hoteliers, by law enforced by the Licensing Commission, have to maintain a standard different from that of spirit merchants and obviously their costs are much higher. Working on the figures referred to by the honourable member for Maryborough, the profit margin of the hotelier on bottled beer is 25.5 per cent. Accepting that the spirit merchant in Brisbane, and possibly in Maryborough—but certainly not in Bundaberg—can buy bottled beer at a price lower than that paid by the hotelier, his profit margin is 18 per cent.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Do you understand the difference between licensed trade and unlicensed trade?

Mr. POWELL: I think so.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You are not demonstrating it; the spirit merchant pays no licence fee.

Mr. POWELL: I understand that the hotelier should have a higher profit margin because of his higher overhead.

The merchants in Bundaberg—I am going on what they told me, not what N. H. Turner informed me—

Sir Gordon Chalk: Did they give you a balance sheet?

Mr. POWELL: I inform the Treasurer through you, Mr. Hewitt, that I am a member of the co-operative. Each year I get a copy of its balance sheet. I know that its profit margin on this particular commodity is fairly high. I also understand that the hotels' profit margin on draught beer is particularly high.

I have no vested interest at all in this. That is what I am trying to get across. Certain people prefer to consume alcoholic liquor at home. I am all for that because I am sick to death of dodging drunken drivers on the road. If we can promote the consumption of alcoholic liquor in the home, or in the convivial atmosphere of a social gathering from which people will not be driving home, I am all for it.

I believe that the measure before the Committee at the moment will put some wholesalers out of business. I can understand the attitude of the Treasurer in wanting to

put his finger on some of the outlets in Brisbane that have a trading advantage, but the point I am making is that that is just not so in the country—certainly not in the city from which I come. The imposition of a licence fee—call it what you will—on gross sales for these establishments is grossly unfair. If it were calculated on cost, I would have to agree that the measure is reasonable; but, as it is based on sales, I cannot agree as to its reasonableness.

The figures that were given to me by the merchants indicate that they pay the same for their beer and other supplies as the hotels. I can only accept their submissions. The member for Bundaberg and I were together when they made their submission to us. Perhaps they were telling us untruths, in which case their submission will be damned. But the point I make is that they have given us the figures and we accepted them in good faith. As yet, nobody, including the other members who have spoken so far, has convinced me why we should agree to the licence fee for one part of the trade being a percentage on gross sales when for others it is based on the gross cost. I do not understand why. If it is to be the same percentage, in one instance based on sales and in the other on costs, that is fair enough. I could see that point of view.

I have to agree that the hotels should have a higher profit margin than a straight retail store selling alcoholic liquor. However, Mr. Hewitt, in other States it is possible to buy cornflakes from one stand and alcoholic liquor from the next. While I am personally not in favour of that sort of thing in Queensland, I think the hoteliers have been particularly sensitive about this avenue of competition.

Mr. Wright: They have every reason to be sensitive.

Mr. POWELL: Perhaps so, but I do not see why they should have the right to claim a monopoly in the field in which somebody else is competing with them, as they are at the moment.

The other point I make is that the profit they make on their bottle sales, according to the figure quoted by the honourable member for Maryborough is 25.5 per cent. Other people have made estimates of a profit on draught beer sales of over 100 per cent. If that is so—and I have no basis on which to prove or disprove that figure—then I suggest that the hoteliers, while they might be making only 25 per cent on bottle sales, are making a much higher profit in another field.

Mr. Alison: The merchants are supposed to be wholesalers.

Mr. POWELL: I agree with that. That is why they are limited to selling a minimum of 2 gallons; is that right?

Mr. Alison: Yes.

Mr. POWELL: The other point is that a person can go to a hotel and buy one bottle of beer, if he likes, whereas he has to buy a minimum of 2 gallons from a wholesale merchant. That is correct, is it not?

Mr. Alison: Yes.

Mr. POWELL: That is another imposition on the so-called wholesaler that is not placed on the hotelier. I believe that if the fees were set at 15 per cent on cost, there would be some fairness in the proposal. I keep coming back to the point that 15 per cent on sales is totally unfair. I will be interested to hear the rationale of the Minister for Justice or the Treasurer, or whoever is to reply to this debate, because at the moment I for one—and I am not the only one—cannot see why that should be so.

Mr. ROW (Hinchinbrook) (12.55 p.m.): I enter the debate to support previous speakers, particularly the honourable members for Flinders and Barron River. I think also that remarks of the honourable member for Isis contained a good deal of merit.

I make it quite clear that I am not speaking on behalf of any vested interests in the liquor trade. I am fully aware of the conflict that has existed for quite a long time between the two outlets in the liquor trade—the merchants and the hoteliers. I am also fully conscious of the requirements of the health regulations, the difficulties of providing accommodation and the high-cost structure that confront the traditional seller of liquor over the bar.

There is a point to be made in favour of the section of the community that will suffer most as a result of this conflict between the merchants and the hoteliers. I am speaking of the small merchant in an area where there is a comparatively small volume of retail trade and no wholesale trade, such as that available to some of the merchants in the larger centres. In this minor field there is a service to be provided to the public. We are likely to interfere with this service and also with the well-being of a section of the community that does not deserve to be caught up in the conflict between the larger liquor outlets. I believe that that section deserves some special consideration.

It is my plea to the Minister that he consider the difference between the two types of wholesale spirit merchant. They are clearly and well defined. Perhaps I could refer to them as category 1 and category 2. Category 1 would include the large spirit merchants who, I believe, are behind the introduction of this legislation. Many of them are owned by large wineries or public and international companies. Some of them might be part of a nation-wide chain of spirit merchants. Because of their size, financial backing and capabilities, as well as

their association with their parent companies, they have a distinct advantage and can absorb any imposition under the Bill.

Category 2 would include a number of small family businesses and companies, particularly in the remote areas of Queensland. For two or three generations these families have pioneered and lived in many country towns in Queensland, particularly in the North and the West. Owing to their size and their location in country communities these small businesses have become an important part of the retail distribution sector. But they will not be able to remain viable if they have to suffer any impositions under the conditions of their licences.

Mr. Wright: You have a good point. Would you support the establishment of some sort of minimum ceiling so that they would have to sell a certain volume before this provision applies? That would cover it.

Mr. ROW: I would support anything that would relieve them of the proposed imposition. It will put many of them out of business. I do not think that this action is fair or just.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I hope that they put their licences up for auction. You would be surprised at how much they would get for them.

Mr. ROW: That is conjecture and I am not prepared to answer conjectural statements at this stage of the debate. Maybe they would and maybe they wouldn't.

The point I make is that, as the honourable member for Maryborough endeavoured to indicate in his speech, it can be demonstrated clearly that there is a case for the hoteliers and that some liquor merchants are not being treated unjustly. Anyone could produce figures to show that the imposition is greater one way or the other.

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

Mr. ROW: Before the luncheon recess I said that figures can be used to illustrate many points. Let us take the position of a liquor merchant who sells a carton of stubbies at the retail price of \$8.40. When we subtract the 15 per cent licensing fee, which is \$1.26, and the cost price of \$7.02, that leaves a gross profit on the sale of 12c. The mark-up is therefore 1.7 per cent. If we then take the hotel cost price of \$7.02 and deduct 7 per cent licensing fee, on a selling price of \$8.40 the gross profit is 89c. The percentage mark-up in the case of the hotelier is 12.67 compared with the merchant's mark-up of 1.7 per cent. How can those figures be reconciled?

Mr. Alison: The basic error is that the cost price is the same.

Mr. ROW: But the basis of assessment is not the same.

As I said in my opening remarks, I recognise that there has been a problem in the liquor trade and I am not trying to say that there are not problems in certain areas. I am not supporting, either, any monopoly in the liquor trade. If monopolistic practices were developing, I do not blame the Treasurer for wanting to deal with them. But I believe that the disadvantaged minority in any situation should be protected.

There are many small retail spirit merchants who do not interfere with the business of hoteliers. There are many situated in remote areas who provide a valuable service to a special group of people, such as those who do not wish to frequent, or even appear in, hotels. They do not wish to purchase their supplies from hotels, and they have to be catered for. It is unfortunate that in areas where such people live the liquor trade is usually established in a small way, and any interference with the trade of small merchants could put them out of business, to the disadvantage of all in the area. That is one aspect of the legislation that I do not like.

I think that the Treasurer should consider a compromise, such as the assessment of the licence fee on the cost-price basis, or, in the alternative, the setting of a ceiling on the business of small liquor traders by which they would be given special consideration, provided they do not sell above a certain quantity of liquor. Surely neither of these moves would make any significant inroads into the hotel trade, or worry the Treasurer by causing a loss of revenue. After all, they would be only a very small section of the liquor trade.

It is also worth noting that if the fee is increased to 15 per cent on sales for merchants, they would in effect, when compared with the hoteliers, be paying 19.65 per cent. A rise from 6 per cent to 19.64 per cent is pretty steep, and it can be demonstrated that this is in fact what they pay when compared with hotels.

I suggest that the Treasurer give serious consideration to this element of the liquor trade, which may be forced to drop out of the trade altogether. There is justification for some sort of relief, such as a ceiling or an assessment made on the same basis as that applying to hotels. It could even be a slight reduction in the fee. This would help in some way to preserve this element of the liquor trade.

Like the honourable member for Flinders, I regret the fact that, after a considerable amount of trouble was taken by several members of Parliament and members of the liquor trade in the North and the West to bring a responsible deputation to the Treasurer to discuss this increase, none of us were advised of the Government's intention before this legislation was introduced.

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (2.21 p.m.): I think it would be fair comment to say that everybody in this Chamber today wishes to see justice for all in the liquor industry—

Mr. Houston: What about the consumers, the public?

Mr. MILLER: The industry revolves around the public. Without the public there would be no liquor industry. We have been talking about cheap liquor for the public. There are two sides to that story. I want to make one thing quite clear. By interjection a few moments ago the honourable member for Bulimba asked if we on this side of the Committee believe in competition. I most certainly believe in competition, but I believe in fair competition, not something that is one-sided. While there is competition—fair competition—I am happy and I believe the public will get liquor at the cheapest possible price.

There are many members of the public who want to do more than just buy a dozen bottles of beer and take them home. Many workers like to go into the local hotel on the way home, and they are entitled to the highest standard of service. It is fair to say that our liquor laws are encouraging more and more people to shy away from the hotels and to take bottles home and drink them there. Personally I am in favour of it, but there are many others who want to go to the hotel for their four or five beers before going home. And that is their right, but I do not ever want to see us get back to the days before the Licensing Commission introduced the higher standards we enjoy today, when hotels were just places for pig-swills. Hotels have to supply accommodation, which is something not required of merchants.

We have three categories of liquor outlet in Queensland. First, we have hotels, and these have to provide eating facilities and accommodation as well as bar facilities. In addition to public and private bars, a hotel has to supply other exclusive bars for the entertainment of our young people. Where would the young people of Brisbane or any other town go if it were not for the hotels and what they provide for young people? The only alternative is a high-class club, which most young people cannot afford to go to. No other liquor establishment offers the facilities for young people that hotels do, at a price they can afford. Hotels supply public bar facilities, private bar facilities for those who want them and club settings for the young people who desire a club atmosphere. We say that these liquor outlets have to pay a certain percentage of sales as a licence fee. It is only reasonable that taverns, the second category of liquor outlets, should pay a higher percentage as they have to supply only food and liquor.

Mr. Moore interjected.

Mr. MILLER: The honourable member for Windsor will have an opportunity to make his speech later. I would like him to give me the opportunity of making mine now. We say to those who run the taverns, "Because you do not supply all the amenities that hotels supply, you will pay a higher percentage." There has not been any complaint about that. No-one has said in this Chamber that taverns should not pay a higher percentage.

We then come to the third category, wholesale spirit merchants. What do they supply? In some cases the outlet is a tin shed, in others a brick shed. These merchants do not supply anything to the ordinary person in the community other than cheap liquor. The question we have to ask ourselves is: do we close hotels and give only wholesale spirit merchants the right to sell liquor? That is what it really comes to, because hoteliers depend to a very large degree on bottle sales to keep their heads above water.

Mr. Moore: They have a monopoly.

Mr. MILLER: There is no monopoly. I say without qualification that if bottle sales are taken away from hotels, there will be no hotels operating as we know them now. If some do continue to operate, they will become, in effect, small clubs for the use of an exclusive few, because the price of a glass of beer in a hotel must rise as bottle sales drop. Since the Federal Government has increased the price of beer by 4c a glass—an honourable member says it is 6c; I do not know whether it is 4c or 6c—there has been a drop in sales in hotel bars. As sales drop, so the cost of serving liquor increases. If bottle sales decrease because of the activities of wholesale distributors, charges in the hotels must increase. It is well known that employees in the liquor industry are paid good wages—in my opinion, wages over and above what some of them are entitled to on the basis of qualifications, but hotels pay these wages willingly.

Honourable members have a duty to ensure that common sense prevails. There must be hotels, there must be taverns, and there must be wholesalers to cater for people who do not want to buy their bottles at a hotel. Let me give honourable members one example. The total value of the sales of one wholesaler in Montague Road, West End, last year was \$2,000,000. Of that, \$1,000,000 was accounted for in retail sales. Under the new legislation, that wholesaler will pay only \$400 on the wholesale side of his business—\$400 on \$1,000,000—and 15 per cent on the other \$1,000,000. What does he supply for that huge profit?

Mr. Row: Grog!

Mr. MILLER: As my colleague says, "grog". No other service is supplied.

I support what the Treasurer is doing. Hotels must be maintained. Queensland is supposed to be the tourist State of Australia.

What other industry enables tourists to enjoy amenities and facilities such as those supplied by hotels? Does one find similar facilities in sporting clubs? Are facilities and accommodation supplied by wholesale merchants? No! I want to see Queensland grow in importance as a tourist State. The only way in which Queensland can become the leading tourist State in Australia is by providing first-class accommodation. The provision of that accommodation can be subsidised only by the sale of liquor.

I support the motion before the Committee.

Mr. GUNN (Somerset) (2.29 p.m.): At the outset, I indicate that I support fully the amendments proposed by the Minister. Spirit merchants have become the parasites of the liquor trade.

Mr. Jensen: You will have a split in your party.

Mr. GUNN: I have an opinion. I am going to give it to the Committee.

The Minister may correct me if I am wrong, but I understand that spirit merchants are licensed under the Liquor Act to sell liquor bulk to licensed retailers—that is, hotels, clubs, restaurants, etc. They are the wholesale section of the liquor industry, and their function is to supply licensees with various brands of wine, spirits and beer. They pay a fixed fee of \$400 for a licence. In addition to that main function, the Liquor Act permits them to sell liquor to unlicensed persons—the general public—in quantities not less than nine litres or one dozen bottles. It is to this section of the merchants' business that the new licence fee will apply. The fixed fee is not increased.

The complaint about the 15 per cent fee is mainly from merchants who use their wholesale business to operate as retailers, particularly in bottled beer. The trade has grown enormously in recent years—50 per cent in four years—to sales of approximately \$20,000,000 a year. Most of those sales should have been made by hotels and the loss to them is serious. It is discouraging investment in new hotels.

I am very concerned about what it is doing to country hotels. They provide an excellent service to country people and have always done so. The Licensing Commission has demanded a high standard of them. I do not think any the less of the commission for that. Indeed, it has done an excellent job. Even in small country towns, hotels have to provide meals and, indeed, they are very often the entertainment centre.

Merchants have many competitive advantages over hotels. They operate from cheaper premises and pay lower wages than hotels. They do not provide food, accommodation or entertainment as hotels do. They do not have hotel-style refrigeration. Capital costs are small compared with the cost of establishing a hotel. They purchase

liquor less a trade discount and so at a better price than hotels can obtain. Because their operating costs are extremely low, they are able to under-sell hotels by a substantial margin. Every newspaper carries advertisements of discount sales by merchants. They offer certain lines on specials.

Payment of the 15 per cent fee will not put merchants out of business. They will still be able to sell under hotel prices. and make a profit.

Of course, taverns pay a higher licence fee than hotels—10 per cent at the new rate—because they do not provide accommodation. The differential rate is an established principle. It follows that merchants, who provide no amenities at all, should pay a higher fee than taverns for the privilege of selling liquor retail.

Retailing under a wholesale licence is so profitable that Gollin and Company has purchased four existing spirit merchants' licences for the sole purpose of retailing—mainly beer.

Mr. Alison: Try to buy one of those licences.

Mr. GUNN: If a person did try to buy one today, he would find it a very expensive proposition. I would say no other business in Queensland would be as lucrative as that trade has grown.

An Honourable Member: What about the T.A.B.?

Mr. GUNN: I do not think Sir Gordon is going to sell the T.A.B.

The Licensing Court has acknowledged the problem by granting two new licences in September—to Chateau Rosevale and Wynns Wines—on condition (a) that they sell no beer to the public, and (b) that their sales to the public of wines and spirits do not exceed 10 per cent of their total sales.

Usually every little town has one or two hotels. They are the biggest ratepayers in the township and therefore are big revenue producers for the local authority. Of course, every sporting body is on their back for trophies, etc. They are the hub of entertainment for the whole district. Big merchants from the city areas are moving in with their sales of beer—there could be a certain amount of wine, too—and under-cutting and over-selling the local hotels.

I agree with the honourable member for Ithaca that sporting clubs have had an adverse effect on hotels. Most country hotels are old wooden buildings to which architectural alterations are virtually impossible to carry out. The Licensing Commission has recognised this special problem and been extremely fair. It has insisted on a very high standard of cleanliness—and rightly so. If the trend of the past few years continues, many of the small hotels will have trouble keeping going. They would be missed.

I support this legislation hoping that honourable members will give it deep thought. It means a lot to small hotels in the country and all other hotels.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Mulgrave) (2.36 p.m.): This matter has been canvassed for quite a while now. I do not intend to retrace much of the ground covered by honourable members from my part of the State.

At the outset I point out that for various reasons drinking habits in Queensland are changing rapidly. Any of us who think seriously about it realise that the road carnage is a major problem which has an effect on the drinking habits of responsible people. In days gone by, people in remote places would meet to have a pleasant social evening, but today they have to drive on busy roads. If they get into trouble, although they may not be strictly under the influence of liquor, they are likely to lose their driving licences. This has an effect.

Conditions are not similar throughout the State. It is very clear from what we have heard from honourable members representing the southern part of the State that hotels provide a lot of accommodation. They supply accommodation in my area as well. I carry no brief for hotels or anybody else. I am concerned about John Citizen—the man who wants service. He is the man we must consider. After all, hoteliers, and wine and spirit merchants are all trading to make a profit, and rightly so. I am concerned about the type of service that these people are giving.

So far as I am aware, the licence fees paid in other States are similar; there is no differentiation. Apparently honourable members—apart from the honourable member for Hinchinbrook—do not realise that in North Queensland there are two types of merchants. As he pointed out, the first type is controlled substantially by the big people in the liquor trade. The second type comprises many other merchants who operate in a fairly small way. They purchase their liquor from the people who have tied hotels. Imagine what will happen to John Citizen if the smaller merchants cannot continue to give a service! If this vicious licence fee is applied, they will be put out of business. I have heard it said that many people would buy their licences. I believe that some of them who do not have a substantial retail trade will sell them very cheaply in a few months' time.

I realise that many hotels give a very good service because of the conditions imposed by the Licensing Commission. However, if similar conditions were imposed on hotels in some of the remote areas they would be rubbed out. It would be unreasonable to do so. Hotels in the remote areas of the State are mainly places where people meet and drink. They serve a very necessary function. Throughout the State we have an excellent motel system. I do not know how many motels there are in Cairns, but very

few people seek accommodation at an ordinary hotel when it is available at motels. In some of the remote areas that may be the only place to obtain accommodation.

However, the merchants are providing a service, and they are not necessarily taking trade away from the hotels, many of which provide good services, with bottle shops and drive-ins. In the afternoon, people can drive in and collect half-a-dozen stubbies, or whatever they require. Where those facilities are not provided by a hotel, a chap can pull in to a small wine and spirit merchant and purchase his supplies there at the same price as he would pay at the hotel.

As the honourable member for Hinchinbrook pointed out, in most northern areas \$8.40 is the price for a carton of stubbies. So there is certainly no competition in price. The merchants are rendering a service—one that we want continued. I am concerned that, if they are removed from the field, the man who has to pay—and pay dearly for it—is the ordinary citizen.

Mr. Moore: The public.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The honourable member is dead right.

Mr. Moore: John Citizen.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He is the fellow we have to consider.

Let it not be forgotten that the 15 per cent we are talking about will be applied to the total cost. Rail freights are to be increased by 40 per cent. That 15 per cent is to be levied on the increased rail charges, handling charges and everything else. Under those circumstances, it will not be easy for some of the merchants to stay in business.

A lot has been said about tin sheds. I do not know of anybody who is trading out of tin sheds. On the contrary, in the last few years a considerable amount of money has been invested in some of the establishments. And I see nothing wrong with that. I think this is a move in the right direction.

Mr. Row: In the tropics, the stock must be kept cool.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That is right. My colleague draws my attention to the fact that we are living in a hot climate and the business people must do things in such a manner as to attract sales.

Mr. Moore: They must have sufficient insulation.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That is right. They must have cool-rooms.

On top of that, they must carry fairly large stocks. Nobody has spoken about that. The merchants have large stocks of all lines of liquor. They have to finance that stock, which is a burden not shared to the same extent by hoteliers.

The other matters that I had intended to raise have been canvassed by some of my colleagues. However, together with the honourable member for Hinchinbrook, I believe the proposal should be looked at very closely to see if there is not some way in which relief could be afforded to the merchants that we have been referring to, particularly those who accompanied us on the deputation to the Treasurer. I must say that I, like my colleague from Hinchinbrook, am a little disappointed. My understanding was that the Treasurer would give this matter some consideration. We are at a loss to know what were the results of that deputation. Be that as it may, I hope that this matter is looked at in greater depth than it has been so far, because the circumstances are not the same in all parts of the State.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (2.44 p.m.): This debate has taken an extraordinary turn. After all, we are debating a taxation measure. The Bill being introduced is associated with an increase in taxation. As yet I have not heard any Government member suggest that it is wrong to increase the tax on liquor. Government members are worried about one section in comparison with another. They have been trying to say that one section will be hit harder than another. How many are worried about the public, who in the final analysis have to pay? It will be the chap who likes to have a grog who has to pay.

Mr. Moore: All because of Whitlam.

Mr. HOUSTON: Certainly the Federal Government did certain things about liquor, but that does not mean that Queensland has to follow suit. Honourable members opposite knew before the Budget was framed that the Federal Government had increased charges on the liquor industry. They knew also that they would be passed on.

On top of that, the State Government is applying further additional charges, which no Government members have tried to justify. All they have done is argue one section against the other. If the Government looks at the liquor trade and the charges applied to it, it should have a really good look at it and consider the different types of drinking establishment we have and whether we should start thinking in terms of new establishments that sell liquor.

Mr. Frawley: The Chairman wants you to speak to the Bill.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is the point as I see it and that is what I rose to speak about.

The first increase that the Minister mentioned was in hotel liquor licence fees, which will rise from 6 to 7 per cent. That represents an extra 16½ per cent on that licence fee alone. If Government members think it is justified, they should support it. But that is the base of the legislation. That is the first thing that will happen. Every hotel will have to pay an increased liquor licence fee.

Mrs. Kyburz: They can afford it.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is not a matter of affording it. If the honourable member for Salisbury thinks that the hotels can afford it, she should get the Minister for Justice to introduce legislation to fix the price of beer so that the publicans do not pass the increase on to the public. The publican will say, "I cannot afford to carry this impost. I will increase the price of beer to the public." That is what will happen.

A Government Member: If they put it up too much, their sales will drop off.

Mr. HOUSTON: I do not know so much about that. I do not know very much about liquor—certainly I'm not expert on it—but I think I know something about cigarette sales. Friends of mine have said time and time again, "If the price goes up, I will stop smoking." But they don't, and the volume of sales goes up.

Mr. Miller: A man has only so much money a week to spend on liquor. That is common sense.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is not true, either. Men and women have so much money to spend and it is up to them to decide how they spend it. Surely we are not going to tell the people how to spend their money. The Government talks about free enterprise! Let us have free enterprise for human beings and let them spend their money the way they think fit. I might not agree with what they do with it, but surely it is their right as human beings to make that decision.

Government members have spoken about protecting one side against the other side. They have spoken also about the fellow in the tin shed. I have no brief from any hotels, taverns or wine and spirit merchants. But how many Government members have said, "I don't believe in the competition between self-service stores and stores that pay shop assistants to serve customers"? No Government member has argued that one store should pay a larger licence fee than the other or that the price at one store should be lower than at the other. But the same principle applies. The customer is getting less service at one store than at the other.

Mr. Miller: Any of those corner stores can become cut-price stores if they wish to.

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member is supposed to belong to a free-enterprise party yet he says "If they wish to." That is not so at all. The fact is that some of them cannot afford to do it. Their money is tied up in various other ways and they are probably only leasing their premises. Many factors come into these matters.

Let me deal with two ordinary establishments that are not corner stores. The first is the self-service store where a customer goes in and chooses what he wants. It might be a good idea to let him see everything on

display, but he is not personally attended to. The second establishment does provide personal service.

Mr. Frawley: You don't get much of it.

Mr. HOUSTON: Government members do not cry about that but, according to them, that is free competition. If I go into a hotel and go to the bottle department and ask for a couple of dozen bottles of beer, all the fellow does is open the fridge, put the cartons in the car and ask for the money. That is all the service I would get and that is all I would want. A person who goes into one of the other establishments gets exactly the same service. The difference arises in the price.

All that Government members have been arguing is that one fellow is apparently making more profit than the other. I do not want to argue on figures because I have none and cannot check them out. Government members are saying that, because one fellow makes more profit, he should be taxed more so that he can put up the price to the public. Again we come back to the old argument of the public having to pay because Government members want to differentiate between the two types of business and because some of them believe that one type of business has an economic advantage over the other.

Mr. Row: Are you supporting the Bill?

Mr. HOUSTON: I will look at the Bill when it is printed and make a judgment on it. I am bringing to the notice of the Committee some of the matters I have sat here and listened to. We talk about hotels providing accommodation. So they do. But let us be realistic. How many people who travel the State stay in motels rather than hotels? Most of us do, and we do it for the simple reason that we prefer a quieter establishment.

The day must come when the Government will encourage hotels to change to either taverns for the sale of liquor or motels for the provision of accommodation. In many country areas one has to stay in hotels because there is insufficient room in motels, particularly at times when carnivals or other attractions are being held. I cannot tolerate the high level of noise that comes from the entertainment provided in so many hotels. I do not want to stop people, young or old, from having their entertainment, but I do not want to be forced to stay in such places. I therefore think that we should not be asked to protect hoteliers because they provide accommodation and entertainment when it is not reasonable to have them provided under the one roof. Let us encourage hoteliers to decide which industry they want to follow. Do they want to sell liquor and provide entertainment or do they want to provide accommodation? If they want to provide all three, that is their business, but protecting

them from competition should not be our worry. That, at any rate, is the way that I see it.

The main purpose of this industry is the sale of liquor. Wine and spirit merchants do not sell glasses of beer over the counter. They are not required to provide tables or entertainment. Their business is exclusively the sale of liquor. I can remember the time when this type of licence was first granted. I remember the days when the old wine shops were condemned.

Mr. Frawley: Weren't they awful?

Mr. HOUSTON: They were. I have no fight with the Government for closing them down. Originally there were to be only a limited number of restaurant licences—I think six—for the whole of Queensland. Everyone thought that that was fair enough. Public opinion changed, and there are now, I understand, about 130 spirit merchants' licences. The Government created them, so at the second-reading and Committee stages it should regard this legislation as a taxation Bill and consider whether it is fair to say to the people and the industry, "We are going to see that you are charged more for liquor as we want another \$3,000,000 in revenue."

The Treasurer stated, I think, that he wants to increase revenue from this source from \$10,300,000 to \$13,500,000. Perhaps he can justify this increase. But so far he has not said whether he believes the industry can carry this extra impost without passing it on to the public. Or is it another form of indirect taxation which will find its way to the public because he knows that those who like to drink intoxicating liquor will continue to drink it?

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (2.53 p.m.): I listened with interest to the remarks of the ex-Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Houston: "The honourable member for Bulimba", if you don't mind.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The honourable member for Bulimba said that the Government should declare whether or not this is a tax Bill. I think the Treasurer made that very clear. He said that he needed more money and this was one way in which he was going to get it. The honourable member certainly cannot say that the Treasurer did not make that statement. Obviously he was not listening to him.

One provision in the Bill that worries me is the increase from 6 per cent to 9 per cent in the vigneron's licence fee. I think there are a few things concerning these licences that need clarifying. There are only two such licensees in Queensland, and they will be hard hit by the increase. I think that honourable members will be aware that the Department of Primary Industries will shortly proclaim a new Act that will provide for these fellows one wholesale outlet away from the winery.

In order to put the price up again—we have just increased it by 9 per cent—the Act would have to be amended. I am quite sure that the Treasurer and the Minister would realise that any further increase would be very damaging to a new industry in Queensland. We are now amending the Liquor Act and I would like the Minister's assurance that it will not be amended again within the next month.

Mr. Knox interjected.

Mr. McKECHNIE: That is good. I have the Minister's assurance that that will not happen and I am not nearly as worried as I was about this increase in the licence fee of vigneron. For the benefit of a lot of wine-makers in my electorate—this is a pioneer industry—I want to make it clear that anybody at all, provided he has three acres of grapes, can sell wine from his own premises, on his own vineyard, without a licence. There is no fee payable at all. I do not think this can be stressed too much because just the other day a man came to me and said that he was very worried, that he had a little more wine than he could consume himself and he wanted to sell just a few gallons. I was able to assure him that he could do so. It is good to see this Government encouraging pioneer industries such as the wine industry by not taxing them in the infant stages.

To come back to the theme of some other honourable members—that of spirit merchants' licence fees—I have read the material and I am not in a position to assess the accuracy of some of the statements that have been made. At this stage I have an open mind on the subject. In my electorate, the firm of MacKenzie & Co. have operated in a very responsible manner for at least 40 years and I am told that they have to pay the same for their beer in Goondiwindi as the hotels do. I do not think they would tell me this if it were not true. As I say, at this stage I have an open mind on the subject. I do not want to see the hotels suffering unduly from unfair competition from people who do not have to provide the same services, but at the same time I do not want to stand by and see people who have been in business for 40 years suffer too much from this increase in the licence fee. I know their sales have increased in the last year but I think that, somewhere along the line, it should be possible to reach a compromise where people who have been in business for many years are not allowed to go overboard and take too much business away from the hotels. I support the Treasurer on that point. By the same token, I support the argument of some other speakers that we cannot and must not put out of business a section of the liquor industry that has been trading for 40 years.

Mr. Moore: We won't be putting them out of business.

Mr. McKECHNIE: That is a matter of conjecture. I am told that this firm's profit on a carton of beer is very small and they have assured me that it would not be worth while continuing to operate in this field if this Bill goes through in its present form. I know the Treasurer is a very thoughtful man and I do not think he will arrogantly go ahead and push these charges through without examining all the ramifications of the increases. It is early days yet. This is a money Bill—it is part of the Budget—and as a Government member I do not think that I could see myself crossing the floor or anything like that on a Government money Bill, and I think this is what some honourable members have to realise. I thank you, Mr. Hewitt, for your indulgence.

Mr. FRAWLEY (Murrumba) (3 p.m.): Most honourable members seem to be concerned only about the increase to 15 per cent in the spirit merchants' licence fee. There are more important things to speak about. No-one has said a word about all the misery caused by liquor—the number of homes that are affected by it, the number of husbands who come home—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That is because they are not permitted to. It is a restricted debate. That is why no-one has said anything about that.

Mr. FRAWLEY: It is definitely included in the debate; it relates to this.

The CHAIRMAN: No. I ruled at the outset that only the matters specifically mentioned would be debated.

Mr. Moore: You will have to sit down in a minute.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I will not have to sit down. I am not like some who have prepared briefs. I can speak without notes, and I will prove it to the honourable member.

Let me say first that I am supporting the proposal to increase the licence fee to 15 per cent on the selling price, simply because hotels have to be protected. They are supplying some facilities and amenities that bottle shops and spirit merchants do not supply. In some bottle shops one could not even get a drink of water. They have no taps. Hotels supply accommodation and some other facilities.

Mr. Moore: What accommodation?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I am speaking about hotels in my electorate, where there are many good hotel-keepers. As I heard an honourable member say, there is a good hotel at Woodford. There are also good hotels at D'Aguilar and Caboolture.

Mr. Houston: How many people stay in hotels?

Mr. FRAWLEY: There are plenty of hotels supplying good accommodation and good meals.

Mr. Houston: How many people make use of the accommodation?

Mr. FRAWLEY: At least they supply something that the bottle shops and the spirit merchants do not supply.

Mr. Moore: They have grandma, grandpa and all the kids in the rooms. There is no accommodation left for anyone else.

Mr. FRAWLEY: No. Wherever I have been, I have not had any trouble in getting good accommodation.

Some of the money that comes from liquor licence fees could be used in providing facilities to improve the lot of young people in the community. There is no doubt that most publicans do the right thing, but many of them still sell liquor to people who are under the influence. They do not give a hoot whom they sell it to or when they sell it.

An Honourable Member: They should be chopped out.

Mr. FRAWLEY: They should be. Hotels are here to stay. We are not going to get rid of them or do without them. Therefore, the best we can do is see that they operate efficiently. We must give them some protection so that they can gain a fair share of the market in competition with the spirit merchants.

Mr. Wright: They are an unnecessary part of the community.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I am not going to say they are evil, because not all hotels are evil. There is no doubt that this is a legitimate trade, and the Treasurer has to obtain increased revenue. In this instance he is increasing the tax not only on bottle shops but also on hotels and taverns. It is only right that the wine and spirit merchants should pay their fair share.

I have received representations from wine and spirit merchants. They are not in my electorate, and they have not tried to put very much pressure on me. They sent me their submissions, which I have read. In spite of that, I support the proposal.

Mrs. KIPPIN (Mourilyan) (3.3 p.m.): Mr. Hewitt—

Mr. Houston: Hurry up, Frawley. Why don't you get the microphone for the lady?

Mr. Frawley: She is in here as a member and she stands on her own two feet.

Mrs. KIPPIN: Yes, Mr. Frawley, I am sure I can do that.

Mr. Houston: The honourable member for Murrumba is a real gentleman!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I call on the very gracious member for Mourilyan to address the Committee.

Mrs. KIPPIN: Thank you, Mr. Hewitt.

I wish to speak in support of the small spirit merchants of North Queensland. Although much has been said on this subject already, some honourable members have lost track of what northern people are trying to say.

As I understand it, there are three selling outlets for beer, namely, nominated selling agents, hotels, and small merchants. The honourable member for Maryborough maintained that the small merchants and the hotels did not pay the same price for beer. During the luncheon recess, I checked with the people in Innisfail and found that the small merchants there definitely do buy their beer at the same price as is paid by the hotels. Therefore, they certainly do not have an advantage at the beginning.

Mr. Alison: They should get into their wholesalers.

Mrs. KIPPIN: Perhaps they should, but I can only tell the Committee what happens in my area and try to assist these people.

The small merchants who sell privately play a very big part in the industry. People are becoming used to buying liquor, taking it home and drinking it there. I agree with that principle. I do not wish the hotels any harm—they definitely provide a service—but I suggest that when families wish to consume liquor it is better done in the home.

The small spirit merchants provide a number of services, such as the delivery of goods and the carrying of credit accounts. They also carry much more extensive stocks than most hotels.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mrs. KIPPIN: They do in my area. Other honourable members can talk about what happens in their areas, but that is what happens in mine. I know, because I have checked up.

The honourable member for Carnarvon supported me in his comment that the merchants in his area bought their beer at the same price as that paid by the hotels.

Most of the small enterprises in my area are owned by individuals or small groups of people who live in the North. In contrast, the majority of hotels in the North are owned not privately but by either of the breweries or a hotel chain whose head office is outside North Queensland. Those hotels are merely parts of big groups, and they can afford to share their costs. In the northern area there are about 30 small merchants with 2-gallon licences. They feel that they will suffer greatly from the increase of the licensing fee to 15 per cent and will have trouble remaining viable.

I realise that the Treasurer needs money, and I certainly do not object to his wish to get more from the liquor trade. Probably that is one of the better places from which to get it. However, I do ask that equitable treatment be given to all sections of the industry. I do not ask for favoured treatment for the small merchants; what I

do request the Treasurer to do is consider their situation realistically as it has been put clearly to him.

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (3.7 p.m.): The Bill before the Committee could be said to be a peculiar one in that, on the one hand, it is the responsibility of the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, as Minister in charge of the Liquor Act, to bring it into the Chamber and, on the other hand, it is, as someone described it, a money Bill and, as such, comes within the ambit of the State Budget presented by me.

I appreciate the manner in which the Attorney-General presented the legislation. As all honourable members know, I listened to the debate from the commencement. I did so because I realised that there would be a responsibility on me as Treasurer, rather than on the Attorney-General, to defend the Budget and the action that has been taken by the Government. I have carefully listened to all who have spoken. I fully appreciate the fact that the members from North Queensland and some of the western areas had a duty to put forward the argument advanced by them, as it had been presented to them by a certain person or persons associated with the wine and spirit merchants in their area. Therefore, I do not in any way belittle their representations. It was necessary that they present a case on behalf of those who no doubt approached them on the matter. I have to say, however, that very few members who have spoken this afternoon really understand the basis on which the wine and spirit merchant's licence was established and the manner in which it is implemented at the present time.

These licences were issued originally for the distribution of wine and spirits in more than 2-gallon lots. The idea was that merchants should provide a variety of liquor—many brands of wine, whisky and other spirits—that hotels were not expected to carry. In the early days the system functioned very well. The next point is that the total fee for this particular licence was \$400. While a trader supplies the licenced trade, he does not even pay the 6 per cent. That is paid by the hotels which do the distribution. For \$400, wine and spirit merchants were given a licence to distribute and that provided the basis of profitability for this category of business. On the basis on which the licence was first established, the only return to the Government was \$400.

Because of the Government's action a few years ago in opening the gate a little in an effort to assist some of the merchants who had some problems, we finally reached the stage where a carton of beer became a 2-gallon lot. At this juncture a number of very shrewd operators—I do not wish to name them this afternoon in this Chamber; they will all know to whom I am referring—paid ridiculous prices in many parts of the State for wine and spirit merchants' licences. They did so for one reason only—to

get into the beer trade. Having done that, they then set about effecting a considerable reduction in the sale price of what I term "hot grog". In using that term, I do not mean anything other than "non-refrigerated." In recent times, wherever one moved throughout the State, one found this type of operation coming more and more into favour. It expanded to such an extent that it became detrimental to the liquor trade generally and particularly to the hotels.

I carry no brief for any hotel, but for quite some time the Government has forced hotels to provide a certain standard of accommodation, a certain type of lounge and a certain standard of health facility. It has insisted that staff be on duty at all times whilst a hotel is open, for registering guests. We have forced hotels—and rightly so—to accept certain responsibilities in relation to the tourist industry. Some people may say that the tourists pay well, and to an extent this is so; but the profitability of a hotel lies in the sale of grog, not the sale of meals. In this context I can refer even to the Parliamentary Refreshment Rooms. Its position is comparable with that of the liquor trade.

Approaches have been made to me about this for some considerable time. And quite candidly, as a Treasurer looking for additional revenue for the State, I was looking for additional revenue. I do not have to remind the Committee that liquor has been a chopping block for all Governments throughout Australia as a means of additional revenue.

Before I introduced the Budget, I had considered obtaining a little more revenue from a different part of the liquor trade. As honourable members are well aware, the Federal Government has taken something like 4c or 5c out of every glass of beer consumed in Australian hotels. There was thus no avenue for increased revenue in that field.

A Treasurer, if he is worth his weight at all, does not increase taxation unless he believes that he can defend the action that he has taken. So I carefully examined not just the records of one agent or one wine and spirit merchant, but the fees paid by every wine and spirit merchant in Queensland. This afternoon I have with me the figures of every merchant, including those who approached me with their stories—the same type of stories that have been told to other members of Parliament—about how this or that might break them or affect their business.

I do not propose to bandy round the Chamber the figures of any particular individual. Rather will I give an indication of some of the happenings in this sphere of business activity. As an example I take first a large wine and spirit merchant in Brisbane. In 1974—that is, the year ended 30 June 1974—he had sales in the field for which he is legitimately established, that is, to the licensed trade in general, amounting to \$46,000. However, for the unlicensed trade—that is, the trade formerly open to

the hotelier only—his sales amounted to \$433,000. In the year just completed, because of the expansion of his price-cutting operation at the expense of the hotels and the public generally, that trade soared to \$1,240,000.

Let me go a little further. We heard the wails from Bundaberg. I will not name the firm; the honourable members concerned will know which one it is. Its unlicensed trade in the last 12 months rose from \$341,000 to \$671,000. I quote now from Cairns, after all the stories we have heard from there. One organisation increased its sales from \$677,000 to \$972,000. Another one in Cairns—the gentleman who told me a story about how it would affect him, so the honourable members who spoke will know to whom I am referring—did not sell one dollar's worth to the licensed trade, but he sold \$444,000 worth to the unlicensed trade in 1974 and \$662,000 last financial year.

These are the people who are whining about what the Government is doing. On sales to the licensed trade, they pay no more. They pay \$400 for the right to make a profit. On the other side of the ledger, on sales to the unlicensed trade, they previously paid 6 per cent for the privilege of undermining the total trade within their own locality.

We heard some whining about Charters Towers. One particular operator there had an unlicensed trade last year of \$113,000 and to June this year of \$205,000. He issues a circular, which I have read. I know what he pays in licence fees and I know the profitability of his operation. This again is an indication of what is going on.

Look at what has happened with one merchant in Innisfail. His sales rose from \$102,000 to \$192,000 in that period of 12 months.

In Ipswich, a certain licence changed hands at a figure that, compared with what might be paid for a licence, was possibly out of this world. To June 1974 this agency, in competition with the licensed victuallers in Ipswich, sold \$751,000 worth of liquor to the unlicensed trade and \$39,000 worth to the licensed trade.

One of the merchants in Mareeba did not sell one gallon to the licensed trade—if he did, the licence column on this form shows he did not pay a licence fee—but he sold \$150,000 worth to the unlicensed trade in 1974 and \$175,000 worth to it in 1975.

Let me look in the other direction and outline what happened in Surfers Paradise. One merchant there sold \$223,000 worth to the unlicensed trade in 1974 and \$912,000 worth to it in 1975.

My purpose in rising was to indicate that the Government is sincere in its approach. It believes that for any commodity there is a price structure that will provide a reasonable return to the operator. In broad principle the price of liquor is set by the Australian Hotels' Association and based on a price which will not give exorbitant profitability

but will return sufficient money to enable a hotel to provide the service that the Government believes should be provided. That is the basic price principle.

If there is to be the type of subterfuge in which, for instance, \$1 can be taken off the price of a carton of beer, some people will say that it is very good for the purchaser. Admittedly the purchaser benefits; but he is benefiting to the detriment of the whole of the service to the community. It is because of this that the Government looked very carefully at the situation and decided not to cancel or amend the licences. We decided that if the merchants could get the type of trade they are enjoying, and could get it legitimately—at prices even below those charged by hoteliers—good luck to them.

On the other hand, the Government is entitled to a greater return from the individual who provides little or no service to the community. All that the Government has done is raise that return to it rather than tax the consumer in any other way. We are saying that these merchants have had what might be described as a honeymoon in their business operations and we are now bringing them back somewhat closer to the hoteliers. At the same time, they will still be able to sell their grog and make a profit on it. The point is that the Government is entitled to take this little extra from that source rather than from any other.

I know my time for speaking is running out, but I have one final point to make. Reference has been made this afternoon to interests that own hotels and, through that ownership, channel business in certain directions in an attempt to overcome what the Government is doing. I sound a note of warning. I say to these people, whether they be brewery interests or large merchants, that the Government is aware of this problem and, if an attempt is made to beat this legislation, there are several ways of handling that situation. We all know about one-brand hotels and similar problems. We overcame some of those, and we have been generous in one or two other directions. I say now that, if we do not get the co-operation that we seek, or if an attempt is made by some of the larger interests to find a way round this issue, a clause that I already have prepared can be written into the legislation.

We are prepared to play the game and we expect the brewers, merchants and distributors to play the game, too. If they do, I say quite candidly that, whilst some merchants will lose, some will not lose at all because the price structure will come back closer to what it should be and they will still be able to continue in business successfully. There will then be free trade and competition between the hotelier and the merchant.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (3.27 p.m.), in reply: We have heard a wide range of

views expressed on this subject, and honourable members have taken the opportunity to voice their opinions on some aspects of the legislation.

I give a word of advice to some of the newer members, and I do not give it, I hope, in any patronising way. I warn them of the dangers of carrying briefs. This Parliament is concerned with the welfare of the whole of the people of this State, and members of Parliament take an oath of office to look after the interests of all. I think it is desirable to remind members of the dangers of carrying briefs. It is not a matter of their losing their seats, because they are entitled to speak in this Chamber on subjects about which they are concerned if they are matters of public interest. The matters that have been debated here today are in that category.

The warning I give is not that they are in danger of being removed from office but that they have to answer in their electorates for statements that they make here. This is a money Bill that is concerned with providing the wherewithal to carry on the Government of this State. It arises from the Budget which has been approved by the House. There are no changes to the principles of the legislation. I counsel members to take this into account during debates on this Bill at the second-reading and Committee stages.

It is, I presume, not proposed to challenge this money Bill and withhold Supply from the Government in this place. While there are interests in the community that will undoubtedly be adversely affected by it, as indeed other interests have been adversely affected by other legislation enacted by this and other Parliaments, I trust that they will understand the reason for the introduction of legislation of this type. The Treasurer's Budget has been praised almost universally in this Parliament, even by members of the Opposition—reluctantly perhaps, but nevertheless praised.

One of the reasons why it is possible to bring down a good Budget, one that is accepted generally in the community, is that measures such as the one now before the Committee are implemented. It is regrettable that the levies have to fall heavily in one direction; nevertheless Parliament must be respected for its decision in this matter. I trust that honourable members will support the Bill in all its stages, because without the revenue from these sources it will not be possible for the Government to realise its ambition to provide the services that it believes the people of this State are entitled to receive.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Knox, read a first time.

The House adjourned at 3.32 p.m.