

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 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 papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Workers' Compensation Act 1916–1974.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BYRNE (Belmont) (11.6 a.m.), by leave: In the "Wynnum-Redlands Herald" of Wednesday, 19 November, the Federal Member for Bowman, Mr. Len Keogh, claims that "investigation had shown that the Federal Liberal candidate for Bowman had, in fact, been using Mr. Byrne's office as a campaign headquarters and that the office of Mr. Byrne and Mr. Kaus were being used on his behalf to rally support and collect campaign funds". I wish to state categorically that this statement was a damnable lie and no doubt part of the over-all deceit and duplicity of an incompetent Labor member who, being completely out of touch with his electorate, is about to be rightfully relegated to political oblivion.

My office has at no time been used, nor is it being used now, as a campaign headquarters for the Liberal candidate Mr. David Jull. To state or to intimate such is to publish a gross untruth. Mr. Keogh further claims that I had misused taxpayers' funds. This, too, is a blatant lie, as all my endeavours in the Belmont electorate have been at my personal expense and totally in the interests of my constituents and for their benefit. I find his claims both disturbing and disappointing, for I thought I could have expected far more from him. If Mr. Keogh were in any way able to reliably ascertain his facts, he would not lower himself to the base pettiness he has in clutching for strength in scandal and untruths.

The Federal Liberal campaign in Bowman is in no need of my office. In the interests of the electors of Bowman three offices have been opened in Wynnum, Cleveland and Mt. Gravatt. An article about the opening of the Wynnum office, and a photograph of the opening of that office, appear in the paper in which Mr. Keogh makes his claims.

The gross hypocrisy of the man is easily seen for, while stating that I was using taxpayers' funds for political benefit, in the same paper on the same day, Mr. Keogh himself, in an advertisement, calls for offers of assistance, financial or otherwise, to be sent to himself c/- The Parliamentary Offices, Brisbane, and includes his taxpayers' paid for phone number as the contact. I totally reject the false and facile claims made by Mr. Keogh, and now set the record straight for the people of Belmont. The sooner the electors of Bowman rid themselves

of this incompetent liar and allow him to retire on his newly purchased farm, the better.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE**1. POLLUTION FROM LAKE CURRUMUNDI ESTATE DEVELOPMENT**

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

(1) Has any investigation been carried out into the pollution which will be caused by drainage from the estate being built on the banks of Lake Currumundi, and what damage will it do to this marine environment?

(2) Was his department consulted by the local authority which approved the building of this estate so close to the lake's shore?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) I assume that the estate referred to is part of development lease No. 2 being developed by Kawana Estates Pty. Ltd. and that the particular land referred to is on the northern bank of Currumundi Creek and east of the Nicklin Way. The lease conditions provide that plans of subdivision be submitted to the Landsborough Shire Council and me for approval. The question of drainage and disposal of water are regarded as matters for local authority considerations prior to council approval of a particular plan of subdivision.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY OF ROAD AND RAIL ACCESS TO NEW PORT, BRISBANE

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

(1) With reference to his statement that the Government is seeking \$7 million in Commonwealth funds to start constructing road and rail access routes to the new port of Brisbane and the fact that Cabinet had decided to commission Rendel and Partners to prepare a road-rail access proposal for consideration by Cabinet and Parliament, will local groups be able to make submissions to this study?

(2) Will the partners be required to organise an environmental impact study on the effects of the road transport in the area concerned and will the study be made public?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Studies necessary to prepare a five and 15 year plan for future development and management of the port of Brisbane have been in hand for six months. The studies are being carried out by consultants engaged by my Department of Harbours and Marine. During the studies the consultants have, to this stage, received submissions from some 150

organisations including local interested groups. The studies include an examination of the environmental effects of any proposed development where necessary. Until the consultants' report is received and examined, I am unable to say whether all or any part of it will be made public.

3. ABOLITION OF TERTIARY STUDENT ALLOWANCES

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

(1) Is he aware that a malicious rumour has been started at the Q.I.T. and other places of higher education that, when the Liberal-National Country Party is elected in Canberra, student allowances will be discontinued?

(2) In order to put an end to this mischievous rumour, will he ascertain the true position from his colleagues in Canberra and advise the House?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) It is most improbable that there is any truth in the rumour. The policy of the coalition will be announced in the near future and this will put an end to any misstatements.

4. APPOINTMENT OF SECOND TESTING OFFICER FOR DRIVING LICENCES, TOOWOOMBA

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

When will an appointment be made of a second testing officer for drivers' licences in Toowoomba, as the waiting time is now three months?

Answer:—

Provision was made in the 1975-76 Estimates of the Department of Transport for the appointment of a civilian testing officer at Toowoomba. Applications have been called by the Inspector of Police, Toowoomba, from interested persons. After interview, a recommendation will be made by the Inspector of Police, Toowoomba, and it is anticipated that an appointment will be made to the subject position within approximately three to four weeks.

5. SCRUB TICK CONTROL

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

(1) Has he seen the report by Dr. B. Doube that Queensland scrub ticks are now at the stage of development most dangerous to humans and animals?

(2) Does his department have any plans to counteract the growth in numbers of these pests in areas around Brisbane?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Dr. Doube has advised the director-general that any attempt at reducing the tick population would be impracticable.

Spraying of the areas with insecticide such as DDT would be costly, dangerous and probably not effective. It could harm the animal and bird population in the area. The host animal is the bandicoot and these animals are more numerous in areas which are covered with thick undergrowth. I am advised that there is no guarantee that a reduction in the bandicoot population would result in a reduction of the tick population. An alternative host would probably be found. Dr. Doube advises that people who live in areas where bandicoots abound should make a careful examination of their bodies for ticks whenever there is the possibility of exposure. Probably the most likely method of control would be a suitable tick repellent. Work is required to assess the efficacy in this regard of the available repellants or to carry out research in the production of a new substance.

6. FINANCIAL AID FOR SPORTING AND YOUTH RECREATION BODIES

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

(1) With reference to questions I asked in this House some months ago concerning the likely yearly budget of a prominent Brisbane football club, is he aware of statements in recent days to the effect that the Fortitude Valley Rugby League Football Club is in debt to the extent of \$160,000?

(2) As this club, along with others, has received generous public donations and commercial-house and brewery support over many years, will he please explain, in view of his department's involvement with sporting organisations, the reason for this serious shortage of funds and, whether to his knowledge, other similar clubs are in comparable financial plights?

(3) As the position of the Valley club has caused many a raised eyebrow in the sporting world and in view of the aforementioned public support given to this club, will he, in the interest of the public, request a full investigation and set out the full facts, detailing the reasons for this gross failure?

(4) If well-supported clubs are not able to manage their own affairs and apparently have little regard for help and assistance given, will he adjust priorities so that more worthy and deserving organisations are given better support, and thus provide the youth of this State with extended, wholesome recreation activity?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) The affairs of the Fortitude Valley Rugby League Football Club are a domestic matter and I am not a party to what is its own business. I am not aware of any other clubs which may be in comparable financial difficulties.

(3) No. This is a matter for the club itself.

(4) The guide-lines laid down to be followed in the allocation of funds made available for encouragement to sport provide for assistance to all sporting bodies upon application. Subsidies are available for the improvement of playing facilities and for coaching of juniors. These provide that sporting organisations which are willing to help themselves are, in turn, assisted by Government funds in the form of subsidy for moneys spent. I can see no reason, because of financial difficulties which apparently one club has encountered, to alter guide-lines which have proved to be so effective in the distribution of financial assistance to hundreds of sporting clubs to date. I might mention that no application within the guide-lines has been received from the Fortitude Valley Rugby League Football Club since the inception of the assistance scheme in 1972.

7. AMENDMENT OF NEW STANDARD BUILDING BY-LAWS

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

(1) Is he aware of concern expressed by some drafting offices that the new standard building by-laws will result in the closure of some offices?

(2) Is he also aware that local authorities have been very happy with their work, which is checked by and done under the supervision of building inspectors?

(3) Is he prepared to consider an amendment to the by-laws, allowing draftsmen to apply to the supervising board for permits to design buildings up to four storeys high, provided they can prove competency and experience, and, if so, on what date will the relevant by-law be proclaimed?

Answers:—

(1) I am aware that the provisions of the Standard Building By-laws when proclaimed into force under the Building Act 1975 may affect certain works presently undertaken by drafting offices. This will not mean that drafting offices will go out of business. Upon the coming into force of the Standard Building By-laws there will be limitations on the size of the projects that may be designed by persons who are not registered architects or registered professional engineers. As examples, a building having a floor area greater than 400 square metres or a building exceeding two storeys in height will have to be designed by a registered architect or registered professional engineer. Drafting offices will still be able to design buildings other than those which the Standard Building By-laws require to be designed by registered architects or registered professional engineers. The provisions of the Standard Building

By-laws that require bigger buildings to be designed by registered architects or registered professional engineers are designed to ensure the structural safety of the building and the well-being of the persons using such buildings.

(2) I understand that building by-laws made by many local authorities do not contain provisions limiting the class or size of building that may be designed by a drafting office. A number of the bigger local authorities, however—for example, the Brisbane City Council and the Gold Coast City Council—have made ordinances or by-laws containing such limitations.

(3) I have already received advice on this aspect from the Building Advisory Committee set up under the Building Act 1975. The committee is composed of representatives of interested Government departments, the building industry, the Local Government Association and professional bodies associated with the building industry. The committee's recommendation is that the existing provisions of the Standard Building By-laws should be allowed to stand. I am prepared, however, to reconsider the matter and I will advise the honourable member of the outcome.

8. METHOD OF REPLACEMENT OF RETIRED T.A.B. AGENT

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

When a T.A.B. agent retires, particularly in the country, what is the method used to obtain a replacement? For example, are applications called?

Answer:—

Methods used to obtain replacements vary according to location and circumstances and no fixed procedure is followed. If a suitable person is known to be interested, a direct approach may be made to that person. In other cases, existing board employees or staff employed by agents are canvassed and by various other means the agency is advertised locally. Generally speaking, the board prefers, where possible, to appoint a person with experience and thus avoid the need for training.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY OF TOWNSVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL PROPOSALS

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. M. D. Hooper**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

In connection with proposed building construction at the Townsville General Hospital, for development of a medical school, and advice already given to me by him that an environmental impact study will be carried out before a final decision on the project is made, who will be entrusted with the carrying out of the study and will the consultants advertise

in the local newspaper, requesting interested persons and/or organisations to make submissions to the consultants?

Answer:—

The Townsville Hospitals Board has issued environmental study advices to appropriate bodies, including the Townsville City Council, in accordance with the Procedural Manual for Environmental Impact Studies issued by the Environmental Control Council and which was adopted as policy by the Government in April 1975.

10. HOUSING COMMISSION AID FOR HOME BUILDERS

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. M. D. Hooper**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) As young prospective home builders have been advised by the local Housing Commission staff that funds for building a home on the applicant's own land are no longer available after a period of 50 years' operation of the Workers' Dwelling Scheme, under which a borrower repaying a loan of \$18,000 would have to pay a monthly instalment of \$102 including interest at 5.5 per cent instead of a monthly repayment of \$182 for a similar loan at a rate of 11 per cent from a building society, will he advise if and when the scheme will again be available?

(2) Are Housing Commission plans and specifications available at a reasonable price for applicants who have to seek alternative avenues of finance?

Answers:—

(1) At 31 October there were 134 workers' dwellings in current building contracts and a further 137 in course of plan preparation. The commission's Townsville office will receive applications from persons desiring to lodge them. However, such persons are being informed that, in view of the increase in the number of applicants, there probably will be some delay in approving a loan. This would account for the information received by the honourable member. There has been a marked upsurge in applications, caused, no doubt, by the high interest rates which permanent building societies and other institutions have to charge under current circumstances. The position has not been improved by the reduction in funds to co-operative housing societies as a result of the 30 per cent cut back by the Commonwealth in housing agreement finance.

(2) No. The sale of incomplete draft plans and specifications to non-technical persons is misleading to the persons concerned and to local authorities. Preparation of documents to suit a particular site and a particular person is an individual process requiring technical skill.

The commission does not have additional staff available for such work outside its normal operations. Draft documents must be very standardised, and do not cater for individual tastes. They are inadequate for a legally binding contract.

11. PAYMENT TO MR. AND MRS. H. M. RILEY FOR LAND AT TOWNSVILLE

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. M. D. Hooper**, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

In relation to protracted negotiations between the Department of Environment and the Queensland Government for the declaration of a national park near the Australian Marine Institute at Townsville, has an agreement been signed under the terms of the Commonwealth States Grants (Nature Conservation) Act 1974 for the purchase of land from Mrs. H. M. Riley, and when can Mr. and Mrs. Riley expect to be paid, as they obviously can no longer remain in occupation of the property?

Answer:—

The Commonwealth Government has not provided funds for the acquisition of land for national park purposes from Mrs. H. M. Riley although negotiations for such acquisition had been proceeding with the full knowledge and approval of the Commonwealth Department of Environment. That department had been counting on a sufficient allocation of funds in the current financial year to enable it to provide for this and other acquisitions under the relevant grant to the State. However, after the Commonwealth Budget had cut his portfolio allocations very severely, an offer was received from the former Minister for Environment to commit the then Government in advance for expenditure in 1976-77 for the acquisition to proceed. I am sure all honourable members will appreciate that such a proposal is an extremely funny way for a Government to do business—to expect the owner, Mrs. Riley, to do nothing with her property for another 12 months in the hope that the next Federal Budget might be more realistic and provide the necessary funds—or perhaps the Minister was hoping that the Queensland Government would finance the deal and hope for reimbursement from the Federal Government next year. I wrote to the former Commonwealth Minister while he was in office, emphasising the need to obtain funds in the current year, but the letter was not replied to prior to the dismissal of the Whitlam Government. I propose to allow the matter to stay in abeyance until after 13 December, when I would hope that I will be dealing with a realistic and reliable Federal Government.

12. INADEQUATE POLICE PROTECTION AT TOOWOOMBA

Mr. Abern for **Dr. Lockwood**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Police—

(1) Is he aware that armed robbery, such as occurred in Toowoomba on 18 November, has long been predicted because of inadequate police protection in Toowoomba, more particularly during the 4 p.m. to midnight and the midnight to 8 a.m. shifts?

(2) Can he give an assurance that he will implement as many changes as are necessary to guarantee sufficient police numbers so that they will be able to react to more than one emergency at a time?

Answers:—

(1) No.

(2) Consistent with the criteria used to establish the needs of all areas in the State of Queensland, I assure the honourable member that as many changes as are necessary will be made to guarantee sufficient police numbers to be allocated to Toowoomba Police Station.

13. DOOR-TO-DOOR AND STREET COLLECTION OF FUNDS FOR A.L.P.

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

(1) Has it been drawn to his attention that a number of persons who claim to be Labor Party supporters and who include at least one Labor member of the House of Representatives have been carrying out door-to-door collections with buckets throughout Brisbane suburbs over the last week-end?

(2) Has he also been informed that a number of drivers of motor-cars have been subjected to intimidation by Labor Party workers who, on behalf of the A.L.P., are carrying out collections with buckets on the roadway at major Brisbane intersections where traffic lights are installed?

(3) Are any breaches of the relevant Acts covering collections and religious and charitable organisations thus committed by the A.L.P. supporters and are they in breach of the Traffic Acts by their actions on roadways?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) Soliciting of contributions in public places is an offence unless there is a permit granted by the Commissioner of Police. Door-to-door canvassing should be left to charitable organisations whose activities are regulated and controlled by the Collections Act. There is a distinct risk that an unauthorised and irregular collection could result in the moneys being mis-handled or misappropriated. People would be well advised to make donations only through lawful and recognised avenues. Political organisations engaging in door-to-door canvassing, apart from the legal difficulty, could unwittingly interfere with the

fund-raising activities of charitable organisations and thereby damage their own interests.

14. LAND FOR BRACKEN RIDGE STATE SCHOOL

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

What is the present position in relation to the acquisition of land to relieve Bracken Ridge State School?

Answer:—

Acquisition proceedings for a new site of approximately 3.28 hectares in Norris Road were finalised on 8 November 1975, being lot 2 on R.P. 150765 and resub 1 of portion 98.

15. FIRE HAZARD FROM PLASTIC LIGHT SHADES

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

(1) Has his department received reports of plastic light shades bursting into flame as a result of overheating from light bulbs?

(2) Is this because light bulbs of a higher wattage than recommended are being used by householders?

(3) Can any action be taken to protect the public?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) There is no record in my department of the receipt of any reports concerning this matter. However, instances of discolouration or distortion of lamp shades as a result of heating by bulbs are known. I am informed that the shape of incandescent electric light bulbs has changed in recent years, which makes it possible for the sides and top of the bulb to be nearer the shade than is the case when the traditionally shaped bulb is used.

(3) I shall be pleased to bring the points raised by the honourable member to the notice of my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Mines and Energy for his consideration as to whether it is practicable to take any action to protect the public in regard to this matter as suggested by the honourable member.

16. PREFERENCE TO RENTAL CAR FIRMS AT AIRPORTS

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

(1) With regard to rental cars available at our airports, is any monopoly given to certain firms or is any franchise given by any airline company to a certain car-rental firm?

(2) As many of our airports are under the control of aerodrome control boards comprising representatives of shire and town councils, can he inform me of any

permission by any of the boards supporting a specific firm in its business undertaking of car or truck rental?

Answers:—

(1) The operation of a rental car service requires the holding of a hire licence under the State Transport Act of the class known as "Vehicle Let to Hire". These licences are issued without restriction to any applicant meeting the requirements of the State Transport Act. The provision of various services at airports owned and operated by the Commonwealth Government comes within the ambit of the Airport Business Concessions Act of the Commonwealth. Rental car facilities at such airports are understood to be the subject of a contract that the Commonwealth Government granted following the calling of tenders.

(2) The situation at Gladstone is an example of what obtains at all similar airports. Gladstone is not a Commonwealth airport but is controlled by the Gladstone/Callope Aerodrome Board constituted under the Local Government Act. It is not known whether this airport authority has made any exclusive business arrangements.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

PORT DEVELOPMENT, LUCINDA; REPLY TO
ATTACK BY HONOURABLE MEMBER FOR
MACKAY

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.24 a.m.): Yesterday in a statement to this House the honourable member for Mackay made another of his uninformed attacks on the decision-making processes of the sugar industry. In so doing he sought to cast slurs against the Queensland Government and against C.S.R. Limited, who are the Government's marketing agents for the sugar pool and who have performed that role for successive Governments for the past 50 years.

Of course, the honourable member for Mackay makes a practice of attacking this Government and C.S.R. in the same breath. He has been doing that ever since he became a member of this House. We are all used to these attacks and have ceased to pay any attention to them. The honourable member is like the boy who cried "Wolf!". Eventually no-one will listen to him. However, yesterday, the member for Mackay excelled himself in his capacity as the small boy. He again raised matters which have been raised before and to which answers have already been given. Apparently he does not understand either the answers which I and other Ministers have given previously or the manner in which the Queensland sugar industry manages its own affairs. Whilst the honourable member professes some concern for the interests of the growers and millers of the industry, he is apparently ignorant of the most elementary and fundamental aspects of the way in which that great industry has

organised its own affairs over the years under the guidance of successive Governments from both sides of the House.

I am, of course, referring to the speech made in this House yesterday by the honourable member for Mackay, in which he attacked a decision made by the sugar industry, on its own initiative, to set aside a large sum of money from its income in the 1974-75 season and to invest this money in increased storage for bulk sugar, in improved facilities for loading bulk vessels and in improved port facilities at Bundaberg and Lucinda.

The statement by the member for Mackay was in the form of an attack upon this Government. But it was also, in reality, an attack upon the industry itself, and it is therefore necessary to answer yet again the unwarranted attack made by the member for Mackay on that industry.

The decisions by the sugar industry to develop facilities at Bundaberg and Lucinda were made after long and detailed engineering and port studies. These studies were commissioned by the Sugar Board as the relevant authority. As is customary in any major industry proposals, the broad nature of the proposals was explained in depth to the annual conferences of the Queensland sugar associations and was the subject of much discussion by the conference delegates. The results of the engineering and financial studies were subsequently examined in detail by the authorised representatives of the sugar industry associations. Finally, the proposals for development of storage, out-loading and port facilities at Bundaberg and Lucinda ports were considered at a joint meeting of the Bulk Sugar Consultative Committee. This committee comprises members of the Sugar Board and the office holders of the following sugar industry associations or their duly appointed deputies:—

the Chairman and General Secretary of the Queensland Cane Growers' Council; the President and General Secretary of the Australian Sugar Producers' Association; the Chairman and General Secretary of the Proprietary Sugar Millers' Association; the President and General Secretary of the New South Wales Cane Growers' Association,

and C.S.R. Limited in its present capacity as the sole sugar miller in New South Wales. Of course, C.S.R. was also present in its capacity as agents for the Queensland Government in the role of advisers on marketing and freighting aspects.

Whilst I do not intend to dwell upon the subject, I would remind honourable members that C.S.R. in the same capacity as the Government's agents was recently responsible for the detailed commercial negotiations leading to the long-term raw sugar supply contract with Japanese buyers, acknowledged by everyone—perhaps even the honourable member for Mackay—as being at least useful for the future well-being of all sectors of the industry.

I am informed by the Chairman of the Sugar Board that the process of consultation and decision-making in respect of the proposed developments at Lucinda were only completed this week. On Monday of this week the Bulk Sugar Consultative Committee met at the Sugar Board's offices to consider a final recommendation for the development of Lucinda. Despite the fact that the members of that committee will not yet have had an opportunity to report back to their respective executives, the Chairman of the Sugar Board has contacted members of the consultative committee to secure their approval for me to advise the House of their decisions.

On Monday, 17 November 1975, the Bulk Sugar Consultative Committee agreed to a proposal to build an off-shore loading facility at Lucinda capable of loading vessels up to 40,000 tonnes capacity. In conjunction with this development there will be an increase in the bulk-sugar storage capacity at Lucinda which is required to match the growth of sugar production in the Herbert River district.

I am also able to advise the honourable member of the basis on which that decision was made. By way of background, I should mention that the port of Lucinda has had no development over the years and is now the most restricted sugar port in Queensland.

Mr. Casey: The growers haven't paid for it; nor has C.S.R.

Mr. SULLIVAN: The honourable member should sit there and listen.

As the honourable member for Mackay mentioned in his statement yesterday, the maximum shipment of sugar from Lucinda is limited to 7,500 tonnes. Honourable members will be aware that shipments of this small size would be costly—much too costly to ship overseas for export. Consequently, Herbert River sugar is shipped interstate for refining and sale in Australia. But even shipment interstate from Lucinda is expensive as the vessels must sail north from the southern sugar refineries past Bundaberg, past Mackay and around Hinchinbrook Island to collect a maximum of 7,500 tonnes of sugar and then make the voyage back south again.

It would be obvious to honourable members that it would be less costly if interstate vessels could call at Bundaberg or even Mackay, instead of sailing all the way to Lucinda. But apparently it is not obvious to the honourable member for Mackay that, until the port of Lucinda is developed for export shipments, it will not be possible for interstate shipments to be made from Bundaberg at less cost to the industry.

This, therefore, was the basis on which the Bulk Sugar Consultative Committee made its decision to proceed with the development of Lucinda. The savings in freight from developing Lucinda into an export port and supplying interstate refineries from Bundaberg more than justify the cost of converting Lucinda to an export port.

The honourable member for Mackay has been quoting numbers as though he has been privy to the detailed findings of the expert consultants employed by the Sugar Board. Honourable members should not be deceived. I am advised that the final evaluation of the costs of the various development alternatives was considered by the Bulk Sugar Consultative Committee only on Monday of this week. Preliminary numbers were available to the committee months ago, but the final evaluation has only recently been completed.

The results of that evaluation, and of the engineering and hydrographic studies which have been carried out over the last year or so, were quite simple. The freight savings available to the industry amount to nearly \$6,000,000 a year for an investment of \$29,000,000. The investment will be made only once whereas the savings will go on year after year and the original investment will be repaid many time over. The savings will, of course, be more than \$6,000,000 a year because of the inevitable cost inflation which has pushed up the costs of interstate freight by 25 per cent in only the last year.

There is, of course, other proposed expenditure. The total cost of the development of Bundaberg is about \$18,000,000. This cost covers the expansion of storage capacity and the deepening of the channel at Bundaberg.

The balance of the project is the expansion of storage capacity at Lucinda. As honourable members are aware, the sugar industry is committed to an expansion of 300,000 tonnes of sugar and more storage is now required at both Bundaberg and Lucinda, each of which is under capacity in relation to its expanded productive capacity.

Many possible alternatives to expansion of the facilities at Lucinda were evaluated, as the honourable member for Mackay would have discovered had he attempted to inform himself of the breadth of studies involved. Expansion of the facilities at Townsville and abandonment of the facilities of Lucinda were of course considered by the Bulk Consultative Committee taking, as is customary in responsible sugar industry committees, the long-term view. The committee took into account amongst other considerations that abandonment of Lucinda as a port would deprive the industry of one of its ports, thereby reducing shipping flexibility. Expansion of Lucinda under the agreed proposal to accommodate up to 60,000 tonnes capacity vessels giving the industry three really large shipping capacity ports was also an important consideration. Costs of total freight to Townsville and additional development of associated berthing and loading facilities at Townsville were also relevant and were assessed. Additionally, of course, as my colleague the Treasurer announced during the presentation of the Budget, the Queensland Government has been obliged to drastically increase rail freights in our State largely as a result of the inflationary trends resulting mainly from the policies of the Whitlam

Government whilst it was in power—policies which, of course, the honourable member for Mackay espouses. It is inconceivable, as members, particularly those whose electorates are concerned with production of wool and meat, will appreciate, that a significant special concessional rail freight arrangement for the sugar industry for shipment of sugar from the Herbert River to Townsville could have been contemplated.

Finally, the possibility mentioned by the honourable member for Mackay of resurrecting Bowen was considered; but establishment of the port with full bulk-sugar receiving facilities from virtually nothing, was also discarded after consideration.

These are the facts of the matter about which we have heard such wild assertions from the honourable member for Mackay. The sugar industry has required improved facilities to cope with expansion and to achieve greater efficiency. It has considered proposals and after much investigation and careful thought has finally reached a considered view. And all the while the honourable member for Mackay has been sniping away, not understanding the problem, not knowing the facts and not listening when facts were provided in this House.

There are other aspects of yesterday's statement by the honourable member for Mackay which require some comment. Assertions were made which should be corrected so that others should not be misled into imagining that they had any substance. The honourable member has suggested that the development of Lucinda port would be solely for the benefit of the Herbert River and that the growers and millers of other districts are being forced to contribute to a development which will have no benefit for them. This suggestion demonstrates a monumental ignorance of how the sugar industry pooling arrangements actually work. Nearly everyone associated with the sugar industry knows that the sugar pooling arrangements entitle each mill, and therefore the growers at each mill, to be paid for sugar on the principle of delivery to the port of shipment free on board vessel. This principle was well established before either the Commonwealth or the Queensland Governments exercised control over sugar industry affairs.

With the development of bulk handling at certain Queensland ports, some ports such as Urangan and Bowen were no longer used as sugar ports, and the mills who were affected by these changes were recompensed by the sugar pool for additional transport costs involved in transporting sugar to the new port. In this way, the principle of delivery f.o.b. was retained but the equity of particular mills whose arrangements were disturbed by the establishment of bulk-sugar ports was protected by appropriate reimbursement of additional costs from the sugar pool. Because mills—and therefore growers—are paid for sugar delivered f.o.b., it follows that all sea freight charges are a charge to the sugar pool. In other words, sugar exported

from Mackay or shipped interstate from Lucinda is done so at a cost to the sugar pool and these costs are shared pro rata by all growers and millers.

Honourable members will appreciate that, if freight costs are shared by all growers and millers, then all freight savings will also be shared pro rata by all growers and millers as participants in the sugar pool. This is the point which the honourable member for Mackay has great difficulty in understanding. The very substantial freight savings which will accrue from the development of Lucinda as an export port will be shared by all growers and millers. It is for that reason that the sugar industry, the sugar industry associations, the Bulk Sugar Consultative Committee and the Sugar Board have been happy to see this development take place and to set aside funds to make it possible.

The honourable member for Mackay has also made the suggestion that the development of other sugar ports has been financed by harbour dues paid by the mills shipping through those ports. Again, I recommend to the honourable member that he should establish the truth of what he has to say before making assertions about the sugar industry in this House. In the past, where various harbour authorities have improved port facilities and deepened shipping channels for the benefit of the sugar industry, it has been usual for a special development levy to be struck by the harbour authority. I am, of course, not referring to the costs of bulk-sugar storage sheds which have been financed in other ways by the sugar industry. However, where special harbour dues have been struck to pay for harbour improvements for the sugar industry, these charges have been paid for by the sugar pool, that is, by all growers and mills. This has been equally true for the construction of Mackay Harbour, and the channel-deepening at Townsville and Cairns.

My remarks so far have been intended to set the record straight and inform the House on the real situation as far as the sugar industry is concerned. Much more could be said, but I do not wish to take up more of the time of the House. It is enough merely to repeat that the decisions taken with regard to the port and terminal developments at Bundaberg and Lucinda were taken by the sugar industry in accordance with its normal and well-tried and tested processes of consultation. I question the motives of the honourable member for Mackay in attempting to raise these issues in a thoughtless, ill-considered, inaccurate and irrational way in an endeavour to make political capital at this time. If he would like a copy of my statement for Rex Patterson, he can have it.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

WRIT AGAINST PREMIER ISSUED BY LEADER
OF THE OPPOSITION

Mr. FRAWLEY: I ask the Premier:
In view of the statement by the Leader of

the Opposition (Mr. Burns) that today he intends to take out a writ because of the advertisement in yesterday's "Courier-Mail" by four State Premiers condemning the Whitlam Government's miserable record in office, with graft and corruption running riot, which did much damage to Queenslanders, what action does he propose to take?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I was made aware of the statement by the Leader of the Opposition. He is living up to traditional Australian Labor Party policy and tactics. If that party cannot silence someone in the usual way, it resorts to other means. As we know, today the A.L.P. is writ happy. If the honourable gentleman does take out such a writ, I will just add it to the collection I have already got from many of his colleagues.

I was very amused to see the Leader of the Opposition on the platform the other day with his arms almost around the sacked Prime Minister. Only a month previously he had been condemning him and ridiculing him, and saying that he didn't want anything to do with him or his policy. How contradictory can he be! What type of loyalty do honourable members opposite extend to their own mates? That is the way they operate in every section of the community. At another Labor rally, a few days later, who was seen on the platform? None other than Mr. Jack Egerton. And who was on the platform with Mr. Jack Egerton? A whole host of Communists and their leaders. He seemed to be happy about his association with those men.

Mr. Alison: He was at home.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Perfectly at home with these Communist leaders. He was with Mr. Hugh Hamilton, the president of the Communist Party, Dick Annear, Wallie Stubbings and Alice Hughes—all good Communists. All of them were shouting "We want Gough", just as members of the Opposition shout it. The Leader of the Opposition is reported in the Press as saying, "We want no violence." But what did he say the other day up at the Trades Hall?

Mr. Frawley: He incited them.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Of course he did. We have clear evidence of that. He said, "If any Liberals get in the way, thump them."

I am not the only one who has been served with a writ. I see that the secretary of the National Party, too, will be served with a writ for saying that the Leader of the Opposition is a dealer in stolen goods. Of course he is a dealer in stolen goods. In fact, he's a self-confessed dealer in stolen goods. What worse type of person is there than someone who confesses he is one?

Neither I nor any of my Government colleagues will be silenced by the tactics of the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues.

We will continue to alert the people of Queensland to the methods adopted by the Leader of the Opposition and his political friends.

PRESS REPORT OF VIOLENCE IF LABOR PARTY LOSES FEDERAL ELECTION

Mr. FRAWLEY: I ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General: Has his attention been drawn to an article published in "The Peninsula Post" of 19 November, wherein Mr. John Hungerford, the A.L.P. candidate for Petrie, predicts that there will be violence if Labor loses the Federal election? Will he take immediate steps to put the election campaign back on the path of calmness and rationality? Further will he suggest to A.L.P. candidates that they refrain from using immoderate and abusive language and making outrageous statements and allow the electors of Australia to decide the matter at the ballot-box in a democratic manner, as the coalition parties have always done? We do not incite such behaviour. Finally, will he urge the Labor Party to refrain from threatening electors with statements such as, "If you do not vote for the A.L.P., you will get violence?"

Mr. KNOX: It so happens that a copy of that issue of the newspaper referred to arrived at my desk this morning. Here it is. Here is the headline, "Violence 'If Labor loses'." Mr. Hungerford is reported as saying, "A wave of violence will sweep over Australia if the Labor Party loses the election." He predicted that the election campaign would be extremely tough and bitter.

Mr. Hungerford's statements are well publicised for everyone to see. They are in keeping with the statements made by his Federal leader on the steps of Parliament House, when he asked the people to stay enraged until election day and to indulge in all types of rioting in the streets. Is it any wonder that peculiar things happen? This type of violence is cultivated by irresponsible statements made by political leaders such as Mr. Whitlam. He cannot back away from them now. He has created the atmosphere, and it only requires the unhinged or the unbalanced members of the community to take his statements as an invitation to commit even worse acts of violence for such acts to occur.

When we read of the prophecies of an A.L.P. candidate that if Labor loses we will see even worse violence, we have every reason to be grateful that the people of Australia have the democratic opportunity on 13 December to toss these people right out.

CLAIM BY MR. F. WHITBY OF NATIONAL PARTY PLOT TO SEND LETTER BOMB TO PREMIER

Mr. FRAWLEY: In directing a question to the Premier I draw his attention to a statement published in this morning's "Courier-Mail" attributed to the secretary of the Trades and Labor Council, Mr. F.

Whitby, who is a well-known associate of Communists and of the Leader of the Opposition. He said that he believed the sending of a letter bomb to the Premier to be a National Party plot. I ask: Will the Premier comment on this blatant lie told by Mr. Whitby? Further, is it proposed to take legal action against this traitor?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Mr. Whitby's statement is nothing more than a straight-out lie. Everybody knows that. No-one would take it very seriously.

Mr. Knox: He's a leader of the A.L.P.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: He is, and it is unfortunate that a person of that type holds such a position.

Mr. Ahern: They're pretty hard up.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Indeed the A.L.P. is. When it has to resort to electing as one of its leaders a man who knowingly tells lies such as that, I say, "Pity help the A.L.P. in the days ahead."

BEER-AND-PAWN NIGHT FOR A.J.A. MEMBERS

Mr. LANE: I ask the Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport: Has his attention been drawn to a circular which has been distributed amongst members of the A.J.A. on behalf of persons who sign themselves, "Media Members for Whitlam", calling on journalists to attend a beer-and-prawn night to be held at the Empire Hotel in Fortitude Valley at 5.30 tomorrow night? Is he aware how this notice found its way onto notice boards where journalists are employed in the service?

Mr. HERBERT: My attention was drawn to this situation. What has happened is that the A.L.P. has found that some of the people it thought would prostitute their job as journalists by writing straight-out Labor propaganda have not been doing exactly what they were told to do. So they are being provided with a party night. Anybody who knows anything about the present inflationary period realises how far \$5 will go on a beer-and-prawn night. It is quite obviously a subsidised show under the guise of a means of raising money. The man who put the information out—Mr. Stanaway—is very well known to this House. Nobody would blame him for doing it. It is his job to try to organise journalists to go further than many of them feel they should in loyalty to the Labor Party. If they are members of that organisation they are entitled to be, but if political journalists are to go to meetings to be directed by paid employees on just how they should write stories, they are certainly leaving themselves open to all sorts of future criticism. I should not imagine that one responsible journalist will attend. However, we have now reached the stage where the Labor Party is offering beer and prawns to journalists provided they write stories which favour Labor's cause. If any of them accept, we will have reached a pretty

low ebb. Fortunately for us, I am sure that the A.J.A. in Queensland will not accept bribery of that type.

UNIVERSITY STAFF ASSOCIATION MEETING TO RAISE FUNDS FOR A.L.P.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Has he noticed that university socialist academics have reacted predictably with indignation, righteous or otherwise, to suggestions in this House that university facilities have been illegally used as a fund-raising agency for the A.L.P.? In view of this and noting that the same academics are persisting with a meeting scheduled for 1 p.m. today to attempt to levy a day's pay from the university staff to bolster A.L.P. funds, what action is proposed by this Government or the senate of the university?

Sir GORDON CHALK: This question follows one by the honourable member on Tuesday morning, when I gave an undertaking that I would discuss with the vice-chancellor what facilities were being used at the university and whether he considered that any improper political activity was being carried on. The vice-chancellor indicated to me that a meeting of which he had some knowledge had been called by the staff association and he understood that at that meeting a proposal would be put forward by Dr. Murphy that could involve some political implication. The vice-chancellor said that it was his belief that he could not take any action about that meeting. He hoped, however, that those who attended would handle any business in a manner that would accord with the proper conduct of a meeting. I indicated to the vice-chancellor that I would be interested to know the outcome, and he agreed to make a report available to me if the meeting took place. I understand the meeting is taking place today.

FORM OF QUESTION

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) having given notice of a question—

Mr. HODGES: I rise to a point of order. Did the honourable member clarify which "Mr. Hodges" he was referring to in his question?

Mr. MELLOY: I did. I referred to the member for Petrie.

At 12 noon, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, the House went into Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH ALLOTTED DAYS

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

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1975-76

TOURISM AND MARINE SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF HARBOURS AND MARINE

Debate resumed from 18 November (see p. 2031) on Mr. Newbery's motion—

"That \$9,276,459 be granted for 'Department of Harbours and Marine'."

Sir BRUCE SMALL: When progress was reported last Tuesday, I was referring to the significance of the by-products of tourism, including the large building industry. I want to refer also to the influence that tourism has on the permanent population of a city and particularly a tourist resort. In 1960 the permanent population of the Gold Coast was 30,000; today, 15 years later, it is 83,000. The City of Gold Coast now ranks as the first provincial city in this great State of Queensland, second only to Brisbane itself.

I regard the operations of the Beach Protection Authority and the Beach Protection Advisory Board as being equally essential to the tourist industry, if in fact they are not an integral part of that industry itself. I say that they are very largely responsible for the progress and the advances that have been made in our coastal tourist resorts. I was privileged to serve on the Beach Protection Advisory Board from its inception. For some years I was a party to the negotiations and the research undertaken by that organisation.

Right here and now I dissociate myself entirely from the utterances of my mayoral successor on his disqualification from the board because of his non-attendance at meetings. He proceeded to make public derogatory utterances that denigrated the work of the Beach Protection Authority itself. In contrast, I pay the greatest tribute to that organisation for the part it has played in safeguarding, preserving and reclaiming our wonderful beaches.

I reflect on the sections of the Delft Laboratories investigation of the coast of Queensland and the subsequent scientific research into cyclonic effects and the means of effecting the reclamation, restoration and beautification of the areas that had been devastated. On all of these subjects, the department under the Minister's control has developed an efficient, capable and expert capacity. I believe that this organisation is equal to anything to be found in the world.

The canal system is also under the control and direction of the Minister. The coastal tourist development particularly and its expansion on the residential side are due largely to the provision of scientific research to enable reclamation and restoration of waste lands, flood-prone lands and even swamp lands and have been made possible only by it. At the Gold Coast alone a potential has been created for a residential capacity of 100,000 people who will live on the artificially created canals on land which had no other significant value before being reclaimed thanks to the scientific expertise of the Department of Harbours and Marine.

I do not agree with all that the honourable member for Salisbury said but I heartily

agree with her reference to the Iwasaki scheme as being of tremendous significance to this State. I rate it as having a potential that ranks it among the greatest projects Queensland has ever seen. I sincerely hope and trust that it will not be lost to Queensland, because other States would seize it eagerly.

I again salute the Minister and his team of expert executives, who are making an extraordinary contribution to the future progress and development of this State and are seeking to earn, to qualify for and to win a far greater share of the richest industry in the world—tourism. I wish them future success in their efforts.

Hon. T. G. NEWBERY (Mirani—Minister for Tourism and Marine Services) (12.5 p.m.): At the outset I would like to thank all honourable members for their contributions to the debate on my Estimates. I felt that the debate was both interesting and constructive, and this was due to the sincere interest in tourism and marine services displayed by all the speakers. If the honourable member for Bulimba felt that my introductory speech was a little long, I am sure he will appreciate that the many and varied activities of both the departments under my control made this necessary in order that the Committee would be aware of what my departments are achieving and planning to achieve in the future.

To reply to the points made by the various speakers—first, let me record my appreciation of the acceptance by the honourable member for Bulimba of the need for a new port at the mouth of the river and the support he will obviously give to its continued development. Some years ago, the Brisbane City Council upgraded Lytton Road to service harbour industries, and our planning has respected this decision. As all members know, Lytton Road is situated in the harbour industry zone and passes through areas of only sparse residential development.

The strategic plan was basically a review of the present status of the port and proposed guide-lines for the future. It did not attempt to define the location of road and rail access, just as it did not include any more than a possible general layout plan of the port facilities.

The master plan study now being prepared has taken into consideration the impact of road traffic through residential areas, particularly Wynnum North. Subject to the conclusion of satisfactory negotiations with Ampol Refineries Ltd., the main access is planned to begin at the river end of Pritchard Street and skirt the eastern slopes of Lytton Hill. A connection from either Wynnum North Road or Tingal Road is not intended.

The construction of the Gateway Bridge would undoubtedly improve access from industries presently located on the northern side of the river and would be conducive to a great reduction in traffic through the inner city and over the Story Bridge. In the same

vein, the honourable member will understand that the centralization of port activities on Fisherman Islands will, by virtue of their isolated location, be a prime instrument in diverting road traffic from inner city streets.

I agree with the honourable member that we need to speed up the development of the new port and I am happy to hear that he appreciates the urgency. Before any real construction works can be commenced on Fisherman Islands, legislation is required to constitute a port authority and provide for part closure of the Boat Passage. It is my intention to expedite the introduction of such legislation into this Parliament.

On the subject of the Boat Passage, which was mentioned also by the honourable members for Lytton, Wynnum and Redlands, I did at an early stage impress upon the consultants my concern about the need for a passage for small vessels, particularly those which could not use the open sea with safety. My advisers have now demonstrated the feasibility of providing a 60 metre bridge with a 3 metre clearance at high water, which is sufficient to allow small power boats to pass through. I am confident that the Government will accept the need for the expenditure of the additional funds necessary to provide this bridge and thus preserve a most popular channel and haven for small craft.

The honourable member for Bulimba expressed understandable concern about the silting of the river banks on the Bulimba side in an area of small-craft activity. This is due to natural accretion around this bend of the river. The removal of port activities and associated deep dredging at the Hamilton reach will be a major step forward in allowing the river to return to its former state where such siltation did not become a problem.

Again, the honourable member has questioned the practice of dumping dredged spoil from berths in the Bulimba reach in a deep hole in the New Farm reach of the river. This practice has been adopted for many years on sound economic and engineering grounds. The tidal currents continue to scour out the spoil and deposit it in the deep channels downstream, from which it is ultimately picked up by suction dredgers. Only an average of 6,000 cubic metres per annum is dumped in this hole, although after the major 1974 flood it was necessary, and then only in an emergency, to deposit an additional 16,000 cubic metres in this location.

When I was delivering my speech on the Estimates, the honourable member for Bulimba referred to the making of Tourist Bureau films in Queensland. I presume he was referring to the film being made entitled, "One More Island", and I think it appropriate that I should explain the situation for his information and for the information of all honourable members.

The State Stores Board calls tenders each year for the production of Queensland Government Tourist Bureau Films. A complete

script, previously commissioned by the bureau, is given to the film houses asked to tender and they are also given the opportunity to submit an alternative script with appropriate costing, if they so desire. Twelve production houses submitted tenders for the bureau's new film, "One More Island", which will cover Queensland off-shore resorts. Queensland production houses are given every opportunity to tender for the work and, of the tenders received, five were from Queensland firms. The tender from Cinesound Movietone Productions Pty. Ltd. for \$45,600 was accepted.

Cinesound Movietone Pty. Ltd. is a highly experienced film company which has proved it can produce a film that would be acceptable to a commercial distributing house. This is an important criterion as bureau films are produced for the sole purpose of promoting the State's tourist features, both at home and overseas. To date every film commissioned by the Bureau has been released in theatres throughout Australia, New Zealand and some overseas countries.

The bureau's previous film, "Thunder In Paradise", was also produced by Cinesound on the basis I have outlined. The film has been an immediate commercial success. Ten prints were ordered by the distributors, Twentieth Century Fox, for release in Australian and New Zealand theatres. In addition an initial order for 12 prints for release in the United Kingdom was quickly followed by a further order for another 30 prints.

Prior to awarding the contract for "One More Island", Cabinet received an assurance that Cinesound Movietone Productions Pty. Ltd. would include as much Queensland content in their production schedule as possible. As a consequence of that assurance, a Queenslanders has been engaged as assistant cameraman and three of the cast of four have been recruited in Queensland. The script for the new film was written by a Queensland writer. It is a condition of tender that the successful production house meet all transport and accommodation costs at normal rates during filming. These costs are considerable and will bring valuable revenue to Queensland operators.

Referring to comments of the honourable member for Bulimba on the railway system—I think we might be more conscious of the problems faced by the railway system in this State because of the great distances which are required to be covered. There is a continuing rapport between me and the Honourable the Minister for Transport in relation to the amenities which should be provided for tourists on our long-distance trains and I assure the Committee that these standards are the subject of regular scrutiny.

The honourable member for Isis referred to the ratio of permanent to casual occupants of caravan parks. I should inform him that the subject of caravan park standards has been a matter of concern to me for some time. As a consequence of a discussion at

national level, a set of draft by-laws was referred to the Honourable the Minister for Local Government. Those suggestions have been considered by the Caravan and Tourist Parks Association of Queensland and I understand that it will not be long before some finality is reached in the matter.

The honourable member also suggested that fisheries patrol and boating patrol functions should be separated. My Department of Harbours and Marine takes the view that both these activities are carried out in common waters and to a large extent by the same people. The two functions have been combined to give optimum usage of men and equipment. If the functions were separated, costs would increase substantially and duplication of manpower and equipment would result.

The honourable member for Isis mentioned also that speed boat licence testing was not always thorough. The department is aware that tests by some, but by no means the majority, of civilian testing officers are not always as strict as is desirable. The department appreciates very much the help given by these private testing officers, but is now gradually phasing them out except in remote areas. Most tests are carried out by trained patrol officers. However, it is important to recognise that this licence is not a diploma in seamanship. In the long term, experience is the only teacher. I should add that the procedures adopted in Queensland are undoubtedly more thorough than those adopted in most Australian States.

I assure the honourable member that my department is very conscious of the importance of public education and has a special section set up for this work. The brochure and hand-outs receive a very wide circulation through dealers and boat clubs, and we have reason to believe that we are getting the message over. The department has plans for radio and television items and in fact the Press and radio stations are already providing a lot of assistance in this regard. It is intended that even more emphasis will be placed on this aspect in the future.

The honourable member made reference to the upgrading of Urangan Jetty to again accept rail traffic, which was withdrawn recently by the Railway Department. He proposed that a feasibility study be undertaken into likely trades requiring rail access. I wish to assure the honourable member that a feasibility study of potential trades that would use the jetty has been undertaken, the study indicating that potential trade was in fact declining. Naturally the provision of large sums of money to keep the jetty in tip-top condition for rail traffic could not be justified, but I hasten to say that the jetty will be maintained commensurate with trade requirements.

Mention was also made that construction of the small boats harbour at Urangan, though sound, was proceeding somewhat slowly. I think the honourable member will agree with the siting of the harbour

and would be aware of the very tough material that is being dredged. I certainly can assure him that construction is proceeding as fast as the availability of funds will allow.

Although it is not a matter which comes within the jurisdiction of my portfolio, I agree whole-heartedly with the honourable member for Everton that the tin shed at the mouth of Currumbin Creek should be dismantled as soon as possible. I am advised by the relevant authority that arrangements to this effect are well advanced and the area will soon be restored to its former beauty.

The honourable member's suggestion concerning the screening of the film "Thunder in Paradise" in Asia and Japan certainly has merit. However, I should point out that when a film is accepted by a commercial house for distribution, the distribution of 35 mm copies of it is totally within the control of that house. Nevertheless, consideration is given to the market value of the Japanese and Asian areas when the opportunity presents itself. Further 16 mm copies are made available for screening in those regions when rights to 35 mm screenings are relaxed. The Queensland Government Tourist Bureau regularly forwards supplies of brochures, posters and other promotional material to travel agents in those countries.

The development of the Torres Strait islands for tourist purposes is not a simple matter. The first concern is to interest a developer who would be prepared to invest funds in a project of doubtful viability. The second problem, even if a project did proceed, would be to encourage sufficient interest in the tourist market because of the great distance from established tourist routes and the consequent excessive cost of travelling to it.

I express my pleasure at hearing the honourable member for Lytton acknowledge that our plans for a new port are essential to the progress of Brisbane and its vast hinterland. As I have explained earlier to the honourable member for Bulimba, great attention has been paid to the planning of the rail and road corridor to reduce to an absolute minimum the effects of traffic noise and congestion in the residential areas of their electorates. Even in the construction phase, our endeavours are to eliminate such undesirable forms of pollution. We are negotiating with Ampol Refineries Ltd. to quarry suitable areas within the company's lands to our mutual benefit. Hopefully, the Commonwealth Government will accept our claim for the access road to be declared an export road. Traffic from the port area will travel along Lytton Road and then diversify into Lytton Road, Queensport Road, Creek Road and thence mainly to the industrial areas to the south-west of Brisbane and, to a lesser extent, to the northern suburbs.

Again I repeat my previous comments that the construction of the Gateway Bridge not only would be an asset to the port but would benefit all the residents of Hamilton and the inner city suburbs by a reduced density of traffic. As the honourable member for Lytton can now appreciate, much progress in planning has been made in the last six to nine months, and I can assure him that I also am mindful of my predecessor's statement in 1974 about the port being operational within two years. As I said to the honourable member for Bulimba, I will introduce the legislation at an early date.

On the matter of involving the public in the port-planning phase—I am aware that my officers and our consultants have entered into useful discussions with more than 150 organisations, both of a business and of a social nature. The assistance and information given to the consultants have been seriously considered in their planning. These people have not only expressed their appreciation of this involvement but have commended our over-all planning. Along with the honourable member, I look forward to seeing a better enjoyment by the community of the river frontages in the city. The proposed moving of port facilities and activities to the Fisherman Islands will bring this day closer for us all.

The contents of the letter of 17 March 1975 from the then Acting Minister for Marine Services, the Honourable N. Hewitt, regarding the effect on costs of a bridge with a 15 ft. clearance over the Boat Passage, as referred to by the honourable member for Lytton, are quite correct. It would add an extra \$7,000,000 to the cost of the project. Upon further investigation, it is now found that a lesser clearance of 10 ft. will suffice for all small boats needing the safety of this passage. As I explained to the honourable member for Bulimba, this planning, which will considerably reduce the cost, is now under consideration.

On the theme of tourist facilities in the port—there is no reason for anyone to doubt that a modest and adequate passenger terminal will be provided for in our port planning. The reference by the honourable member for Lytton to the existence of an overseas division in the Brisbane branch of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau is so repetitive and boring that even the members of the media will not use his Press release on the subject. An overseas division of the bureau exists as a small section of the Brisbane branch only, and no such division exists in any other branch. The Brisbane Division was established many years ago simply to service the needs of a Queensland clientele with whom the bureau had established contact over a long period. It fulfils that service very capably and the operation does not detract in any way from the efforts of the bureau to attract tourist traffic to Queensland and to service it while it is in the State.

I can assure the honourable member for Mt. Isa that the development of the inland areas of the State as a tourist area is a matter of special interest to me. I have already visited several inland centres, such as Winton and Charters Towers, and it is my intention to visit the Mt. Isa area as soon as I am able to do so. I must say that I am very appreciative of the efforts of the travel community in Mt. Isa in forming the Mt. Isa Tourist Association. This will do much to progress the industry in that region. The establishment of a tourist feature in Cloncurry is a subject which should attract the interest of that association. If a project develops there, I can assure the honourable member that the advice of the bureau will be provided readily to the developer. Further, the bureau will promote the project by every means available to it.

The honourable member should be aware of my interest in outback Queensland and the efforts of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau in promoting it. The bureau has distributed for many years a special publication on the Outback and that area is included in other bureau publications. The bureau film, "You Don't Know Why You Came Here", which has been on very successful commercial distribution for three years, contains a most generous portion displaying the attractions of the Outback, including Mt. Isa.

The honourable member for Wynnum mentioned navigation aids at sea and in Moreton Bay. He is probably aware that coastal navigation aids are the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. As far as Moreton Bay is concerned, I venture to say that this area is very well beaconed indeed, and the standard of maintenance is high. Navigational marks are constantly and promptly being moved with the shifting sands, but if the honourable member knows of any which require attention, I would appreciate his immediate advice. The honourable member also mentioned that different boats are needed for different duties. My Department is well aware of this and each new boat is purchased for a specific duty in a specific area.

In speaking of the development of Manly Boat Harbour being of prime importance to the boating public in the Brisbane area, the honourable member mentioned some difficulty being experienced by the family boatman in mooring to piles in certain weather. While I would agree that approaching a buoy mooring is a much simpler matter, it must be firmly borne in mind that for the same area, on the average, four times the number of boats can be moored at piles as can be moored at swing moorings, and economics thus dictate that, though some inconvenience may be experienced, pile moorings make realistic use of scarce mooring areas.

Mention was also made that the greater use of dry-stand areas for vessels within boat harbours was desirable as more boats can be catered for within a harbour. Future

planning at Manly provides for a dry-stand area for the use of junior off-shore groups adjacent to the southern public ramp.

The honourable member for Wynnum also drew attention to the rapid growth in trailer boat registrations and the resulting demand for boat ramps and parking areas adjacent thereto. In keeping abreast of such demand—some 174 boat ramps have been provided to date, and I am well aware that in locating such ramps a most important factor is the provision of ample parking area which can be expanded as demand grows.

I note the honourable member's representations concerning the dredging of dead coral from the surrounds of Green Island and his point is well taken that, upon completion of dredging, the area should be left in a condition suitable for use by the boating public, and this matter will be pursued with the relevant authority.

The honourable member for Wynnum again raised the matter of placing sand on the Wynnum area foreshores, proposing that sand for the purpose be dredged from the mouth of Tingalpa Creek. As I have advised the honourable member previously, foreshore improvement of this nature is a matter for the local authority, in this case the Brisbane City Council. While I appreciate the honourable member's thought that the resulting dredged hole could form the beginning of a further small boat harbour, I would express the opinion that it would not be good planning, being too close to Manly Boat Harbour, and undoubtedly there would be a continuing siltation problem.

The honourable member for Wynnum expressed his rightful concern about the effects of the new port activities on the neighbouring communities, and I do appreciate his constructive comments, particularly his reference to the need to examine quarry sites which would not require heavy traffic through residential areas. As I have already pointed out, an attractive quarry operation can be conducted on Ampol lands near the port environs.

He also referred to the need for a Gateway Bridge and I have previously commented on this matter.

The honourable member for Nudgee praised the efforts of the counter staff of the Brisbane branch of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau. I should inform him that the staff of the bureau in Brisbane has recently been increased by seven officers and that any delays previously experienced should be obviated. The honourable member would be interested to know that new premises have been secured for the Cairns branch of the bureau. Planning for the re-fitting of those premises to suit the needs of the bureau now proceeds.

The committee of investigation into the Iwasaki project at Yeppoon was by way of a preliminary investigation only. It is logical that Mr. Iwasaki might provide the information which is now sought by the Government and, so far as I am aware, he is

happy to do so following investigation. Having travelled to the Asian countries in company with the honourable member, I respect his views on the sorts of facilities and services that tourists look for, and I would like to say that I appreciate his continued interest in tourism matters generally.

The honourable member for Redlands mentioned the desirability of reclamation along the Thornside foreshores, with particular reference to the Raby Bay development. Previous proposals for such development have not proceeded for reasons outside of my control and there would be no objection to future schemes of this nature should they be proposed by developers with the necessary financial backing. I agree with the honourable member that the mangrove islands in the southern part of Moreton Bay should largely be left in their natural condition, and he can count on my support in this matter.

The honourable member for Redlands expressed the opinion that the Beach Protection Authority, while providing an excellent service to local authorities for the preservation of beaches for future generations, should not control Moreton Bay beaches and that they should remain under the control of local authorities. I would advise the honourable member that the Beach Protection Act limits the interest of the authority to beaches of the main sea. However, should the authority receive a request from a local authority for advice on an erosion problem outside of its area of jurisdiction, it naturally is willing to provide such technical advice, as was the case with regard to advice tendered to the Redland Shire Council concerning erosion at Amity Point.

With regard to problems being experienced by the motor-boating public who use Redland Bay and Victoria Point jetties, I appreciate that the existing situation is far from ideal and I trust that investigations presently under way will alleviate the problems.

I am in agreement with the honourable member regarding the excellent potential of Toondah Harbour as a small boat harbour. To this end much investigation work has been completed and the Redland Shire Council has recently notified its agreement to the development of Cassini Island for part subdivision and part development associated with boat harbour purposes. I propose to pursue this matter further with my colleague the Minister for Lands in the near future.

I agree with the honourable member for Redlands that the experience of other port authorities in Australia, and overseas for that matter, in planning and management must be considered in the interests of the future of the port of Brisbane. Only the best available practices will do, and I have encouraged my officers to follow these principles and to learn the practices of other harbour authorities. I am pleased to hear his appreciation of our planning for continued small-boat use of the Boat Passage.

The honourable member also referred to the occupancy of caravan parks by permanent, and I have explained to the honourable member for Isis the discussions now proceeding between the Department of Local Government and the Caravan and Tourist Parks Association of Queensland on all matters affecting caravan park operation.

As to the reference by the honourable member for Redlands to the high cost of motels, I pointed out in my address to the House the problems faced by accommodation establishments because of the increasing costs of their day-to-day requirements and labour charges and, quite frankly, in spite of some of the higher tariffs which are applied in some areas, I know of no such organisation in the industry which is securing an exorbitant return on its capital investment.

On the subject of the preservation of the Cleveland Lighthouse—I have received a submission in this regard which is presently being given full consideration.

The honourable member for Murrumba spoke of his concern at the way street demonstrations of the type encouraged at present by the Australian Labor Party act against the average peace-loving person, and I share his concern. Such demonstrations are frightening to the non-participant and no doubt give tourists a poor impression of the city they are visiting. However, they would also get a poor impression of the Labor Party, which is prone to encouraging rowdy activities in the streets.

The honourable member's deep interest in the Redcliffe area as a holiday resort is acknowledged, and the Government's abolition of the bridge toll must assist the area.

I first visited Redcliffe 35 years ago as a tourist and was impressed with its good parking areas, good swimming, good crabs and good fishing. Since then, the changes to the area have made it an even better place to visit.

The honourable member has visited my area—Sarina—in the capacity of a guest athlete at several school sports days. I hope he will visit my area again. I will certainly be visiting his.

I thank the honourable member for Sandgate for his favourable comments about my portfolio and my officers. The honourable member stressed the necessity for increased supervision of small-craft behaviour, especially on week-ends and holidays.

The strength of the Boating and Fisheries Patrol is to be increased by appointment of eight more officers in the current year. Rosters are so arranged as to provide maximum possible cover for week-ends and holidays. But patrol officers cannot be everywhere. I agree with the honourable member that the key lies in education and public awareness, and, as I advised the honourable member for Isis, my department is giving special attention to this aspect.

The honourable member's keen and active interest in the Warana Spring Festival is acknowledged and his many efforts on behalf of this excellent festival are greatly appreciated by all who come in contact with him.

The honourable member for Salisbury raised the issue of disposal of refuse from tourist islands in the Barrier Reef. My department and the Queensland Government are very conscious of the need to keep our waters clean, and consultations are in progress with the Federal Government aimed at the formation of a Barrier Reef authority which will be a suitable body to exercise supervision over this and other environmental issues.

I would also like to inform the honourable member that the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau has already issued a general publication on the State containing a story in the Japanese language for wide-scale circulation in Japan.

The question of the use of standard signs to depict the various forms of tourist amenities has been the subject of consideration for a long period at Ministerial and director level, and it is hoped that not much time will pass before a successful result is achieved.

Staff-training to assist the accommodation industry is presently carried out at the School of Food at Coorparoo and at the School of Hospitality Management at Lawes. These two efforts will assist towards the development of a proper staff supply, even though casual, untrained, local persons will still continue to be employed by many operators.

Reference was made also to the tariff structure at the resorts in the Great Barrier Reef area. When one considers that these are full tariffs—that is, providing room and three meals plus, in many cases, entertainment in the evenings—they are in fact quite competitive with those rates which apply on the mainland where room only or room-and-breakfast tariffs apply. The increased cost of operation in relation to viability must also be considered. By comparison with mainland establishments, the off-shore resorts must face additional costs brought about by the need for the additional handling of day-to-day commodities, water supply, generating equipment, sewerage, marine craft and in some cases communication by aircraft.

The honourable member for Cooroora raised the matter of high air transport costs brought about by the variety of charges applied on the air operators by the previous Labor Government in Canberra. It will interest the Committee to know that this Labor policy causes a landing charge of \$1,514 per 707 aircraft to the international operator at Sydney airport by comparison with \$143 at Honolulu and \$70 at San Francisco. To land a 747 at Sydney for a turn-around costs \$3,237 compared with \$449 at Honolulu and \$216 at San Francisco.

These are staggering figures—\$3,237 at Sydney as against \$216 at San Francisco!

Mr. Houston: They tax passengers.

Mr. NEWBERRY: This is the reason for such high air fares.

Under such a destructive policy, it is no wonder that our job of attracting overseas visitors to Australia is so hard, and we cannot be surprised at the number of Australians who find it cheaper to spend their holidays overseas than to see their own country first. No doubt, a more reasoned approach to this problem by the new Federal Government will bring about much improvement.

The honourable member for Cooroora also raised the important matter of the stability of Noosa beach, the Noosa bar and the whole Noosa lakes system. Professor Gordon Mackay, dean of the faculty of engineering at the Queensland university, has for many years taken a keen interest in this region and has constructed a hydraulic model of the area which has been under test for some time. As was to be expected, the investigation has brought to light many complex problems, and testing is still in progress to find an economic solution to such problems. The professor is being afforded all reasonable assistance in this matter, though it may be some time before final conclusions are reached.

The remarks of the honourable member for Surfers Paradise brought back some delightful memories of the progress of the Gold Coast as a tourist paradise. The coast will for ever be in debt to the honourable member and his lovely wife Lady Small, as the forces mainly responsible for making the Gold Coast known throughout the world.

The honourable member had praise for the promotional efforts of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau and for the budget provided by the Government for tourist activities in Queensland. Coming from the honourable member, an experienced and skilful tourist promoter of many years' standing, that is high praise indeed, and I thank him.

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (12.38 p.m.): Discussion on the Tourism and Marine Services Estimates is very important. The Department of Harbours and Marine is the guardian, one could say, of one of the strong links in the economic life of our State, and a very grave responsibility rests upon the heads of that department. Boards control some of the harbour authorities, which are well decentralised, but the department has direct authority and responsibility for many of the ports that are not under the control of a harbour authority.

In acknowledging that the Minister is introducing Estimates for the first time, I say in the true spirit of a parliamentary colleague that I hope he carries out his administration very efficiently. While on that thought, I pay a tribute to an old

friend of mine, and a Central Queenslander, in the person of the Honourable N. T. E. Hewitt who, for many years, was responsible for the Department of Harbours and Marine and applied himself most assiduously to his task.

This was in sharp contrast to what was done by the previous incumbent (the Treasurer), who traditionally, by virtue of his office as Treasurer, controlled this department. I can say of his period of stewardship only that he was an abject failure. He did not endear himself to many harbour boards, who remember his introduction of controversial legislation in 1967 in which he adopted an attitude of real parliamentary abuse of the Opposition. The Opposition extended the debate, although the Treasurer had said on the initiation of the Bill that it was only a small measure. It proved to be very much more than that.

The stand that I then took, particularly on the leasing of land and facilities, has been justified by the many statements since made, both privately and publicly, by people connected with port authorities. My name, and the stand that I took on that occasion in 1967, are mentioned in "A History of the Ports of Queensland" by Glen Lewis. The author mentions that I supported the earlier attitude adopted by port authorities to wharf ownership and management. Neither I nor any reasonable port authority in the State has changed that opinion.

The decisions made on that occasion are being watched very closely by those in ports that have been affected by them. In the port of Gladstone many members of the harbour board have suffered severely from the wounds inflicted by the granting of a 75-year lease to Queensland Alumina Ltd. and the conditions that the board was forced to make applicable to the T.P.M. wharf. Board members are very sorry indeed that this state of affairs was allowed to develop. I feel that I should mention the action of the Treasurer on that occasion.

One of the policies on which I and almost all other harbour board members throughout Queensland were elected was that the ownership of wharves and facilities should remain with the authority concerned. It was generally conceded that it was not the function of a harbour board to seek extravagant profits from the use of its facilities. Rather, a board should earn sufficient to meet maintenance expenses and to make provision for better and more modern facilities. I do not think that there is anything wrong with that policy.

Are those in the shipping business satisfied with the existence of private wharves along the banks of the Brisbane River, and are they economically sound propositions? The die has now been cast—and advisedly so—and there is now to be a separate port at the mouth of the river to handle the exports and imports of this area. That is a wise move, and it was very wrong for the Government to endorse the direction of further

private capital to wharf development. That policy was laid down in clear and concise terms by a former Minister who controlled this department, Sir Thomas Hiley, and it was subsequently endorsed by the present Treasurer. I do not believe that it has been the best policy in the interests of port development in this State.

I have some other matters to mention, and I hope the Minister takes note of them. I also hope that, in the future, amendments to the Harbours Act will be brought down to remedy many of the present injustices and to tidy up other matters that need attention.

Mr. Lane: Why aren't you concerned about North West Island?

Mr. HANSON: I certainly am. The honourable member has no reason to doubt that.

There are several matters that are raised each year at meetings of the Queensland Harbour Boards Association. Many matters also are referred by that association to the Australian Harbour Authorities Conference or to its permanent committee. Year after year with monotonous regularity these matters are raised, but, because of the policies laid down by the Bjelke-Petersen administration, the Government is slow to move in initiating many of these proposals.

I wish to refer to one such proposal on the land surrounding our various harbours and ports. The intention of certain sections of the Act in relation to harbour and industrial land is open to very serious debate and we find that there is little uniformity in rental and lease conditions. I maintain that the provisions are an absolute schemozzle and should have been fixed up years ago. It is about time that the administration introduced appropriate amendments in order to achieve some rationalisation so that people will know where they are going.

It is imperative also to have under the control and jurisdiction of the harbour authorities all land adjacent to deep water in our harbours. I hope the Minister takes some cognisance of my remarks in the interests of people who are desirous of establishing some form of industry on the waterfront as well as people requiring land for other purposes. Such people would be well advised to secure large areas of land behind their wharves so that they will not be inconvenienced in the future by having to pay very dearly for extensions to their facilities. These are matters that have to be considered and considered very quickly. The Government has been very dilatory in not bringing these matters to the attention of the Parliament and in not introducing appropriate amendments.

While on this very important subject, I mention a matter that has been raised over the past 10 or 12 years—the rateability of harbour lands. This is a very contentious matter and I hope that the Minister in the full bloom of his first few months of administering a very fine department will come up with some answers and perhaps introduce

amendments to the Act. The Local Government Act will have to be amended in this regard because it provides that all land, with certain exceptions, is rateable, the exceptions including Crown land which is unoccupied or is used for public purposes. There has been argument for years about whether harbour board land being reclaimed is subject to rates.

I well remember as a chairman of the Gladstone Harbour Board Authority, and subsequently as a member, being involved in engaging expensive counsel to prepare our case and have it submitted for determination by the court. Unfortunately, on that occasion we lost, but we did show that there was quite a bit of merit in reclaiming land so that the local authority could obtain additional rates. One solution would be a provision that harbour board land being reclaimed shall not be subject to rates. I hope that this principle is adopted by the Government. There has been considerable litigation on this point and there are still many matters that need cleaning up.

Years ago certain local authorities, when considering the rating of sugar terminal land, decided that they should inflict a very high rate upon these terminal lands but, as the Sugar Board was an instrument of the Crown and the land was used for a public purpose in so far as it was used for the loading of sugar supplied by the Sugar Board, it was not subject to rates, but I think it was generally agreed that the dwellings that were occupied by Sugar Board employees were subject to rates and some sort of ex-gratia payment was made. No clear and concise decision or determination was made about vacant land and land being reclaimed, and it is about time that this matter was tidied up. I know from the time when I was on the harbour board that under the old Act we were able to grant a lease to certain oil companies for their installations and terminals for 21 years and they then had the right to extend the period to 40 years at a very minimal rental. That was done to get the operation within the confines of the port authority and it seemed to work very well indeed.

We reclaimed certain land in Gladstone for the oil companies. We made a charge based on the cost of reclamation. We did not want to make extravagant profits on the reclaimed land; we realised that considerable revenue would be obtained through harbour dues in subsequent years if we could get the oil companies established on that land.

A very serious matter has arisen. It has been on the boiling point for some considerable time. It concerns the Gladstone Harbour Board and the terminal complex on the waterfront. A confrontation is at present taking place between the Storemen and Packers' Union and the Railway Department. The State secretary of the Storemen and Packers' Union—a friend of mine, and a man I have known for many years—on behalf of his members and other waterfront

employees, is justifiably seeking greater safety in that area. Railway wagons loaded with imported goods block the exits from the waterfront. Despite assurances by the Railway Department that an exit would be left open at all times, difficulties still occur. About 18 months ago when an employee was injured, it took a considerable time to get railway wagons shifted so that the ambulance could get through to him. I understand that a conference between the parties is to be held shortly. I hope it will be conducted in a friendly atmosphere but with a lot of straight talking. I certainly hope that the matter can be settled to the satisfaction of all parties.

The intrastate shipping argument continues. Because of the unconciliatory attitude of the Premier and his blatant pigheadedness in this matter, the State's ports are being severely inconvenienced and the public are being put to a great disadvantage. He will not allow A.N.L. ships to engage in intrastate trade. He says that he wants to preserve the monopolies enjoyed by the Railway Department. That is absolute rubbish. Ask any concerned railway employee, or any person who actively watches his own interests and is concerned about railway unions, and he will say that railway employees have more than enough work in many centres and that they would not be jeopardised by the sea transport of goods that the Premier says would be lost to rail transport.

Mr. Moore interjected.

Mr. HANSON: If the honourable member for Windsor would listen, he would hear a little bit of common sense—something he can't get out of his own mouth and something he can't get from his colleagues.

Enormous road transports operate throughout the length and breadth of the State. They are tearing the roads apart and causing inconvenience to many people. People in Queensland should not be inconvenienced; they should be able to take advantage of a good intrastate shipping service.

At a recent meeting of the Queensland Harbours Association, the chairman, Mr. Bert Field—he is the chairman of the Townsville Harbour Board and certainly not a member of my party—took the Government to task, and justifiably so, for its attitude. Of course it is an attitude on the part of the Government that is to be deplored.

Mr. Lane: You're firmly in the pocket of the Seamen's Union.

Mr. HANSON: If the honourable member for Merthyr wants to talk about the Seamen's Union, I point out to him that it runs a very fine service between Weipa and Gladstone. Many members of that union know his activities, and they do not refer to him in very endearing terms.

Of course, the honourable member was very concerned that I would miss the matter of North West Island. I certainly deplored

the attitude of the Government in recent days when it announced that it was calling tenders world wide for the establishment of a tourist resort on that island. Unfortunately most Queenslanders know very little about the Great Barrier Reef. Although many honourable members in this Chamber might have visited the Whitsunday islands and seen very fine islands and tourist resorts, they would not have actually seen the Barrier Reef at its best unless they had travelled by launch for a few hours to see the reef proper and be amazed at its natural attractions. The Great Barrier Reef is the finest natural tourist attraction in this State—far removed in nature from the sophisticated attractions of the small kingdom of the Gold Coast.

Mr. Lane: What do you think of Tangalooma?

Mr. HANSON: I have not been there, so I cannot express an opinion on the place. I know, however, that the honourable member has made many jaunts to Tangalooma, and I hope that one day, in a spirit of generosity, he will shout me the fare.

Mr. Lane interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HANSON: North West Island is one of the Capricorn Group, which, together with the Bunker Group and their surrounding waters, are a very lovely part of the Great Barrier Reef. It is unfortunate that most parts of the reef are inaccessible to the great majority of people. As has been claimed, the reef waters are excellent fishing grounds—provided fishermen can get to them. Owing to changing weather conditions, it is only for very short periods that anyone can fish in comfort on the reef.

I venture to suggest that the great majority of young persons in Queensland have never set foot on the reef. The reason, of course, is that accommodation at reef resorts is very expensive. The honourable member for Salisbury referred to this matter earlier in the debate on these Estimates, and to a large extent she was talking through her hat. For example, every pound of butter and every pound of sugar used on Heron Island has to be transported over 45 miles of open sea. The cost involved is enormous. The launch that carries goods and passengers to Heron Island is manned by a master, an engineer, deckhands and hostesses. Its operating costs are very high. Of course, tourists have an alternative means of transport to the island, by helicopter.

Accommodation at Heron Island is very expensive for the ordinary family man. In recent years we have seen the tendency among boat owners to journey to outlying islands, such as Mast Head and North West Island, where they camp over the Easter and Christmas holiday periods with their families.

(Time expired.)

[Sitting suspended from 12.58 to 2.15 p.m.]

Mr. LANE (Merthyr) (2.15 p.m.): I am very pleased to participate in the debate on the Estimates of the very interesting departments under the control of the Minister. Firstly, I shall comment on the tourist part of his portfolio. Tourism attracts wonderful revenue to our great State. I support the remarks of other honourable members about the preservation for posterity of our very beautiful Barrier Reef islands. At the moment North West Island, which is very near to Heron Island off Gladstone, is causing concern. Heron Island is to be developed by the P. & O. company—and developed very well, I hope. The other day the honourable member for Salisbury criticised charges made for holiday accommodation on the Barrier Reef. I was disappointed to hear the attack made this morning by the honourable member for Port Curtis on the honourable member for Salisbury, a lady who graces this Chamber and promotes interest in conservation issues.

Mr. Hales: It was a cowardly attack.

Mr. LANE: It was cowardly. The honourable member for Port Curtis should pick on someone his own size. I am always ready to debate any issue with him. He should leave the women members alone.

We heard recently that the Queensland Government has called world-wide tenders for developing a tourist complex on North West Island, a coral atoll about 17 miles from well-known Heron Island. It is in the centre of a marine park, and is a sanctuary. I wonder exactly what is proposed for this island. Any interference with its natural state would be detrimental. I am sure we all look forward to hearing from the Minister exactly what the Government proposes.

A number of my friends in Gladstone have told me how they enjoy going in their boats with their families to camp on North West Island at Easter and Christmas. At Easter and Christmas last year, I understand that 150 parties—families from Gladstone and people working in the Gladstone area—camped on North West Island. The island provides the only opportunity for these people on moderate or average incomes to enjoy the Barrier Reef, to bathe in its beautiful lagoons and fish for tropical fish—in other words, to enjoy what is surely one of nature's heritages conferred on the people of Queensland. This island is well known for its wildlife, which abounds. People who set up camps on the island can watch noddy terns and mutton birds coming in to nest. It is a natural habitat for these birds and other wildlife.

It would be a crying shame if the island were to be trodden over by the heavy boots of international tourists, who will no doubt visit the island in great numbers when the tourist complex is developed. Between October and March female turtles come ashore to lay between 100 and 150 eggs at a time on the island's beautiful beaches.

We are entitled to ask if they will be disturbed by the proposed development for which world tenders have been called. It may well be that the developer proposes to respect the environment of the island. If that is the case and if ample safeguards are laid down, perhaps some form of development could take place. However, I would want guarantees that this natural habitat of birds, turtles and many other beautiful species of wildlife that inhabit the island will not be interfered with.

To me there is a stark contrast between the proposal to call tenders from overseas consortiums for the development of North West Island and the frustration being experienced by Mr. Iwasaki for his proposed development near Yeppoon—a site that is probably less than 100 miles distant from North West Island. Those of us who have been privileged to see something of Mr. Iwasaki's development of the islands in Japan—

Mr. Powell: He won't deliver the goods.

Mr. LANE: We have here an expert from the Co-ordinator-General's Department. That is helpful.

We know that Mr. Iwasaki has set up nurseries, planted a number of small trees and shrubs and intends to develop the site near Yeppoon along the lines of a national park. So far, however, he has not been allowed to proceed with his proposed substantial development, for a number of complicated and perhaps over-technical reasons.

I am one who would like to see the Government give this development near Yeppoon a trial. I do not see that we have anything to lose. The State has a nest of legislation for the protection of the environment—legislation to ensure that water quality and air pollution are controlled. Categories of birds, fish and other wildlife are protected across the continent. If those laws are respected and Mr. Iwasaki fulfils all the requirements—we could enact more laws if the present ones are not sufficient—surely we could let him commence with a trial development. He is the one who risks losing money on the project, not the Queensland Government. The land will always be there. He cannot pick it up, put it on a barge and take it away. It will always be part of Queensland and part of Australia. On the one hand he is being frustrated over his development, whilst on the other hand tenders are being called world wide for North West Island less than 100 miles away. Perhaps the Government could reconsider the Yeppoon proposals. I look forward to hearing from the Minister some explanation of the Government's attitude to these two areas.

I know that the Minister who has the responsibility for this portfolio (Mr. Newbery) is a man with an understanding of the natural things in our community—an understanding of wildlife—and a man who is, to use an Italian expression, simpatico. I

find it highly unlikely that he would countenance any action detrimental to the environment. He is probably one of the nice guys of this Parliament. I am sure that he would adopt a realistic approach to these matters.

Mr. Lindsay: There are only three of us left.

Mr. LANE: There are very few of us left.

Moving on to another area of tourism administration in Queensland, I wish to comment on the work carried out by the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau—work which is commendable in many respects; work which brings to Queensland a great deal of revenue from the number of interstate and overseas visitors who come here to enjoy our many natural tourist facilities and opportunities.

However, I have a suggestion to make about one aspect and I suggest that the Minister and his officers might care to examine the material I intend to put forward. Recently I had the opportunity to visit Europe, the United Kingdom and some other places. I was able to see how tourism was co-ordinated there. The tourist information service in the United Kingdom is very good and in many respects could be copied in this country. The tourist information centres throughout Great Britain and on the Continent afford valued facilities. A stranger to a particular region, city or town immediately goes to the tourist information centre, which is easily identified by an internationally known sign—a small, red letter “i”. The tourist can readily obtain free brochures and maps and also information on accommodation in that region. It is an extensive service. In some parts of Great Britain and the Continent, particularly during the heavy tourist season, mobile caravans are set up in other places and again they have the distinctive small, red letter “i” attached to a post nearby.

In addition to general tourist information, a tourist can obtain information on accommodation. These centres have printed lists of hotels, pensioni, guest-houses and private bed-and-breakfast homes. In fact, accommodation can be booked at these places. I found them to be very helpful, in slight contrast to some of the services provided by the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau.

I was a little shattered on my few visits to the bureau office in Adelaide Street to see queues of people waiting to be attended to during the lunch hour. I have spoken to some interstate tourists, including elderly people. During their retirement, elderly people travel extensively. These people have to wait sometimes half an hour to be attended to. I did not find this to be the case anywhere in Great Britain.

The Tourist Information Board, which is responsible for these centres, distributes a booklet that is obtainable anywhere in

Great Britain. It lists the location of its offices throughout the country. It contains maps of each substantial town or city and shows the location of the tourist complex. It lists also the tourist information centres and, very briefly, the main tourist attractions in each town.

I have with me the booklet to which I refer. I shall pass it to the Minister when I am finished speaking. Opening it at random and picking an example—I shall take the city of York. It lists the sights to be seen in York as “the Minster, the mediaeval streets and city walls, the racecourse, the museums and the river.” A tourist driving into that town can refer to the book and knows exactly where to go and what he should see. This information is helpful particularly to those people who are passing through a town quickly and want to take in the main sights and then move on. In the back of the book are listed the Automobile Association centres, the R.A.C., the port offices, the post offices, the British rail services, the national park information centres and details of the motorway and main road tourist information services outside the city. This book could well be copied in Queensland.

It is also available on the Continent and was probably copied from the book published in Great Britain. The same sign is used there. It surely must be international.

Mr. Casey interjected.

Mr. LANE: If the honourable member would care to see it, I shall let him look at it later on.

Another facility available from tourist information centres is a cardboard parking disc, which has a movable dial in the centre by means of which the time of day at which a person parks can be indicated. There are no parking meters—those hideous steel monsters that we see here, even on the Gold Coast. The tourist merely places this disc under the windscreen wiper on his car, and the parking attendant can tell immediately how long the vehicle has been parked and whether it should be moved. The one that I have with me is from the Harrogate district of England. I shall pass this cardboard disc to the Minister for him to see.

Another facility that struck me as being extremely useful was the provision of information centres on the Continent. I have with me a booklet produced by regions along the Rhine and in the Black Forest of Germany. It has as a centrefold a three-dimensional map showing the roads, mountains and rivers of the region. When a tourist drives into Germany across the bridge at Strasbourg, at the border gate he will see a tourist information centre marked in the same way as such centres are marked in Britain. At this centre he will be given a booklet containing this map as a centrefold. It is a three-dimensional presentation showing cities, towns and villages and it enables tourists to see the topography of the area quite clearly.

It gives a sense of perspective that cannot be obtained from the ordinary two-dimension map.

Such maps could well be considered for distribution on the Gold Coast, which has a backdrop of mountains as has the Rhine Valley in Germany. Such a map would also be useful on the North Coast, which also is backed by mountain ranges. I should like to see colourful and useful productions of that kind distributed by the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau to visitors to these areas. They permit visitors to know at a glance exactly where they are going. Many people, particularly the elderly, have difficulty in following a two-dimensional map—on the flat as it were—and distinguishing on it mountains, valleys and rivers. The three-dimensional presentation is easy to understand. I shall give this to the Minister, too, at the conclusion of the debate.

The Cairns region and Townsville, with their mountain backdrops, would be very suitable areas to be covered by such a method of presentation. The one that I have is printed in colour, and I am sure that such maps would help to attract tourists to an area. Perhaps for one year the production of a tourist film could be abandoned and the money put into the production of such maps. The one that I have shows the routes quite clearly, from the autostradas to the small village roads, and I am sure that the Minister and his officers will find it very interesting. I know that they have never seen such a map before because, if they had, they would have had one prepared for the Gold Coast area. The Minister is quite welcome to have this one.

There is a uniformity in tourist information centres, and wherever one goes in Europe one can identify them by the small letter "i". On crossing the border into Italy one again sees this sign, and here maps are available and lists of accommodation for the region. These documents are quite extensive and well printed, some of them half to three-quarters of an inch thick. They are handed out quite freely in the hope that the visitor will enjoy his stay in the region. The accommodation available is listed in various categories denoted by stars so that a person can learn the facilities provided. Some elderly people need special facilities, and information on their availability is easily obtainable from tourist information centres. I think this would represent a decentralisation of tourism in Queensland. I know there are some regions—

(Time expired.)

Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (2.35 p.m.): The first thing I would like to do in this debate today is extend my congratulations to the Minister on his appointment to the portfolio of Tourism and Marine Services. I have done this personally, but not in the Chamber. The Minister and I have family associations in the Mackay district which go back a considerable period. While he has known

me since I was a very small boy, however, he needs no reminding that in the Chamber I am an Opposition member. He knows, of course, that he can expect full co-operation from me and he has received this over the years since I entered Parliament. Even now as a Minister he will receive my full co-operation in those good things that are done by the departments he administers. But he also knows that, because of the type of person I am, he can expect no quarter from me on those aspects of his departments' administration that I believe warrant criticism.

Last month I criticised the Department of Harbours and Marine and its intentions regarding the ports of Mackay and Hay Point.

Mr. Hinze: You criticise all departments.

Mr. CASEY: The Minister for Local Government steps into the Chamber. He should be the last to be privileged to make such comments.

Mr. Hinze: You copped it this morning, didn't you?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dean): Order! The Minister will refrain from interjecting.

Mr. CASEY: I am prepared to offer the same co-operation to him. Initially, my comments regarding the ports of Mackay and Hay Point were based on a Press statement of 18 September which indicated certain things, but from then on any time that I made a comment in the Chamber all I had to do was wait a few days and up would pop the Minister and make a bitter and personal attack on me by way of a ministerial statement. His comments, or some of them, anyhow, have been grossly misleading. They did not worry me one little bit for the simple reason that in the Government Gazette of 8 November it is revealed that his department has called applications for the two jobs, that of harbour master at Hay Point and the reclassified position of harbour master at the port of Mackay. That clearly vindicates the points I originally raised.

In fact, when we come down to the practical working of the port of Hay Point by pilots, I still wonder how it will be done. The pilots and the harbour master will still live in Mackay—for the present, anyhow—and travel backwards and forwards to Hay Point. They will still be in the same area. There has been much local discussion regarding the establishment of a small craft harbour in the vicinity of Hay Point which will eventually be used by the tugs that service the port, the departmental vessels and also the line vessels that are used to tie up the large ships which berth there.

The Minister, unfortunately, has been placed in a bit of a predicament in this regard. Before he was promoted to ministerial rank, he was chairman of the Sarina Shire Council, and as chairman of that

council naturally he continued to press for something in this regard that would be of benefit to his shire—and rightly so—and that was for the establishment of this boat harbour at Grasstree Inlet rather than Half Tide Island. Unfortunately, on becoming a Minister he found that his department had decided otherwise. Subsequently we found that Gutteridge, Haskins and Davies had been appointed to compile a so-called independent report, which, in actual fact, will favour the department's recommendation that the boat harbour be built at Half Tide Island at an estimated cost of \$7,900,000. I am going to try to help the Minister here today by strongly supporting his original stand.

I believe this proposed boat harbour that will service the port of Hay Point should be at Grasstree Inlet. This is nothing new so far as I am concerned, because whilst I was a member of the Mackay Harbour Board back in the mid-1960s I supported a proposition that a small boat harbour should eventually be constructed in Grasstree Inlet as a result of a study that was done of small boat harbours throughout the Mackay district. At that time I said that money that was going to be spent on any coal development in the area must also be spent to the advantage of the general public. Certainly the construction of a boat harbour at Grasstree Inlet would be much more in the best interests of the public of Mackay and district, including the Sarina Shire, than the proposal indicated at Half Tide Island.

Coming back to the Hay Point-Mackay situation, I believe that the whole of the port complexes of Mackay and Hay Point should be under one port authority. I espoused that proposition in this Chamber some years ago. The steps taken by the Department of Harbours and Marine in setting up a new portmaster at Hay Point is helping to further divide that issue. It is one of the reasons why I object to the downgrading of the port of Mackay. That is a further barrier to the control of the joint ports by the one regional port authority. I have been a great supporter of that in the past, and I still believe that that should be implemented.

Even though we are going to have the pilots stationed at Hay Point, in many instances pilots board vessels bound for Hay Point approximately half a mile off the heads of Mackay Harbour. That is where the 10 fathom line runs. As the Minister and his departmental officers would know, the 10 fathom line is looked at by the masters of the large 100,000 tonne international shipping vessels. The 10 fathom line is all important to them in their operations. This is where many of the vessels anchor while they are waiting for a berth at Hay Point. They can swing there completely unrestricted in deep water. Many of the pilots who will be appointed to Hay Point will still board vessels right outside the heads of the Mackay Harbour.

That points to one of the other reasons why I believe we should have the one overall port authority for Mackay and Hay Point. In actual fact it should be constituted under the auspices of the Mackay Harbour Board—a board that is representative of the whole of the district, knows the district's needs and in actual fact can co-ordinate the port development of Mackay and district. It can co-ordinate in the best interests of the district, rather than in the best interests of the coal companies concerned or the best interests of any one particular group. I am concerned that any future work that goes on in the area should be for the benefit of the area as a whole, including the construction of a boat harbour. As I said earlier, I strongly support the Sarina Shire Council's proposal that it be built at Grasstree Inlet and certainly not at Half Tide Island.

In the debate on these Estimates I do wish to make brief reference to the comments of the Minister for Primary Industries this morning. I will certainly not stretch your tolerance, Mr. Dean, or our personal relationship, by referring to the primary industries aspect of his comments, which were many and varied, but restrict myself wholly and solely to a few quick comments on points regarding ports which are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Harbours and Marine. A member of this Chamber always knows when he pricks a Minister about something or hits him on a soft and tender spot. There is a quick desire to come back with a ministerial statement prepared by departmental officers. We saw the classic of all classics this morning when the Minister for Primary Industries held up the business of the House for almost 20 minutes. The Sugar Board fellows must have stayed up all night preparing his answers to my comments yesterday. They were references rather than answers.

The Minister may call me whatever names he likes and heap whatever personal abuse he wishes on me; it does not worry me at all, nor does it have any effect on me. However, among his hateful innuendoes he revealed the real reason for the action of the Government and C.S.R. Limited in relation to the establishment of the new port at Lucinda Point. Basically it is that, instead of shipping sugar from Lucinda Point to southern refineries, C.S.R. Limited wishes to ship it from Bundaberg. Considerable quantities of sugar are shipped each year from Mackay, Bundaberg, Mourilyan and Cairns to refineries in the southern States. If, as has been claimed, shipping sugar from Bundaberg will bring about a saving each year of \$6,000,000, that amounts to a saving of \$25 per tonne. I find it hard to believe that such a saving could be effected by shipping the sugar from Bundaberg instead of from Lucinda Point. The distance involved is not very great at all. As anyone in shipping circles would confirm, high costs are incurred not so much while ships are at sea as when they are loading and unloading

in port. The turn-around of ships is much more expensive than actual steaming time. The sailing time between Lucinda Point and Bundaberg would not be more than 24 hours for modern merchant vessels, so I cannot go along entirely with the figures quoted by the Minister.

Another point is that the cost referred to is a refining cost, and under the Commonwealth-State Sugar Agreement it is a component of the domestic price of sugar in Australia. This is governed by something entirely different.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dean): Order! The honourable member will tie in his speech a little more closely to the Estimates under debate.

Mr. CASEY: Certainly, Mr. Dean. I was simply going to make the point that in all parts of the Commonwealth the domestic price is the target for strong criticism.

This morning the Minister did not reveal the fact that a large section of the sugar industry considers that the finance made available to the port project at Lucinda Point should have been by way of a loan, just as the Queensland Government organised loans to the sugar industry in the mid 1960s in order to help it overcome its financial difficulties. At that time other primary industries were receiving grants. As I have said before, the sugar industry is being called upon to make a grant towards the cost of the Queensland Government's new port at Lucinda Point.

One way in which the State Government could save a vast amount of money on port works is by upgrading the port of Mackay so that it could accommodate ships of up to 100,000 tonnes. That could be done at a cost of only \$15,000,000 or so. Despite the predictions of the Sugar Board, the time will come when bulk-sugar carriers of that size will be constructed. Sugar exports are presently restricted by the capacity of overseas refineries; but this will not last for ever. It will be interesting to see the attitude adopted by the Queensland Government when that time comes. Of course, if the coalition parties continue to act as at present, they will not be in office at that time.

I turn now to tourism. I have had a lifetime interest in the tourist industry and have been an advocate both inside and outside the Chamber for it. It brings tremendous benefits to the State and its people.

I congratulate the director-general, Mr. Joe Wilson, on another successful year of operations of the tourist bureau. I would also place on record my personal appreciation to Frank Ball, who retired recently from the position of assistant director-general. In the years that he was associated with the tourist industry in Queensland he was devoted to it. I met him when I was a boy in Mackay. He came to the city to open up a branch of the tourist bureau. I admired him then as a man who displayed a wonderful attitude to his job as well as to the people of the

area. He sought their co-operation and did everything possible to put Mackay on the tourist map. I am sure that many people in Mackay are not aware of the hard work he did in pushing tourism in Mackay. He was a great strength to all who worked with him, and I think the words that would best describe him are those that he uttered on his retirement, when he said that the main attributes required of the tourist industry are service and civility. He possessed them to the full. Service and civility were his bywords. I wish him many years of retirement. His good work will always be remembered because he trained so many others who now hold responsible positions in the bureau.

I praise the changed attitude of the Australian Tourist Commission in recent years. In days gone by I criticised the commission but it is encouraging to note that it is now encouraging Australians to see Australia first. For this we can be thankful to the Federal Government, which instigated the change in policy after it came to power in 1972. Mr. Frank Stewart was very keen on this policy.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. CASEY: It is undeniable. For a long time the Australian tourist industry was looking to the Australian Tourist Commission to encourage our people to see Australia first. Unfortunately the set-up of the A.T.C. was encouraging people to go overseas.

Earlier in the debate much was said about overseas visitors coming to Australia, but 80 per cent of them visit only our capital cities, mainly Sydney and Melbourne. That could be attributed to the fact that we have been unable to develop tourist facilities of international standard at our resorts, other than on the Gold Coast, which seems to attract most of our overseas visitors. Government loans and other means of assistance are needed to help resorts, particularly in remote areas, to encourage tourism throughout the State. Overseas countries such as Fiji, New Zealand and Singapore have set the example. Even Victoria is doing a great deal in this field.

We certainly do not want further comments like those made by the honourable member for Salisbury the other day. She would do better to support the suggestions I have made than to make allegations about fleecing tourists in the Whitsunday area.

Mr. Houston interjected.

Mr. CASEY: Her lack of knowledge of the tourist industry was obvious the other night.

It is disappointing that the Minister did not give an appropriate reply this morning. If she had been a member of the Labor Party, he would have given her the greatest blast of all time. Because of his soft, gentle nature, he treated her very kindly.

However, I believe that he pointed out adequately that the Whitsunday resorts (which I know so well) provide their own power, water, sewerage, garbage disposal and first aid, and carry out their own maintenance and repairs. Unlike on the North Coast, which the Minister referred to, it is not a matter of resort proprietors approaching the nearest local authority to get reticulated water, electricity and so on.

Mr. Newbery: Over all, I believe their charges are very fair.

Mr. CASEY: They are, because they are all-inclusive.

On the Gold Coast, and other places—I may be a little harsh on the Gold Coast—accommodation which is advertised at certain prices looks cheap, but visitors find that they get only a flea-bitten bed for the night and have to buy breakfast, scrounge lunch, make their own transport arrangements, entertain themselves and do everything else. All this is provided on the Whitsunday Islands in the all-inclusive charge. Tourists receive service and civility from the time they arrive. If a person wants to drink, or spend most of his time at the bar, it might cost him a few dollars; but that would be costly anywhere. The island charges are no more exorbitant than the prices charged at the Talk of the Town and the Zebra Motel. Anyone who goes to some of the more modern lounge bars would think that a horse had bitten him.

Many island resorts have been run by the proprietors and their families who have been battling for many years. Weather conditions such as strong south-easterlies can cause them a great deal of strife. Everything has to be taken to the islands by boat or barge. They certainly face more problems than people in our rural sector, but they get far less support than any section of the rural industry.

When we talk of tourism we should not forget that the 17½ per cent holiday loading in Australia is designed to help the ordinary working man travel—to look around and see his own State and nation. If we do not offer the facilities to encourage that, something is wrong. That is what it is given for. It is not given to provide extra booze or anything else.

Australia's high internal air fares cause a problem. The Minister referred to this, and the director-general pointed it out in his annual report. We are seeing a swing back to the railways—and I believe that we need it. However, one of the big difficulties in Queensland is that the Railway Department does not pay a fee to encourage travel agents to sell railway package deals. It does not pay commission. I do not know whether the tourist bureau receives commission from the Railway Department. I do not think so. It certainly does a tremendous amount of work for the railways.

The New South Wales Public Transport Commission recently increased the commission to its agents.

(Time expired.)

Mr. GIBBS (Albert) (2.55 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to speak on the Estimates of the Minister for Tourism and Marine Services (Mr. Newbery). If one looks down the list of his responsibilities, one is amazed to see how many of them affect my electorate. Practically all of them apply in one way or another. Of course, if the Albert Shire and the Gold Coast are taken as one parcel, his responsibilities cover the area totally.

I believe that Australia has the world's greatest tourist potential. Within Australia, Queensland has the greatest tourist potential—a tourist potential covering a large range of attractions. We have much to offer world tourists and those from the rest of Australia and New Zealand. We have a great diversity of attractions, ranging from those at the Gold Coast to those at Mt. Isa and Cairns. A number of members have spoken about the resorts on the Great Barrier Reef. Each area has its own potential and its own points of interest to offer the public.

The Gold Coast and the Albert Shire, if taken together, have the greatest potential in Queensland for tourist development. If the adjacent area of Fassifern is included, we have in that area one of the greatest opportunities to promote the tourist industry in Queensland. In the Advancetown area is the new dam, or the inland lake as we call it, that is being provided by the Gold Coast City Council for the purpose of providing a permanent water supply. It will be one of the biggest inland waterways in Australia and it will provide some of the greatest tourist promotion opportunities ever for the south-east corner of our State.

I do not think we are taking full advantage of our areas of historical interest, as New South Wales is doing. We have wonderfully historical-oriented areas in Queensland. One could spend a lifetime researching and writing about the Beenleigh-Bethania area. It is good to see that \$100,000 is being set aside in the Budget to help preserve some points of historical importance. We should take more interest in history. For instance, the Beenleigh rum factory has become a top tourist attraction in the Albert electorate. Tourist buses visit it regularly. A new liquor sales area has been established, thus providing a double attraction.

With modern transport and the increasing use of caravans, people have more opportunities to travel. We must concentrate on providing more and better facilities for visitors travelling by caravan. Wherever possible, we must encourage people to upgrade caravan sites. Queensland is so big that it is possible to spend months touring its many areas of interest.

I was pleased to see that the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau has opened a new office at Surfers Paradise. The Minister

has certainly been active in the promotion of tourism right throughout Queensland, and I congratulate him and his officers for the work they have done since he assumed office. Things are really looking up and tourism will do a good deal to boost the economy of Queensland. Perhaps it might be the saviour when other sections of the economy are on the decline.

The Minister referred to the convention centre that is being built on The Spit at Southport. It will be a great acquisition. Queensland has been well behind in the holding of conventions. Some have been held at the Chevron Hotel and the Broad-beach International Hotel, but the areas available in hotels is very limited. The new centre will be the first that can accommodate up to 4,000 people. We should push for more centres such as that throughout Queensland, because in this way we could be telling visitors about the beauty of Queensland as a whole. Tourists should be encouraged to my area and then further encouraged to travel throughout the remainder of Queensland and see as much as possible. A person could spend years in travelling round Queensland looking at tourist attractions.

The Queensland Government should be given credit for the fairly good roads that lead to the Gold Coast, and possibly the New South Wales Government should be given some credit for the road leading from Tweed Heads. However, the Coolangatta Airport is a blot on the landscape and no-one has taken the initiative to improve it. Surely the people responsible for that airport must realise the tourism potential in Queensland and on the Gold Coast in particular. The airports in the northern area are not too bad. The Brisbane Airport is a pretty dull old place and needs a really good face-lift, but the Coolangatta Airport is an absolute shocker. We should bring as much pressure as possible to bear on the authorities responsible, irrespective of the Government in power.

The honourable member for Mackay referred to motels and cheap accommodation. Motel owners at the Gold Coast are taking up petitions to upgrade some motels and to have certain signs removed. This matter has been under consideration for quite a while because the signs are misleading. A person sees a sign "\$3 a night". When he goes into the place he finds that the rate is "From \$3 a night". It is the old story. It is not really dishonest advertising, but it is misleading to say the least. We have referred the motel owners to the Minister. The Gold Coast City Council will be approaching the Minister to have this matter considered. If this is happening on the Gold Coast, it is happening everywhere. When it comes to that type of thing, the Gold Coast is no different from anywhere else. Both the Department of Local Government and the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau must have a good look at what can be done to

rectify these problems. At the moment they are only minor but, if they are talked about, they become major problems. We need to take some heed of them.

Recently I visited Albany in Western Australia. I went to the tourist office there and for \$10 deposit, I was able to hire a tape recorder and tape. The information recorded on the tape led me to every sight there was to see and told me its history. I think this is one of the best ways to show tourists around the district and tell them the historic areas and other places they should see.

In his speech, the Minister mentioned safaris, getting off the beaten track, and decentralisation. As I said, Queensland has a lot to offer that is off the beaten track. I instance Carnarvon Gorge and the trip up through the Darling Downs. In promoting these places, care must be taken not to push so many people into visiting them that the attractions are ruined. I have seen films in England showing people going to a tourist event over a week-end; miles and miles of cars were banked up. The restoration work after the event would take months. We must be careful to protect the outback places and ensure that we do not get out there only the vandals who will ruin everything that we have to offer.

Government policy at the last election was to give greater recognition to regional tourism. I note with interest that grants of up to \$5,000 are now available to regional associations to enable them to employ full-time tourist officers. It is good to see the private sector being given encouragement and incentive to do its own job. I am sure that these concessions will prove very advantageous in the long run. It is also good to see that \$100,000 has been set aside to help promote some historical areas.

The film "Thunder in Paradise" was a wonderful production and it has been a great success. It is good to see a continuation of film-making with "One More Island". Such films will have quite a staggering influence on tourism in the long run, as this method of presentation reaches a wide variety of people.

Bringing parties of travel agents to Queensland is also a good idea. Travel agents are the ones who sell tourism, and they are the ones with whom the bureau has to keep in constant contact.

Marine services also come under the Minister's control and they affect the electorate of Albert greatly. The Delft report covers a considerable area of the coast and has a direct influence on the tourist industry. Perhaps when its recommendations are implemented and the mouth of the Nerang River is stabilised, consideration could be given to bringing the whole area under an authority similar to a harbour board or trust, which could administer it on a more personal basis.

Planning the future of the Broadwater is most essential. It extends from Jumpin-pin to the Nerang Bridge, and it has been

the subject of a long-range report. It is a report that covers my whole electorate, and the many departments that contributed to its production are to be commended. Its implementation will be a matter for the Department of Harbours and Marine, and it provides guide-lines for all other Government departments and local authorities to ensure that for as long as possible the area will be preserved as a playground for Brisbane people and tourists who visit it from other areas.

Boat ramps are linked directly with tourism and there is a shortage of them. People from Brisbane and from across the border in New South Wales visit this area and they want to be able to launch their boats with reasonable safety.

Two particularly valuable organisations in the area are the Coast Guard and Air Sea Rescue. They operate on a voluntary basis and they assist the water police to do their job. In emergencies they do fine work. The Coast Guard are erecting a new building at the mouth of Loders Creek and here they will train people in boat safety and everything to do with boating. They are a wonderful asset to the coast and to all people in the Albert electorate, and any help that can be given to them will be much appreciated.

There are plans for new marinas in the Broadwater, and in the long run they will be a great asset to the area. At present they are badly needed and the areas in which they are planned are, I believe, the best places. They are in fact virtually the only places where they could be established to make them fairly handy to the people of the general area.

The shark-meshing programme has had a considerable impact on the number of sharks in the area. There is now virtually no danger from sharks. The department is to be commended on its activities in this field.

Another important place we have to make sure is looked after and preserved is Stradbroke Island. We have the Beach Protection Authority, which, in co-operation with local authorities, supervises the pumping of sand onto beaches. It is pleasing to know that, under the auspices of the Department of Harbours and Marine, Mr. Bill Gale is to go over to the Delft Laboratories in Holland to inspect how the model-testing of the mouth of the Nerang River is progressing. It is good to see how active the department is these days. It is really sincere about the preservation and stabilisation of our beaches.

There are a lot of important waterways in my electorate, including Coombabah Creek, the Coomera, Logan and Albert Rivers, and the many smaller tributaries which flow into them. It is very important that we keep the water pollution in these streams at the lowest possible level. We have to make sure that our sewerage plants are working properly as the electorate of Albert expands. It is one of the greatest growth centres in

Queensland. At present I believe it is growing faster than the Gold Coast, especially having regard to the number of buildings being erected. In the last quarter there has been greater expenditure on buildings in the Albert electorate than on the Gold Coast. We have to make sure that the area continues to grow.

The electorate is criss-crossed by waterways and this is why marine services and tourism are so important to it in order to make sure that the growth is slanted towards the reason most people go to live there; that is, because one way or another they are interested in the water or tourism side of things. Of course, the tourist industry provides a great deal of work for the people who live in my electorate either directly or indirectly, especially in the building of motels to cater for tourists. The Minister did spell out in his speech how many people were employed in the tourist industry. The honourable member for Surfers Paradise said that many more people were involved in the industry than the Minister indicated, and I agree with his statement because I believe that, if we count up how many people are directly or indirectly employed in the tourist industry on the coast, the number would exceed the figure mentioned by the Minister. This adds to the security of the people I represent. I believe that the more we can promote the tourist industry the more we will be able to decentralise. I could bring to the Minister's notice—as could, I am sure, the honourable member for Fassifern—many places in the Albert Shire which could cater for tourists.

I believe that people today want to look at historical places. I believe we live in an era when people want to look back into the past. We have a lot of historical places in this great State of ours which we should preserve and open up for people to see. They will remind people of the pioneering days of Queensland, what the pioneers did to create this great State and the standards they set for us to live by. We should preserve this type of thing as much as possible to show people what it was like in the old days when bullocks were used as a means of transport and when they were used to pull cedar out of the mountains. McMahon pulled cedar out of the mountains to build the Grand Hotel at Southport, which recently caught fire. Of course, there is nothing left to see of it now. The Gold Coast City Council recently built a cedar getters fountain in Surfers Paradise to commemorate the exploits of the cedar getters of that era.

Many people look upon the Albert Shire and the Gold Coast area merely as growth centres. They seem to forget the great depth of history behind this area. I believe those concerned with tourism could do a tremendous amount to promote this sort of thing.

If the mouth of the Nerang River is eventually stabilised, we will have a safe boating area there. I believe the Broadwater will grow into an area which will provide

absolutely unrestricted access to the boating fraternity of Queensland, especially those from Brisbane south—even better access than is provided now.

The Beach Protection Authority has received a lot of criticism one way and another because at times its advice has appeared to retard development.

(Time expired.)

Mr. YEWDALE (Rockhampton North) (3.15 p.m.): Previous speakers have given us a kind of Fitzpatrick travelogue. They expounded the virtues of England, London and Italy, and told us about the fine leaflets and brochures produced overseas. We must accept the fact that we have to learn from other people. If their ideas are good ones, we should certainly take note of them and turn them to our advantage. I would be the first to concede the importance of the tourism section of the Minister's portfolio. Anyone who does not acknowledge that is not looking very closely at what the tourist industry means to Queensland and Australia as a whole.

There has been a lot of talk about the Gold Coast, and the honourable member for Albert made lengthy reference to that area. As a layman, I do not profess to have any particular expertise in the development of coastal areas but, to my mind, the concrete jungle right up to the foreshores on the Gold Coast detracts greatly from the beauty and natural value of that area. The Southport area, an old established area, has a fairly wide green belt or grassed area between the beach and the road and buildings. I think mistakes have been made in the Gold Coast area. In all sincerity I would suggest to the Minister that, as part of his responsibility, this is something he should look at closely in association with people involved in tourist development.

Many people will not accept the fact that in expansion of the tourist industry, which is a must, cognisance must be taken of the environment and surroundings. Tourism is a big money-spinner, but we have to look at the environment and ensure that certain areas are protected. We should not develop tourist resorts just for the sake of revenue. Future generations should be able to enjoy green belts rather than sprawling concrete jungles.

The Minister referred to the allocation of funds for preservation of historical buildings. I go along with that. I say that as a preface to what I am going to say about historical buildings in Rockhampton. The Minister's department in Rockhampton is situated on the corner of East and Fitzroy Streets in an historical building. If it is not an historical building, it is at least a very old building. To my mind, being situated where it is, it does not do much for the tourist industry. Probably it is at the busiest intersection in Central Queensland. There are traffic lights on that corner right in the heart of the city. It is surrounded by trees.

It is an old unattractive building; it provides only cramped working area for the staff. People travelling through Rockhampton would have great difficulty in finding it. A sign indicates that it is the Tourist Bureau, and I know that the staff do their best to help all people who inquire there. A map outside the building depicts the high-lights of the area. Motorists driving through the city would find it difficult to park near that office. It is in a no-parking, commercial area which is subject to very heavy traffic morning and afternoon.

To my mind it is not a good site for the local Tourist Bureau. Someone might well ask, "Where else could the office be located?" I would answer such a question by saying, "Anywhere except there." I do not pretend to be able to suggest the best location for the office, but it could be sited in any one of a number of locations on the edge of the inner-city area, at a place where parking facilities would be readily available.

I raise now another bugbear to the people of Rockhampton, a matter that strictly does not come within the Minister's responsibilities but is more likely to come within the portfolio of his colleague the Minister for Transport. I suggest that the two Ministers in conjunction examine the problem that I am about to bring to their attention. Rockhampton has a fairly heavy influx of tourist coaches from all parts of Queensland as well as from interstate. With a few exceptions, they embark and disembark their passengers just off the main street of the city, in an area that has no telephone, no signs directing tourists, no seats and no toilets. It has no facilities whatever. Coach passengers, whether they are old or young, whether they are local people or strangers to the city, disembark in all types of weather—in summer and winter—and are virtually left standing on the footpath. Visiting tourists would have no idea at all where they are.

Apparently the local business people who are associated with the arrival and departure of tourist coaches defend this practice. Some of my friends who live outside Rockhampton and visit the city are amazed that this situation has been allowed to continue for many years. The officers of the Transport Department are not prepared to do anything about it. The Minister for Transport is the one who must accept criticism that is levelled at his department over this state of affairs.

Many local groups, including the chamber of commerce, and the Rockhampton City Council have joined with me in condemning the situation. Nevertheless the Government is not prepared to do anything about it. The council has suggested that a coach depot be established in an area fairly close to the centre of the city, but this suggestion has not been widely accepted. Another proposal is that a terminal be established in a certain inner-city area, but it has met with opposition because it is claimed that such a facility would encroach on parkland opposite the ambulance and fire brigade centres. I would

not regard the proposed site as a good one; coach traffic there would interfere with the operations of the ambulance and fire brigade services.

The Minister for Transport has no power to cancel the licences of coach operators who embark and disembark their passengers in the area to which I have referred. However, I suggest that he could impose certain conditions on them to make them provide better facilities for coach passengers who embark or disembark in Rockhampton. If, as many Government members have claimed, the Minister presenting these Estimates is conscientious, he should take up this matter with the Minister for Transport and examine the problem. I conclude on that note so that my colleague the honourable member for Cairns will have time to make a contribution to this debate.

Mr. JONES (Cairns) (3.25 p.m.): I have always strongly advocated the reintroduction of the grandstand train on the Cairns-Kuranda line. I was pleased to note that the Minister, on his recent visit to the Cairns area, endorsed the need for this unique tourist attraction. In "The Cairns Post" of Monday, 13 October, he is reported as saying that he backed to the hilt my call for this train.

Mr. Newbery: I still will, too.

Mr. JONES: I am very pleased to hear that. I am sure that the Minister will agree with me that the Cairns-Kuranda railway trip, which takes in the Barron Falls, the Stoney Creek Falls, the Barron Gorge and the Kuranda garden station, is one of the most beautiful in Queensland. My contention is supported by figures I have taken out since becoming a member of Parliament. They show the following increases in patronage on this line—

Year	Passengers
1967 ..	37,489
1968 ..	37,967
1969 ..	39,719
1970 ..	40,729
1971 ..	45,062
1972 ..	64,271
1973 ..	74,741
1974 ..	92,867

No doubt last financial year the number of passenger journeys exceeded 100,000. We put that record forward at a time when, over-all, Queensland railway passenger journeys have been declining. We should be catering for this demand. An increasing number of tourists want to make this trip under very adverse and primitive conditions. The railway conditions and accommodation are appalling.

This is a unique trip which would be enhanced by the reintroduction of the grandstand train that ran pre-war. I am sure the reintroduction of this service would create an aura similar to that of the grand old days of steam. If we update the passenger accommodation by providing tiered

seats running the length of the carriage (in the old days passengers sat sideways), as the train crawled up the Kuranda range, the Barron Valley could be viewed almost in cinemascope through glass windows running from the floor to the roof on one side of the carriage. That old, unique train was excellent for viewing the spectacular scenery. By running such a train twice a day, we could certainly make it a top tourist attraction that would be very remunerative for the railways and the tourist industry in Far North Queensland.

I noted that the Minister said this morning that he was in close consultation with the Minister for Transport. Perhaps he might influence him to introduce more "Sunlander" services from Brisbane to Cairns. At the moment five trains—two in the morning and three at night—provide the service. Although four extra cars are attached to each train, all the people who wish to travel cannot be accommodated. We should provide a service for people who wish to travel by rail. I do not think a record is kept of people who are turned away. Even with the increased rail fares it is \$15 cheaper to travel one way between Cairns and Brisbane than to do the journey by bus. There is a need—a demand—for this service, but we are turning people away.

I understand that no second-class seats are available on any "Sunlander" for the next 14 weeks. Anyone who has not booked a seat has no chance of getting one. Sleeping berths are at a premium. Bookings have to be made three to six months in advance. We are turning away enough passengers to fill at least one or two trains a week.

I realise that the Minister wishes to speak at about 3.35; so in the limited time of five minutes still available to me, I shall deal with Marine Services. I would like to hear of the latest developments in the Cairns Boat Harbour project. We had news that tenders had been called.

The Minister may have much information about the boat harbour that the general public in Cairns, and particularly those who are interested in tourism, would like to know. I voice a word of caution about the erection of high buildings on the arms of the boat harbour. I understand from shipping experts that large buildings could obliterate channel lights and other navigational aids in the Cairns Harbour.

I would like the Minister to elaborate on a proposal that has been the subject of complaints by oil companies and shipping interests. I understand that an area of 500 ft. is available between No. 6 and No. 8 Wharf for the building of a new facility, but that the intention is to extend it out 70 ft. into Cairns Inlet beyond the existing wharf line. An obstruction such as that would be almost criminal. A movable crane should be provided on the A.N.L. berth. Ships must move up and down the wharf to facilitate loading by the present crane, which would be unnecessary if the crane were a

mobile one. That is the first complaint about the A.N.L. terminal. However, we are now to have this obstruction of a wharf extending out 70 ft. into the middle of the pond. That is just not on. It will be a marine hazard. To construct a jetty such as that out into the middle of the harbour would be a marine muddle.

For a long time I have criticised Government representation on harbour boards. Perhaps we should have as our representatives people from shipping companies or others involved in marine services. It seems to be the practice to have as our representatives people drawn from local authority. There is already a reasonable amount of local authority representation on the boards. Perhaps the Government representatives could be drawn from other sections.

Mr. Newbery: You know that you can draw them from other sections.

Mr. JONES: Yes. Unfortunately that is not done. Maybe we should provide for the harbour master to be seconded automatically to the harbour board, or the manager of one of the major shipping companies or somebody with background and experience in marine matters. They could assist to explain to other matters of the board the difficulties that would be confronted when new marine engineering projects such as docks and so on are being planned.

I will not extend into the Minister's time. I think he has enough material to keep him going in reply for the full 25 minutes.

Hon. T. G. NEWBERY (Mirani—Minister for Tourism and Marine Services) (3.35 p.m.): I was pleased to hear that the honourable member for Surfers Paradise endorses the worthiness of the Beach Protection Authority and the Beach Protection Advisory Board. As I said earlier, Queensland is leading Australia and most of the world in beach protection research. The results of this research are being passed on to local authorities to preserve our beaches for the enjoyment of the public at large. I think that the situation completely supports the worthiness of the two organisations.

I am also pleased that the honourable member acknowledged the part that is being played by the Government in the development of canal-type subdivisions. The prime real estate that has resulted has been made possible only by the excellent co-operation among the developers, the local authorities and the officers of my Department of Harbours and Marine, ably assisted of course by specialists of other departments of government and I look forward to the continuation of this official liaison.

The honourable member for Port Curtis made reference to ownership of wharves. He said that all wharves must be owned by the port authority. I would agree wholeheartedly with this philosophy with regard to multi-user wharves. In these cases it is

proper for the port authority to have real management control. However, I do not think that this same principle applies to single-user wharves, such as the alumina plant wharf in Gladstone or an oil refinery wharf in Brisbane. These wharves are designed for only one specific purpose—one trade, in effect—and as long as they are serving this trade properly, I can see no need for any other approach.

The honourable member suggested review of the Harbours Act concerning leases, rating and other matters proposed by the Queensland Harbours Association. I would like to say that I accept wholeheartedly that the Harbour Act calls for amendment in many areas and I can say that the Parliamentary Counsel is at present drafting a substantial number of amendments as proposed by my department.

Reference was made to the trade union dispute on the question of safety at Gladstone. I am aware that discussions with the unions concerned are about to take place. This is the proper approach, I believe, and I trust that the outcome of the talks will be satisfactory to all concerned.

The question of intrastate trading by the Australian National Line was raised by the honourable member for Port Curtis. This of course is a matter for my colleague the Minister for Transport. It has been under consideration for some time and my department has contributed everything it can towards making a proper decision. I can only say that I am hopeful that such a decision will be made in the near future.

At the outset, let me say to the honourable member for Merthyr that North West Island is not a marine park. Tenders have been called by the Land Administration Commission for the development of this island. When those tenders have closed and those submitted have received consideration, the Minister for Lands, whose portfolio includes this matter, will be able to say more about the type of development which might occur. There is no real reason why disturbance should be caused to the birdlife on North West Island and I think that the management there would be as conscious of its protection as is the Heron Island management. I had the opportunity some time ago to visit Heron Island and I would say that the bird life and the turtle life are part of the tourist attraction. I can assure the Committee that they are well protected.

Regarding tourist information centres, I have already said that nine branches of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau are established in this State. Information centres are now being considered for setting up by some regional tourist associations in addition to that already operating at Mourilyan under the control of the Far North Queensland Board of Tourism and Travel and assisted financially with funds from the Queensland Government.

I have already said in reply to the honourable member for Nudgee that the staff of the Brisbane branch of the bureau has been increased by seven officers. I know what was happening, and that people were having to wait. This is why a change has been made.

The material passed to me a while ago by the honourable member for Merthyr will be examined. It is wrong for him to say that the Iwasaki proposal is being frustrated. The development as proposed by Mr. Iwasaki has been presented in only a very preliminary fashion. This preliminary proposal has been put under public inquiry by my Government and, judging from the response to that inquiry, the people are very interested in receiving much more information and having many more studies made before a firm decision is arrived at. Certainly Mr. Iwasaki has expressed no surprise at being asked for more information. He has not indicated frustration, and I believe that in the public interest the whole matter is being properly handled by my department.

The honourable member for Mackay seems obsessed with the idea that the appointment of a full-time harbour master and pilot at Hay Point will have some effect on Mackay Harbour. I believe that that is utter nonsense. The fact is that Hay Point Harbour is growing fast and the number of ships using it is expected to increase from 150 this year to 300 in the next 12 months. The situation demands a local harbour master and an on-the-site pilot service, as is the case with Mackay and any other busy harbour.

Regarding the small boat harbour mentioned by the honourable member, I must emphasise that what is urgently needed is a sheltered area for tugs and other vessels servicing shipping in Hay Point Harbour. At the present time, vessels are accommodated at Mackay Harbour. A Grasree site, as suggested by the honourable member, would be no closer to the ship-boarding ground, which is two miles north of Hay Point wharf, than is Mackay. That means that if a boat harbour is set up at, say, Half Tide, the loading ground would be two miles north of Hay Point. In other words, it would appear to be of no value to the port services to develop a tug harbour at Grasree. It would seem that a site closer to Hay Point boarding ground is necessary if any investment by the port authority in a tug harbour is to be justified. This is under consideration. I thank the honourable member for his comments concerning Grasree because I can assure him that I would like to see the harbour there.

The comments made by the honourable member about Mr. Frank Ball following his retirement as Director (Administration) in the tourist bureau are much appreciated. I, too, appreciate them. He really was a good officer.

I might point out that the present Australian Tourist Commission policy of "See

Australia First" follows a decision made some years ago by the directors of the various State bureaux that such a theme should be established. The bureau in Queensland actively promotes "See Queensland First".

The honourable member has been wrongly advised that the Queensland Railway Department does not pay commissions. The State railway system does in fact pay commissions to the bureau and established travel agents.

I inform the honourable member for Albert that the State Government is conscious of the need to retain its historic assets and has set aside funds which might be provided for such projects.

I might add that the new branch of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau at Surfers Paradise, mentioned by the honourable member for Albert, provides a very attractive presentation and will offer a very satisfactory service for visitors to the Gold Coast. It is to be hoped that the Gold Coast City Council will be able to control the actions of those motel proprietors who display misleading signs on that strip of coast.

Taped commentaries are available in other areas and they are a feature that might become the responsibility of the regional tourist association.

The honourable member supported the policy of leaving the area between Jumpinpin and the Nerang River substantially in its natural state. This is now Government policy. It is also Government policy to pursue the development of the southern Broadwater for marina and water-sport purposes. I appreciate that the volunteer Coast Guard and other rescue groups do a most important job, particularly in search and rescue and education in the use of boats. My department will co-operate with these organisations in every possible way.

I should inform the honourable member for Rockhampton North that some time ago I inspected the premises occupied by the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau at Rockhampton. There is no doubt that a new site and a more attractive branch are required there and a search for new premises has been pursued for some little time. That search is being actively continued.

The Rockhampton City Council is aware of the lack of a transport terminal in Rockhampton and this deficiency might be pursued with the local authority by the honourable member.

The honourable member for Cairns mentioned the Cairns-to-Kuranda special train known, of course, as the grandstand train. I regarded my journey on that train as one of the most interesting I have ever made. It is a wonderful view. The honourable member's figures setting out the number of people using that train were most interesting. I understand the old carriages and rolling-stock are still available and could be converted to the type that were used in the early days of the grandstand train.

Mr. Jones: They were converted during the war but they could very easily be reconverted.

Mr. NEWBERRY: I understand that, yes. It is a very interesting point and I hope that this will be done. One thing I did notice while I was on that train was that vision could be improved. I think the honourable member and I should do something about having some improvements made on the open side of the line to give better vision. There is grass, lantana and trees growing on the banks in some places and possibly some improvements there would be of much assistance to viewers from that train.

Mr. Jones: The line was built in wheelbarrow and pick-and-shovel days. It would be much easier these days with bulldozers.

Mr. NEWBERRY: I see that the honourable member understands what I mean.

Mr. Jones: Yes.

Mr. NEWBERRY: It is a bit hard to see everything to full advantage, and those improvements would enhance that trip.

I am pleased the honourable member mentioned the departure times of the "Sunlander". At the moment we have two departing at 2 a.m. and three departing at 3 p.m. and I know just how tourists feel about this. I would say that possibly there is a need for more sleepers on those trains. There always seems to be some difficulty in obtaining sleepers and I believe additional sleepers would attract patronage to those trains.

Mr. Jones: A programme of construction of new carriages to make up a couple of new trains would help.

Mr. NEWBERRY: Perhaps that would be the answer, but that is not within my jurisdiction. I listened with interest to the honourable member's comments regarding the problems faced by the Cairns Harbour Board. I had the opportunity of having a good look at the Cairns Harbour Board area while I was in Cairns at the tourist festival and I can assure the honourable member that I will have a look at it or discuss it with him, if he likes, at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. Jones: That 70 ft. extension out in the middle of the inlet could become a navigational hazard.

Mr. NEWBERRY: We will have a look to see what can be done about that. I know my director is listening to what the honourable member has to say. As to representation on harbour boards, the honourable member will realise that under the Act local government councils can nominate a representative from outside the council.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. NEWBERRY: In the main they pick one of their members, but in the case of the Sarina Shire Council, we had an outside

member for many years. In that case it was a representative of the sugar industry and I am sure—

Mr. Casey: Mr. Langdon.

Mr. NEWBERRY: That's right. He was a member of the harbour board for many years.

If I may return to the comments of the honourable member for Rockhampton North—he criticised high-rise building on the Gold Coast. He also criticised some of the constructive contributions made by Government members. I believe that high-rise building on the Gold Coast is some sort of an attraction. On the North Coast we see the odd high-rise building, but I believe those buildings are some sort of an attraction for the Gold Coast.

Mr. Houston: They do throw a shade on the beach.

Mr. NEWBERRY: Yes. That kind of problem is being overcome. The by-law that was gazetted on 10 March 1973 allowed for 25 per cent site coverage. Only last week I was informed that that was reduced to 10 per cent coverage. Back one street, 45 per cent coverage is allowable. I believe the new by-laws will afford the protection tourists require. It will ensure that there is less shadow on the beach. Of course, some people like shade as well as sun. At Surfers Paradise the siting of the main road more or less created the difficulty. There is no doubt that in many parts of the Gold Coast area the lie of the land made it essential for the high-rise buildings to be constructed on the foreshores so that tourists could get a view of the beach. When I go to the beach, I like to see the sea and not be accommodated a mile back from it.

Mr. Jones: What about the boat harbour in Cairns?

Mr. NEWBERRY: It has developed to a stage where we may be able to make an announcement in the near future. I look forward to having the plans completed. From what I have seen of the plans, the Cairns frontage will be really enhanced to the great benefit of that city and tourists who visit the area.

Mr. Jones: Have you had a look at the possibility of some of those high-rise buildings interfering with navigation aids and that sort of thing?

Mr. NEWBERRY: That might be out of my jurisdiction.

The honourable member for Albert referred to the Delft Report and what might be done about the mouth of the Nerang River. In view of the urgent need for something to be done there, particularly with the approach of the cyclone season, I have decided to send Mr. Bill Gale of the Beach Protection Authority to Holland to discuss the construction of groynes at the mouth of

that river. Only last week he had lengthy discussions with the Gold Coast City Council on the matter.

I might also mention for the benefit of the honourable member for Cairns that the proposed foreshore development in his city includes a boat harbour, and the developers have been given till the end of the month to come back with a revised plan in conformity with the requirements of all authorities, including the Cairns City Council.

As to the extensions to the A.N.L. wharf—the Marine Board has approved of the plan and is satisfied that it is safe for navigation.

Mr. Jones: I would still like to talk to you about it.

Mr. NEWBERRY: All right.

I should like to acknowledge the many kind words spoken by almost all speakers about the efforts of the officers of my two departments. I agree with the praise expressed, as they are indeed doing a fine job. On behalf of my officers I thank all honourable members.

I also express my gratitude for the assistance, advice and encouragement received from honourable members of this Assembly. When I say that I refer to all honourable members. Particular mention of the members of my parliamentary committee is appropriate because without the great help of these able and reasonable men, my job would have been very much more difficult.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Row): Order! By agreement, under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 22 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Tourism and Marine Services.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

Tourism and Marine Services—

	\$
Department of Harbours and Marine	9,276,459
Balance of Vote, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account	43,299,118

LANDS, FORESTRY, NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

CHIEF OFFICE, DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

Hon. K. B. TOMKINS (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (3.57 p.m.): I move—

“That \$6,522,544 be granted for ‘Department of Lands—Chief Office’.”

Since taking over the portfolio of Lands and Forestry, and additionally National Parks and Wildlife Service, I have found the task entrusted to me most satisfying.

Having spent most of my life on the land, I regard the business of administering properly and effectively about 90 per cent of the land of Queensland as presenting a challenge to me, and I do not shirk it. I have been fortunate in having a very efficient Land Administration Commission to guide me in the many decisions I am required to make.

Detailed statistics have already been conveyed to honourable members per medium of the department's annual report, which also embodies the report of the Superintendent of Stock Routes and Rural Fires Board. The 1974-75 report of the Fauna Section of the National Parks and Wildlife Service is contained in the annual report of the Department of Primary Industries, and that of National Parks in the 1974-75 annual report of the Department of Forestry.

My following remarks will be confined to the broader aspects of land administration, but in the first instance I would like to make reference to the Government's role in assisting landholders in their time of need during periods of market recessions, droughts and floods.

I refer honourable members to that section of the report entitled “Assistance to Primary Producers” and mention that the Government's record in dealing with the problems that have confronted landholders over the years has been one of complete understanding, and every effort has been made to alleviate their plight. The Government, fully realising the effect of a lengthy period of drought accompanied by a market collapse, introduced in 1970 the wool industry assistance scheme whereby rents payable on leasehold sheep properties were reduced to a level more consistent with the state of the industry.

The future and prosperity of the State depends to a large degree upon the viability of our primary industries, and the concessions granted by the Government to wool growers during troublesome drought times bridged the economic gap and allowed the industry to recover from a serious situation. At this time, recovery, though slow, may be reaching the permanent stage. The average price of wool is still far in excess of the depressed return in 1971-72.

The present poor beef market again demonstrates the susceptibility of some of our major rural industries to sudden and erratic variations in income. Efforts are being made towards more stable marketing arrangements for meat, which hopefully may insulate producers to a greater extent from this uncertainty and allow them to plan ahead with a greater sense of security.

Under the continuing efficient control of the Land Development Branch, the estate development programme for 1975-76 provides for an expenditure of \$2,000,000 on some 54 projects throughout the State. The commission is receiving increasing pressure from local authorities and the general public to make more land available at various centres

for residential purposes. At a recent sale in Tannum Sands, nine lots were offered and 80 persons attended. At Rainbow Beach, 38 lots were offered and 222 persons attended the sale.

Mr. Casey: How was Karumba last week?

Mr. TOMKINS: It was very good; there was a big roll-up and we sold most of the blocks.

Mr. Marginson: What about Ipswich?

Mr. TOMKINS: I have not been informed about the Ipswich sale.

Requests from other Government departments such as the Housing Commission and the Works Department are also increasing. Increased standards of development now required by most local authorities and the substantial increase in development costs will require an increase in expenditure if the Crown is to develop and release a sufficient number of allotments each year to help to satisfy demand and thus keep land prices at a reasonable and steady level.

During 1974-75, 377 allotments were released for sale, and this does not take into account the substantial number of allotments made available to other departments and various charitable institutions at cost. Action is in train to offer 588 allotments during the present financial year. Should an agreement be reached between the State and the Commonwealth for the release of substantial funds for urban development, the expertise of the Land Development Branch of my department, with an infusion of extra staff, will be quite capable of carrying out increased operations.

The harrisia cactus scheme at Collinsville and other centres throughout the State was continued and a total of \$518,363 was expended from Revenue Vote in this respect. An amount of \$552,677 has been provided for the destruction of harrisia cactus during the 1975-76 financial year.

The Alan Fletcher Research Station is continuing its work with experimental insects from South America for use on harrisia cactus. It is too early at this stage to judge their effectiveness, but it is known that some insects have survived in the field. Initial results of the use by the scheme of the new weedicide, Nopalmate, are most encouraging and this material has been adopted by the scheme for all of its spraying operations. Considerable interest has been shown by landholders in the use of Nopalmate, particularly since its lower price and long-lasting effects were illustrated. It is confidently expected that the use of this chemical will increase considerably as it becomes more widely known.

Purchase of weedicide and poisons for the year, together with costs associated therewith, totalled \$590,000. For this purpose an amount of \$650,000 has been provided in the 1975-76 financial year. Some weedicides have

become more readily available over the past 12 months and it is expected that the supply position of all the weedicides normally stocked by the department will be in a good position in the next two to three months. Demand over the past few weeks has increased considerably.

An amount of \$7,100 was expended on the destruction of groundsel bush in the Greater Brisbane Area during the year. An amount of \$10,000 is expected to be expended for this purpose during the 1975-76 financial year. This is in addition to any amount the Superintendent of Stock Routes may require for the destruction of groundsel in the remainder of the State.

The Rabbit Control Authority continued its planned programme of rabbit control in the southern part of the State during 1974-75. Financial limitations necessitated some restriction of the 1974-75 programme such as not replacing employees who terminated their services with the authority. The provision of plant storage sheds at St. George, Inglewood, Texas and Stanthorpe was held over. An expenditure of \$233,000 by the authority is provided for during 1975-76, plus \$180,000 by the Darling Downs/Moreton Rabbit Board, making a total of \$413,000. This includes 20 per cent on previous year's expenditure to cover inflationary costs.

Receipts from Landholders in the Rabbit Control Authority area for 1975-76 will be \$150,000. Landholders in the Darling Downs/Moreton Rabbit Board area will contribute \$180,000. With a Consolidated Revenue contribution of \$32,000 and \$35,390 from sale of plant and other sundry receipts, an estimated over-expenditure of \$15,000 will be met from reserves. During periods of low rabbit activity, employees of the authority have given valuable service to landholders in control of locust infestations and have assisted in experimental exercises for the control of wild pigs.

The Land Development (Fitzroy Basin) Scheme (generally known as the "Brigalow scheme"), which was implemented in 1962 after comprehensive studies by State officers and the Commonwealth Bureau of Agricultural Economics, culminated in an agreement for the Commonwealth Government to lend initially \$14,500,000 and finally \$23,000,000. The first agreement was ratified by the Brigalow and Other Lands Development Act of 1962, and the extended agreement is covered by an amending Act in 1967.

Although Commonwealth finance was necessary to allow the development to proceed, the success or failure of the scheme depended upon State planning and administration. Furthermore, the State must repay every cent borrowed, plus interest at the long-term bond rate that applied when each advance was drawn. For administrative purposes the scheme was divided into Areas I, IA and II, south of the Central Railway (roughly

between Wandoan and Comet), and Area III extending northerly towards Nebo and the Sutor River.

Even before the Commonwealth-State agreement was formally signed on 1 December 1962, the Land Administration Commission had commenced the clearing of scrub in Area I and was able to offer the first 11 blocks for ballot in March 1963.

The first setback to the scheme occurred in the successive drought years of 1964 and 1965, when grass seed either failed to germinate or was scorched after germination. Conditions were ideal, however, for brigalow regrowth and the cost of spraying these suckers or of advancing the planned stage of pasture development to cultivation, to eradicate the regrowth, added a great burden to the settlers who had expended their funds on essential development work and on the purchase of some breeding stock.

It became necessary, then, for the Government to make concessions in the repayment of loans and to make further funds available for the control of regrowth. The early loan limitation for scrub-clearing and pasture establishment, water facilities, boundary and internal fencing and dip and yards, was \$48,000. An extension to \$60,000 was then made to assist with the purchase of breeding cattle and sucker control where necessary. The restriction to a \$60,000 loan still applies to Areas I, IA and II, but in view of the larger selections needed in Area III to carry up to 1,200 grown cattle, loans of \$72,000 generally are required.

The plan of development in the brigalow scheme was for the acquisition by negotiation of the larger holdings that in general were still being utilised for cattle-grazing on native pastures, the subdivision of these holdings after careful investigation and the leasing back of a good living area to the former lessees. The early "retention areas" were granted as grazing homesteads, but the policy was changed to make such areas available as grazing homestead freeholding leases so as not to disadvantage the former lessees, whose surplus areas were offered under freeholding tenure. Of course, the early grazing homesteads may now be converted to a better tenure.

The closer settlement or competition blocks were offered as either purchase leases under the selective method of application or as auction purchase freeholds. The purchase money in the case of purchase leases is payable over 25 years, free of interest. When a block is purchased at auction, it may be for cash or under current policy on a deposit of one-tenth, a further two-tenths within three months (interest only for two years) and the balance of purchase money over the remaining eight years, with interest at the rate of 5 per cent per annum.

Development loans are not available to the purchaser of auction blocks, which are intended for persons who have sufficient capital or capacity to borrow from other

sources of finance. The accelerated rate of payment on those blocks also assists the State in meeting the costs of access roads and administration while the scheme is in the development stage. The administration costs debited to the scheme cover only motor vehicle expenses and other items needed specifically for the scheme. The salaries of officers employed by the Land Settlement Branch of the department are met from State revenue funds. From a purely financial point of view, the trust fund set up under the scheme is planned to break even. Repayments by the settlers should cover Commonwealth advances and the purchase money from the land should meet road and administration costs plus any shortfall in interest due to the Commonwealth.

The stage has been reached where the 4,500,000 hectares (11,200,000 acres) covered by the scheme has been classified and the land suitable for subdivision dealt with. The final ballot was held on 11 October 1974 and the last two auction blocks were sold at Rockhampton on 4 June 1975. The scheme has resulted in the granting of 113 better tenures to former lessees over 600,000 hectares (1,500,000 acres) and the provision of 247 new holdings containing some 1,400,000 hectares (3,500,000 acres). Blocks offered for ballot total 170 and those for sale, 77.

Owing mainly to the success of acquisition by negotiation, it is unlikely that the State will need to draw more than \$18,000,000 from the Commonwealth. These advances, together with capitalised interest and accruing interest, are to be repaid to the Commonwealth by 1995. Unfortunately the increases in interest rates have had to be passed on to the settlers who are still developing their selections, and the downturn in cattle prices is causing concern to those who have not had the opportunity to become established. One brighter spot, however, is the availability of breeding cattle at reasonable prices.

Generally, I am very pleased with the scheme and I believe that the early settlers, after having overcome their drought and regrowth problems, are well on the way to financial stability. Naturally there are some exceptions and in the main these people aimed at an accelerated farming enterprise instead of following the recommended improved pastures/cattle grazing principle. Machinery and cultivation costs and uncertain rainfall patterns have left a few of these settlers in unenviable positions. Although higher interest rates and decreased cattle prices are posing problems for the later settlers, I am confident that with a reasonable run of seasons they too will triumph in their endeavours.

The successful promotion of the brigalow scheme by the Government is well proven by the new communities which have developed between Wandoan and Nebo, the greatly improved road system and the increased cattle production. Other State funds have been used to provide the services and

amenities which make conditions a little easier for these modern pioneers, who are not afraid to accept the challenge of hard work and adversity on the land.

Dairy adjustment schemes operated by the Department of Lands comprise the Commonwealth-State Dairy Adjustment Program and the State's own supplementary scheme for assistance to the dairy industry. These schemes are funded through the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Fund and the Assistance to Primary Producers Special Fund respectively.

The original Commonwealth-State Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme expired on 26 July 1974. It was replaced by an expanded scheme entitled the Dairy Adjustment Program, which came into operation in Queensland on 11 December 1974. Queensland's performance under the original scheme was outstanding when compared with that of the other States. The amount of \$11,133,615 expended to 26 July 1974 in the purchase of 424 farms represents 75 per cent of the total commitment of almost \$15,000,000 by all States.

The Dairy Adjustment Program, which envisaged an expenditure of \$28,000,000 by all States over the short-term period expiring on 30 June 1976 not only provided for the disposal of uneconomic dairy farms but also incorporated a very wide range of reconstruction assistance including interest-free loans for conversion to bulk milk supply, purchase of build-up land by dairy farmers, developmental expenditure including upgrading of dairies, stock and plant, diversification from dairying and rehousing and retaining assistance for vendors.

Unfortunately, demand, particularly in Victoria, exceeded all expectations and as the allocation of \$28,000,000 was almost fully committed the programme was suspended during August last. Queensland's final allocation from the programme is \$4,729,385 or just on 16 per cent of the available funds. In all, 418 farmers and eight factories have been approved advances comprising \$1,350,000 for 295 bulk milk conversions, \$1,320,000 for 266 property development loans including dairy upgrading, \$1,400,000 for 62 farm amalgamations and build-ups and \$660,000 for factories.

An amount of \$826,575 was expended during 1974-75 and \$800,000 of that amount has been recovered from the Commonwealth. A total of \$3,925,000 for advances has been approved in the present budget of expenditures from the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme and comprises \$225,000 for purchase of uneconomic dairy farms and \$3,700,000 for advances to borrowers for all other purposes.

Out of a total of \$44,500,000 made available under the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme and the Dairy Adjustment Program, Queensland has utilised \$15,863,000, which is equivalent to 35.65 per cent. In

comparison, Victoria utilised 37.76 per cent, all but a small portion being under the Dairy Adjustment Program.

The terms available from the Commonwealth under the original scheme included a 50 per cent grant factor to provide for losses and meet administrative costs, etc. This grant, with unexpected redemption of loans over the last two years, is enabling the State to build up a surplus which is being transferred to the Assistance to Primary Producers Special Fund for utilisation on the basis of a revolving fund for State special supplementary assistance to the industry. The amount proposed for transfer this year is \$450,000. Budgetary provision of \$510,000 has been made for interest and redemption payments to the Commonwealth and a total of \$113,201 has been provided for salaries and administration.

Provision was made in the 1972-73 State Budget for a \$5,500,000 three-year special scheme to supplement the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme and to provide for assistance with conversion to bulk-milk supply. The scheme is operated through the Assistance to Primary Producers Special Fund, which, as already mentioned, is funded primarily from surplus funds accumulating in the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Fund. An amount of \$1,450,000 had been transferred as at 30 June, 1975, and the proposed transfer of \$450,000 during 1975-76 will increase the amount transferred to \$1,900,000.

Only a limited number of farmers have taken advantage of the scheme and as at 30 June last the amount advanced to borrowers totalled \$515,433. The reasons for the relatively low response appeared to be mainly the lack of confidence in the industry, rapidly rising interest rates and a wait-and-see attitude with respect to possible Commonwealth assistance and as to exactly what assistance would be available when the new programme came into operation.

The scheme has been brought into line with the Commonwealth programme but on a less restricted basis. It was being utilised to assist deserving cases ineligible under the Commonwealth programme and to provide for those dairy factories which did not qualify for assistance with bulk milk receival expenditures.

With suspension of the Commonwealth programme, applications are now being considered under the State scheme. The budgetary provision of \$1,000,000 for advances to borrowers during 1975-76 should permit the State to give worth-while assistance to the industry even though some limitations must necessarily now be applied with respect to purposes for which advances may be made and the amount of advances. Of course it is not now possible to allow interest-free loans for bulk-milk conversion.

Amendments to the Land Act to provide for reservation of areas as environmental parks were assented to on 18 April, 1974, and

1974-75 was the first year in which provision was made in the Lands Department's Estimates for expenditure on environmental parks. In terms of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975, the sections of the Land Act relating to environmental parks are to be administered by the Director of National Parks and Wildlife as from 5 June 1975.

Upon the passing of the legislation dealing with environmental parks, the Land Administration Commission sought advice from all district land commissioners, local authorities and bodies and persons interested in conservation on areas considered suitable for reservation for environmental park purposes. From these inquiries over 200 proposals were received for areas to be reserved as environmental parks.

During the period in which the Land Administration Commission was responsible for environmental parks, areas totalling about 26,187 hectares comprising 43 environmental parks were set apart and reserved for such purpose. Expenditure on environmental parks during 1974-75 totalled \$25,968.60 made up of \$17,972.35 for acquisition of land and \$7,996.25 for development costs, surveys, etc.

Proposals for reservation of areas for environmental park purposes and for which investigations had not been completed by the Land Administration Commission as at the date of commencement of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975 have been forwarded to the Director of National Parks and Wildlife Service for attention.

Continuing in the vein of protection of the environment, I mention that in cases where approval of conversion of leasehold to freehold tenure is, by law, subject to considerations of public interest and public purposes, all such applications relating to land within 400 metres of the coast are referred to the Beach Protection Authority for its views. Also, where such leasehold land is mangrove or tidal swamp, the views of the Department of Harbours and Marine and the Queensland Fisheries Service are sought. Generally, these departments are opposed to the conversion of such areas to freehold tenure because the land would be removed from the provisions of the Land Act and thus from control of use of these areas which may be taken in terms of conditions attaching to the leases.

The freeholding policy of the Government continues to receive the whole-hearted support of landholders and up to 30 June 1975 a total of 22,885 applications had been received and processed. During the financial year 1974-75, the Land Court determined the unimproved value of the land and market value of commercial timber, where necessary, in respect of 418 holdings. In the same period, I made determinations in respect of 872 holdings of which the lessees accepted 431 and proceeded to conversion without reference to the Court.

In consequence of legislation introduced in the last session of Parliament providing for the conversion of tenure of grazing selections to that of grazing homestead perpetual lease, it is expected that during the forthcoming year and succeeding years the commission will be actively engaged in the examination of applications from landholders who wish to avail themselves of this change in land policy. Once the advantages of this tenure become well known, it will be widely seen throughout the State's grazing lands.

The 1974-75 fire season was, with the notable exception of Boulia, Bulloo and McKinlay Shires, one of little fire damage. Claims on the Government by the Boulia and Bulloo Shires for financial assistance were met by a contribution from the Rural Fires Board at 50 per cent of shire expenditure in this field. The contribution by insurance companies of \$50,000 per annum provided for by legislation in 1973 partly rectified a situation which rural landholders regarded as unjust, that is, their contribution through insurance premiums to a fire authority to whose services they had no access. The full amount was expended on bush fire brigade equipment, but even with this injection of funds, demand by the greatly increased numbers of active brigades exceeded supply and for the first time in its history the board was unable to fulfil all brigade orders.

The report on the scientific study of pre-harvest burning of sugar-cane has now been completed and the cane-burning meter has now been produced to take its place with the grassland, forestland and brigalow burning meters. The study was carried out by scientists from the Bureau of Research in Canberra and the State Forestry Department. The report has been handed to various bodies associated with the cane industry and its proper application to the benefit of the industry will be determined following their consideration. During the year the fire fighting device known as the "Brompton Rat" gained considerable publicity as a major fire-fighting implement, with wide application. The board has subsidised the appliance in respect of bush fire brigades and trials have been conducted by the State Forestry Department, Australian Paper Mills and the Bush Fire Council of New South Wales which indicate the suitability of the device in many areas. A grass roller suitable for fire break construction in heavy grass areas is at present being made from a model observed in the Northern Territory. This device, too, may have significant application in fire prevention.

The Rural Fires Board now provides, in addition to a complete cover of personal compensation, a policy of compensation for damage sustained to private equipment used by bush fire brigades. The cover in this field has now been increased to \$10,000 for any one piece of equipment. Rural fire districts now number 189, each with a chief fire

warden, while fire warden's districts number 1,703 with a fire warden appointed to each. Sixty-three bush fire brigades were formed last year bringing the total to 1,241. These comprise some 18,000 persons—probably the largest group of volunteer personnel under any single authority in the State.

The Co-ordinating Board has reported that the 1974 devastating floods seriously damaged the dingo barrier fence and the repair bill is estimated to be in the vicinity of \$300,000. A Commonwealth grant for this amount became available and as at 30 June 1975 an amount of \$55,674 had been expended. The Co-ordinating Board has found need to continue all current programmes and to allow for the introduction of two new projects following the increased incidence of feral pigs and the evidence of a major weed pest known as parthenium weed.

In the light of clear evidence that increasing feral pig numbers were causing devastating damage, particularly in the grain-growing and sheep-grazing regions, experimental work was initiated using 1080 poison. These trials showed such promise that the Co-ordinating Board, when preparing 1975-76 Estimates, requested provision, and has been allocated a grant from Consolidated Revenue, of \$25,000 to allow the trials to continue.

Reports received during 1974-75 indicated that parthenium weed had become a major pest in Central Queensland. The most northern infestation occurs 120 kilometres south of Charters Towers on the Gregory Developmental Road and extends to Clermont. There is heavy infestation at the junction of the development road and the Kilcummin Road. This area is predominantly a grain sorghum area and the potential of the plant as a crop weed is causing great concern. The plant extends along much of the Clermont-Mackay road, growing right to the road edge. It hangs over the carriage-way, resulting in transport of seed by vehicles. The Estimates provide a special grant of \$5,000 for preliminary investigations during the year.

When estimating the funds required for 1975-76 for control work against both feral pigs and parthenium weed, it had not been considered opportune to institute general eradication work. Since that time the enormity of both problems has become apparent, and it seems inevitable that the board will be obliged to seek additional funds during the year to continue recently introduced State-wide 1080 poisoning campaigns against feral pigs and to undertake actual eradication of parthenium weed.

I now make reference to the Rural Reconstruction Board, which is called on to administer financial assistance to sections of the rural industry hit by difficult economic conditions. There are many in the industry who are unable to obtain further help from normal financing sources, and it is the task of the board to endeavour to assist those, where

recovery seems possible and the defined principles and criteria can be met, from special funds made available by the State and Commonwealth Governments.

Since the commencement of operations in 1971, the board has approved in total under the rural reconstruction scheme and the wool growers' assistance scheme a little over \$42,500,000. Of these funds \$24,000,000 was approved to 1,033 applicants for debt reconstruction and \$13,000,000 to 359 applicants for farm build-up to 30 June 1975, the wool growers' assistance scheme, of course, having provided the remaining \$5,500,000.

It is acknowledged that amalgamation of adjoining properties to enable more economic farm enterprises to be established is an important long-term solution, and the board by agreement with the Commonwealth had endeavoured to channel 70 per cent of its allocations for the last two years towards farm build-up assistance. Unfortunately, however, costs continue on their upward spiral, and during the past year, through a loss of export outlets we have witnessed the collapse in the cattle market. The combined effect has been to place many producers in a desperate financial situation, resulting in a marked increase in applications to the board for debt reconstruction assistance. To illustrate the point I would mention that in the year to June 1975, debt reconstruction applications totalling 295 were received, compared with only 17 in the previous year in this category.

For the 1975-76 year the board has received an allocation of \$5,100,000 from the Commonwealth under the rural reconstruction scheme, and in view of the greater call for debt reconstruction the objective in favour of farm build-up has been lowered to 50 per cent of the commitment.

Whilst the plight of the wool growers a few years ago was the critical area, the impact of the beef crisis which has developed over the past 12 months or so, and its effect on this, the principal cattle State of Australia, has been little short of disastrous. Recognising that the board had inadequate funds at its disposal to cater for the requirements of applicants requesting assistance as a result of the severe downturn in the beef market, the State Government allocated \$10,000,000 to assist beef cattle producers in necessitous circumstances by way of low-interest loans for their carry-on needs. The scheme has recently been extended to cover payment of rates—both shire and water—to June 1975 for specialist beef producers who were unable to obtain finance for this purpose from normal sources. The Commonwealth has now joined with the States in this scheme and has agreed to match our allocations. Thus the board has available \$20,000,000 for lending under the beef cattle industry assistance scheme, and to date 655 advances have been approved for a total of \$8,200,000.

It was a condition of the agreement with the Commonwealth that joint funds be lent at a common interest rate. However, as the Government had already made some loans at

2½ per cent, it was agreed that in the first year loans to producers in Queensland would be required to average 3¼ per cent interest, with the firm objective of bringing all loans to a common interest rate of 4 per cent after the first year. No capital repayments will be required to producers for the first 12 months, and the interest charges for the first year will be capitalised. The position of individual producers will be reviewed after 12 months with the intention that, where possible, normal servicing requirements would be commenced. The Commonwealth has set a limit of \$15,000 on individual loans with the objective of averaging \$12,000 per advance, the maximum term of any loan being seven years. The arrangement also provides for equal State-Commonwealth sharing of loan administration costs and of any shortfall in either principal or interest repayments by the borrowers.

The scheme will be reviewed at the annual ministerial conference about April next, and any possible need for changes in the repayment terms will be considered in the light of conditions then prevailing in the industry.

The Rural Reconstruction Board is also responsible for administration of the fruit-growing reconstruction scheme, which involves the payment of compensation for removal of trees specified in the agreement with the Commonwealth. The scheme, which has been operating since 1972, has been extended to 31 December 1975 for receipt of applications for assistance.

Since its commencement, a total of 95 applications have been received for clear fell or partial pull. The scheme has not had a great impact in this State, being largely confined to the Stanthorpe area, but over the past three years compensation totalling \$162,220 has been approved to 40 fruit growers. An assisted grower undertakes not to replant specified trees for a period of five years, and if this condition is observed loans are not repayable and all interest charged is rebated.

Once again the Rural Reconstruction Board has been called upon to deal expeditiously with the influx of applications coming to hand from beef cattle producers. The task of examining each individual application and also continuing to handle debt reconstruction and farm build-up and reviewing the progress of existing borrowers is an exacting one and has required each member to spend a great deal of his own time in making an assessment prior to each board meeting. When it is remembered that these gentlemen have their normal business responsibilities to attend to as well, I am sure honourable members will join with me in extending sincere thanks to them for their dedication and untiring efforts in helping the man on the land in this time of need.

The Industries Assistance Commission has been carrying out an investigation into all aspects of the rural reconstruction and fruit-growing schemes with a view to determining their future. The public hearings in this

regard have been completed and it is anticipated that the commission's report and recommendations will be available towards the end of this year.

The history of national parks in Queensland is contained in the 1974-75 report of the Department of Forestry and that section of the report is a monument to the dedication of officers of earlier years who were instrumental in foreseeing the importance of preservation long before the pressures of modern demands and needs became apparent and long before it became obvious that a separate service should be created.

The present total area of 1,127,715 hectares of national parks and the year 1908 total of 9,379 hectares points up the progressive increases in dedicated areas particularly in respect of the period of office of this Government.

Preservation of fauna and national parks is now the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Service recently created to accelerate and plan the future of preservation and conservation in Queensland.

Despite normal staffing and financial constraints, the service has made rapid progress towards establishing itself as a vital and effective new initiative of government.

The service has been restructured away from the previous units of national parks on the one hand and fauna conservation on the other. The new staffing, structure and organisation are aimed at presenting an integrated work-force of technicians, scientists and administrators with the common aim of presenting to the Government balanced policies for the conservation of Queensland's natural assets.

The allocation of funds for the current financial year are, in the existing tight economic climate, barely adequate to maintain a steady forward impetus.

The Estimates for 1975-76 include funds for the maintenance of existing national parks and fauna research centres and facilities, working patrols of parks, and the extension of interpretive services. The last-mentioned activity is a fairly new field for the service, designed to assist park visitors to gain more from their visits to our parks, by educative means.

The total allotted at \$404,000 is about the same as for the 1974-75 year; therefore maintenance programmes will barely meet the needs of parks and reserves.

A total of \$100,000 has been allocated for acquisition of land for and developmental work on environmental parks, and \$459,000 has been provided to cover general establishment running expenses, maintenance of plant and equipment and purchase of new and replacement vehicles.

Major new loan undertakings are proposed as follows—staff residences at Carnarvon, Woodgate and Alligator Creek (Mt. Elliott),

\$100,000; single men's barracks at Carnarvon and Girraween, \$18,000; and development of a new facility at Davies Creek outside Mareeba, where \$20,000 is to be spent on picnic, parking and toilet facilities.

At Rosslyn Bay near Yeppoon an administration centre and tracks to serve Double Head and other foreshore parks is to be built at a cost of \$17,000; purchase of a new boat and trailer, \$6,000, will enable more efficient patrol of Newry and Rabbit Islands out from Seaforth.

The lighting of Donna Cave (part of the Chillagoe system) will be completed, and a detailed examination of further cave systems in the area for extension of tourist facilities is planned. The total cost will be \$18,000. The balance of the \$550,000 will allow construction of minor improvements to existing facilities, and the acquisition of further lands. Already, a small but importantly located area has been purchased for addition to the Girraween Park complex.

It is expected that during the year important new parks in the process of proclamation will be gazetted. Once this occurs, it will be necessary to plan for staff to manage them and for visitor facilities.

Additionally, the service will be housed in a new headquarters during the year and will acquire additional staff to help it function more effectively. It is anticipated that Estimates for 1976-77 year will be of a much higher order than is the case this financial year, by which time the service will be operating more smoothly and efficiently.

At this point I would like to draw honourable members' attention to the table presented on page 2 of the annual report of the Department of Forestry. An error in calculation had occurred in that table and this has been corrected by the inclusion of an erratum slip in all copies of the report.

The Department of Forestry is a large and important one providing permanent employment for a wages staff of 1,739 men and 598 salaried staff. An amount of \$5,959,556 has been provided from Consolidated Revenue to cover salaries and contingencies. In addition, under Trust and Special Funds, an amount of \$9,177,000 has been provided under the Forestry and Lumbering Fund and \$14,609,000 under the Reforestation Trust Fund. Of this \$14,609,000, an amount of \$10,630,000 was transferred from Loan Funds made available through the Co-ordinator-General and \$2,400,000 will be provided by the Commonwealth under the provisions of the Commonwealth Softwoods Agreements Act 1972. The remaining \$1,579,000 is made up from a balance in the Reforestation Trust Fund of \$152,000; special employment funds for Aborigines, \$481,000; the Regional Employment Development scheme, \$746,000; and relief of unemployment, \$200,000.

The total Loan Funds made available by the Co-ordinator General was \$10,700,000, of which, as previously mentioned,

\$10,630,000 was transferred to the Reforestation Trust Fund. In addition, an amount of \$70,000 has been made available from Loan Funds for provision of recreation facilities on State forests. One major facility constructed on a State forest in 1974-75 at Camp Mountain was officially opened on 26 September 1975.

Honourable members will realise that these figures do not include any provision for funds for national parks administration, as the national parks branch of the Forestry Department is now incorporated within the independent National Parks and Wildlife Service set up by the Government, for which separate Estimates will be tabled.

The main responsibilities of the service relate to the husbanding of the native timber stands on State forests, timber reserves, and other Crown lands and the establishment of plantations to make up for deficiencies of softwoods in these native timber stands. Incidental to these are a number of other important functions relating to the growth and uses of timber and to services providing advice and protection to the users of the product of the forest.

In respect of the native production forests, the most important are the areas of State forest. These are permanently dedicated to the continuing production of timber and involve an area of 3,292,291 hectares. As honourable members are well aware, this Government has often been the butt of ill-informed criticism on its attitude towards the environment, and in this regard they will be interested in the facts relative to the way the area of State forests has been consistently increased over recent years. Since 1957 the area has risen by 1,265,540 hectares. I will again refer to these figures when dealing with the plantation programme of the department.

Management of these State forests entails their protection from the ravages of wild fires, the harvesting of the crop in accordance with the principles of sustained yield followed by the regeneration and culture of the new crop. In all State forests other than those destined for conversion to plantations, harvesting is controlled by a system of selective tree-marking which aims at retention of adequate growing stock in the forest and ensures that the essential nature of the forest is maintained. Since all State forests are fauna sanctuaries, this means that they will continue to provide a haven of refuge for the wildlife often threatened by other forms of land use.

These native forests support a valuable milling industry yielding about 80 per cent of the State's total cut and in so doing provide employment in field, transport, mill and factory for more than 16,000 Queenslanders. It is therefore clearly important to the livelihood of many good citizens that they should continue to do so and that confidence in the industry should not be continually eroded by irresponsible demands for logging to cease over large areas of productive forest.

That these forests under proper management can continue to provide a product in very short supply without detriment to the environment is abundantly clear in that areas at Cooloola, Fraser Island and Mount Nebo—to name but three currently much in the news—have been subject to forest management with logging for up to 100 years and yet are still considered by some conservationists to warrant national park status of world significance.

One of the advantages of wood is that it is a natural asset that is replaceable, and the forests in which it is grown serve a multitude of other purposes such as protection of soil and of water catchments, havens for wildlife, grazing, honey production and open recreation. Tree-marking and silvicultural treatment of the State forests aim at improving their production of timber and so enable them to make up for the drop in production from private lands. Last year an area of 19,260 hectares was afforded silvicultural treatment and this was 5,589 hectares more than in the previous year.

The State's request for financial assistance from the Commonwealth along the lines of that provided for softwood plantations has been rejected, but resubmission is proposed, as provision of such financial assistance was the first recommendation in a recent report submitted to the Commonwealth Government by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation. If successful, this will permit expanded activity in treatment of cypress pine and blackbutt forests of the South and of rain forests in the North.

Of recent years there has been a reduction in the expenditure on the protection of these forests with less emphasis on firebreak construction and maintenance and more on road access and on fuel reduction by prescribed burning, including the use of techniques of aerial ignition during the winter months.

Whilst our native forests provide a variety of fine timbers remarkable for durability and strength and cabinet woods of great beauty, they fall short of meeting the State's need for hardwoods and are quite inadequate to meet the demand for softwoods. It has therefore been necessary to import substantially from the hardwood forest of the Northern Rivers district of New South Wales and to promote a vigorous programme of reforestation to compensate for the lack of softwoods, with the object of achieving self-sufficiency on a State and national basis by about the end of the century.

For some years now this has been the principal function of the Department of Forestry and, as a result of its efforts since the inception of the Softwoods Agreements Act some 9 years ago, achievement of this goal seems possible. Members will, I am sure, be interested in the following facts in regard to the softwood plantations of the State. The nett area of effective softwood plantations now stands at just over 96,345 hectares, of which 50,460 hectares, or just

over half this area, has been planted since April 1966. The annual yield from plantations is steadily growing and last year 160,706 cubic metres was harvested to support some 26 mills. It is significant that these plantations, which amount to less than 3 per cent of the area of State forests, now contribute approximately 35 per cent of the timber processed from these forests.

A recent study by the Forest Resources Branch has shown that within 10 years the State will have standing in its plantations a volume of softwood equal to the total quantity of hoop, kauri and bunya pine utilised from our native forest heritage over the whole of our past history in the service of the growing State and nation.

The establishment of plantations of exotic softwoods is frequently the subject of criticism from conservationists, especially where it involves other than farmlands that have already been cleared. It has become fashionable with these people to call such plantations "biological deserts". Those who use this term are more concerned with turning a nice phrase than with the truth. Numerous birds and some animals frequent these forests and there is clear evidence in older plantations of exotics that the site is being improved by the crop and its protection. Soil is stable and, under the surface litter, a varied and vigorous micro-fauna works to its benefit. In this regard it must be realised that timber is an agricultural crop traditionally supplying man's basic needs and that the major demand in developed communities is for the softwoods and their products.

There are cogent reasons of national significance why Australia should aim at substantial self-sufficiency in this field and this has been accepted by all Governments, State and Commonwealth, and is the very basis of the Softwoods Agreements Act that has achieved so much. The most reliable estimate based on trends in population growth and per capita consumption indicate that an area of 200,000 hectares of softwoods is necessary for Queensland by the end of the century and this has been the target. If present programme areas can be maintained in the long term, the target will be achieved.

Now let us get this into perspective by comparing it with some other necessary crops. The Queensland area of assigned sugar lands in 1972 was 300,000 hectares and had increased by 110,000 hectares, or more than half, over the previous 10 years. The area of wheat in this State in 1972 was 660,000 hectares. Obviously the efficient growth of all agricultural crops involves substantial environmental change, but assuredly that associated with softwood plantations is the least severe.

Let me look at this another way. The present area of State forests—areas permanently dedicated as sanctuaries to remain in Crown ownership—is 3,292,291 hectares and is increasing annually. The present area of softwood plantations at 96,345 hectares

is less than 3 per cent of that of State forests and even with anticipated annual plantings it will never exceed 5 per cent of the total. Therefore it is anticipated that at least 95 per cent of the area of these permanent reservations will continue as natural forests meeting part of our timber needs, providing the natural habitat for our native fauna and meeting all the multiple purposes that forests do. In point of fact much of the area of State forests clothing steep slopes is classed as protection forest and will not be logged. So it can be seen that over all the plantation programme has but little impact on the forests as a habitat for native fauna and flora.

In so far as particular areas are concerned, the planting programme is divided between the native hoop pine and the true pines or exotics. Hoop pine is planted mainly in the rain forests of South-east Queensland where it occurred as an occasional tree. It is not amenable to methods of natural regeneration which are used with cypress pine and the eucalypts and can be grown successfully only by planting in cleared areas. Since the inception of planting with this species some 50 years ago, it has been the practice to leave substantial strips of rain forest uncleared as a protection measure and about 25 per cent of the natural forest has been so retained in these plantation complexes. In addition areas of merit are held as beauty spots and as scientific areas. Moreover, once the planted hoop pine has taken control of the site and pruning is complete, the regrowth of scrub species is encouraged and in many of the older plantations a condition obtains that is similar to the original rain forest with hoop pine dominants over an understorey of scrub species. In fact foresters are conservationists by their very training and can be proud of the part they have played in preserving our bushland environment.

The exotic pines are planted mainly on the coastal plain between Maryborough and Caboolture in what is loosely termed the wallum lands. Here slash pine, a native of the southern states of the U.S.A., is the main species planted on types ranging from treeless swamps through true wallum with stunted banksias and tea-trees to the better drained sites carrying high forest with species of low value for milling or other purposes. As they are State forests, the Act requires that these areas be managed for the production of timber in perpetuity and these plantations of slash pine have converted forest of little to no value for timber production to areas of high value already contributing approximately one-eighth of the total annual yield from State forests in mill logs and pulpwood. Some idea of the value of these forests may be gained from the figures for a 40-year-old area of loblolly pine at Beerwah recently covered in its fourth thinning which yielded nearly \$1,175 per hectare in stumpage and left standing trees currently valued at about \$7,500 per hectare.

At the same time these areas are providing rural employment in forest, transport and mill when this is sorely needed. In this regard it is of interest to note that a new mill was recently opened in Maryborough to process the forest thinnings from the comparatively young plantations at Tuan at a time when that town is gravely concerned with employment. Most critics of the policy of converting these coastal lands to plantations of exotic pines accept that timber should be grown for the future but suggest it should be done on areas of unproductive or uneconomic farmlands. They are concerned for the effect of operations on the environment and on the destruction of the natural habitat of our native fauna.

It has always been the practice to leave strips of standing forest along the main watercourses. Current plantation designs provide for the retention of at least 15 per cent of the native vegetation, sampling all major types from spur top to wetland. While this affords some measure of habitat for the native animals (and some of these thrive in the plantation environment), it is considered that in general such should be properly provided for in areas of national parks and areas of State forest not involved in the planting programme and maintained in their natural condition. Recently, consideration has also been given to the aesthetics of the plantation scene and areas of native forest are being left along highways and in strategic spots to lend diversity to the landscape and to present a more pleasing scene.

The suggestion that unproductive farmlands should be devoted to softwood plantations is quite good so far as it goes. It has been followed in a number of areas such as Pomona, the Granite Belt and the Tinaroo Dam, where reasonably large areas could be obtained and included in a relatively compact planting programme. However, such areas are extremely limited in localities where climate and soil are suitable for softwood growth. I have, on occasions, invited people to nominate areas which would meet these conditions, but have not received any suggestions.

It is my firm conviction that the softwood planting programme is soundly based and is being properly implemented to build up in this State a forest estate that will be more valuable than nature endowed us with. I have visited the south-east of South Australia where this condition has already been attained and where extensive and diversified industries depend on the plantations of the exotic radiata pine and maintain a prosperous and growing people. I foresee the time when a similar condition will obtain in South-east Queensland. The foundations have been laid, industry is developing and the amount of \$14,609,000 provided in this year's Estimates will permit the good work to continue at a highly satisfactory rate and ensure that work in the native forests is maintained at a reasonable though reduced level.

I now turn to the timber industry and its relation to the Department of Forestry. For some years up till quite recently they have obtained market conditions most favourable to the industry which have led to increased milling activity in the cypress pine areas and in the plantations—the only sources of supply that permit expansion. Important changes have occurred in the marketing of cypress pine as a result of declining supplies of hardwoods in the south-east of the State. This species is being used more and more as scantling for house framing, as are slash pine and hoop pine from the plantations. These changes, in conjunction with the development of strong markets in the mining centres of Central Queensland and in the Gladstone area, make it necessary for a review to be undertaken of depots used in connection with stumpage calculations throughout the State. To permit this to be done, a market survey is being carried out with the co-operation of the milling industry.

The timber industry is a very important one to the State in that it provides direct employment for more than 16,000 Queenslanders largely in rural centres, and the value of the final product of timber processed in the State is well in excess of \$100,000,000. Unfortunately, there has been a serious loss of buoyancy in the industry over the last two years because of a drop in demand from the building trade sector. There are some signs that demand is reviving and it is hoped that the worst of the slump is behind us. Maintaining supplies to the mills and ensuring orderly logging of the forests entail continuing and substantial expenditure on access roads, forest inventory, tree-marking and measuring. In addition there is expenditure in haulage contracts where timber is sold, delivered at mill or on rail and for hardwoods supplied mainly to the railways. Last year's expenditures under these heads were—roads, \$962,449; harvesting and marketing, \$2,094,509; and hardwood supplies to railways, \$590,074.

The Forest Products Research Branch continues to provide a valuable service to industry and to timber users and is responsible for enforcing the provisions of the Timber Users' Protection Act to see that timbers susceptible to borers are correctly immunised and that required standards of moisture are met. The recently proclaimed Diseases in Timber Act is another step towards adequate consumer protection in the forest products field. These entail the maintenance of laboratory facilities and are services necessary to maintain confidence in the use of timber. Determinations of moisture and of preservative content amount to about 2,500 a year.

The Forest Resources Branch is primarily responsible for the inventories of the forest estate on which are based the calculations of sustained yield as required under the Act. Since 1958 this branch has also had the massive task of assessing timber values on areas subject to freeholding action. In

association with this work the branch has been responsible for the reservation as State forests of more than 400,000 hectares. In future it will be responsible also for forest entitlement areas under the recently proclaimed legislation.

I commend the Estimates of the Forestry Department for the approval of members so that the Department of Forestry may carry out its responsibilities—the management of natural forests to maintain and steadily improve their value, and the management of the plantation resource and its expansion to meet present and future needs of the people of Queensland.

I would like to record my appreciation of the services of Mr. Brian Heffernan, the Chairman of the Land Administration Commission, and I join with him his co-members, Mr. Paul O'Gorman and Mr. George Lee. Mr. Lee replaced Mr. M. Johnson, who is now a Land Court Member. Also Mr. Len Lawrence and Mr. Joe French have been of considerable assistance to me as acting member of the Land Administration Commission and acting secretary respectively. Mr. O'Gorman, in addition to his commission duties, completed his assignment as chairman of the Flood Damaged Homes Committee with his usual drive and enthusiasm and is presently involved in the preliminaries leading to consolidation of the Land Act, which it is hoped will be introduced to this Parliament sometime next year.

I should also like to place on record my appreciation of the services of the Conservator of Forests, Mr. Bill Bryan, his deputy, Mr. Tom Ryley, and the senior officers of the Forestry Department who also have been of considerable help to me. Other officers of the Departments of Lands and Forestry have contributed to the successful management of the State's land and timber resources and I commend them all for their dedicated services to the State.

The annual report of the Lands Department, which includes the reports of the Superintendent of Stock Routes and the Rural Fires Board, has been tabled, as also have the reports of the Department of Forestry and the Rural Reconstruction Board. The reports contain details of many other facets of the work coming under my jurisdiction which, when combined with the additional information I have furnished in this introduction, will have provided as wide a coverage as possible.

Finally, I would like to say how much I have been assisted by my personal staff in carrying out my duties as Minister for Lands—Mr. Gary Gilbert (my private secretary), Mr. Jeff Swift (my Press and public relations officer), Mrs. Carol Wilson, and my faithful driver.

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (4.58 p.m.): The Committee has heard from the Minister a very comprehensive introduction of these Estimates. Years ago it would have created a considerable amount of excitement and interest among Government members. However, as I said yesterday, it is apparent that the people who should be very interested, the National Party members—members of what was formerly the Country Party—seem to treat the presentation of departmental Estimates in rather a cavalier fashion. Very few of them were in the Chamber, and those who were here did not seem very interested. There was also a scattering of Liberal Party members of the coalition. During the Minister's speech, they came in and out of the Chamber in a somewhat somnambulist fashion. However, that is by the way.

In his presentation of the Estimates, the Minister—

Government Members interjected.

Mr. HANSON: In reply to the unwarranted interjections by honourable members, the shadow Minister is in Bundaberg on matters of very grave importance not only to this State but also to the nation.

Let me say at the outset that I am always very appreciative of the wonderful assistance given to me by officers of the Lands Department and members of the Land Administration Commission. My good friends Mr. Brian Heffernan, Mr. Paul O'Gorman, Mr. Lennie Lawrence, Mr. Joe French and many other officers have been very courteous, helpful and kind to me in the execution of my various political duties. I acclaim also the great service rendered to the State by the Conservator of Forests and his deputy.

During the Budget debate, I mentioned that receipts from land sales, freeholding tenures, grazing selections, pastoral occupational leases, perpetual lease tenures, and so on, had declined in the last 12 months. Certainly that decline is attributable to some extent to the national and international recession, the effect of which has, of course, been felt by the beef cattle industry, which is of paramount importance to the people of Queensland. The Government has had to come to the party to a reasonable degree by deferring rental and freeholding instalments on many holdings used for the raising of beef cattle.

In my speech in the Budget debate, I referred also to the transfer of \$6,500,000 from the Woolgrowers Assistance Fund and \$3,500,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the Beef Cattle Industry Assistance Fund. That made a total of \$10,000,000, from which advances up to 30 June 1975 totalled only \$963,000—in other words, less than 10 per cent of the Beef Cattle Industry Assistance Fund was used.

No-one should be fooled by the statements of Government members on the hustings that the Government is making great efforts on behalf of persons on the land. It would seem

that many primary producers are very suspicious of the schemes that the Government has initiated. In these days of market manipulators, discredited money-lenders and general political perfidy, very few people, other than the humane members of the Australian Labor Party, spare a thought for the man on the land, who has been relegated to the lowest form of citizenship. That is to be regretted where there is a party in office that professes to be interested in the man on the land.

Mr. Frawley: Tell the truth. Your Federal mob are to blame.

Mr. HANSON: When was the honourable member for Murrumbidgee, a member of the National Party, last in a cowshed? Would he know the difference between a Santa Gertrudis and a Hereford? All he would know would be how to put petrol in a grazier's motor-car—and he'd give him short measure at that!

The man on the land has been politically attached to the anti-Labor forces of the State as a result of the sectional group known as the Country Party formed 50 years ago. More recently the gimmick has proved successful, and it has been successful for the past 18 years because of the split in Labor's ranks and the notorious electoral redistribution that was thrust upon the people of this State.

During the lifetime of National-Liberal Governments the Lands Department has been used as a medium to extract the last cent from the pocket of the genuine primary producer. To do that, the Government has circulated false and misleading propaganda. There is a vast difference between the land policies of former Labor Governments and those of the present Government, whose policies have hit the landholder's hip pocket. The Government has nothing to be proud of in raising the rental rate from 1.5c to 2.5c, which represents an increase of 66½ per cent. It is extortion. In the light of fictitious capital values in existence today, the situation is even worse for the man on the land. If the Government were fair dinkum it would restore the rate that applied in the days of Labor Government. If it did that it would remedy the injustice that it has inflicted on the primary producer in recent years.

In the Government's mad desire to freehold all land in sight—and a few members of the Government are mad—it sold many primary producers a dummy. "Freehold" is a misnomer, because in reality there is no such thing. All land, whether it be held under perpetual lease, freehold or any other tenure, is subject to local authority rates. All land is subject to the laws of resumption. It is only the so-called freehold land that attracts land tax. All land is subject to mortgage, and land is mortgaged as security to obtain local authority and Government loans. Loans are repaid by levying rents and taxes on the landowner or landholder.

All land is subject to occupancy and to the laws of the State. The only difference between tenures is in the variation of conditions imposed on the occupier of the land.

When the National-Liberal Government came to office, many primary producers rushed in and nearly tripped over their beards to exercise their options to freehold their properties. They were quite foolish and, as history shows, made the wrong decision. Conversion to freehold required the outlay of a large amount of capital, thereby reducing the liquidity of landholders. Therefore, primary producers suffered from a shortage of working capital.

Capital outlay is justified only when it increases or protects income, and income should be the main concern of the producer. Companies such as Woolworths and Coles adopt the good business practice of not tying up capital in fixed assets such as land and buildings. A large number of businesses exploit the land-lease system. The point I make is that by reorganising their capital structures many producers could get up off the floor and fight again. It is about time the Government assisted them. If sensibly administered, the land-lease system could inject much needed capital into an industry worthy of assistance. I challenge the Government to show its sincerity of purpose by adopting that system.

There was a time when such a suggestion would have awakened the interest of primary producers and made genuine members of the Country Party aware that they owed a responsibility to the people whom they professed to represent. Today, the only real political friends of primary producers are members of the Labor Party. While this Government remains in office, it will inflict hardship instead of giving assistance to primary producers. Government members may laugh, but they know that what I am saying is true.

I do not believe that land should be dealt with in the same way as consumer goods such as TV sets and motor-cars. A person selling land runs very little risk when he is able to assure purchasers that it will undoubtedly increase in value. Increased prices cause great concern to young people who are anxious to buy a block of land on which to build a home. Many subdividers are responsible, decent people. No-one denies them the right to make a reasonable profit; they are fully entitled to do that because they perform a useful function. However, many young people now experience difficulty in buying a block of land.

Under Labor Governments, land was made available on the perpetual lease system at 3½ per cent of the upset value. There was nothing wrong with that. In many country towns, battlers got a fair go under the workers' homes and town perpetual leases systems. The old State Advances Corporation provided houses at a very low weekly rental.

Mr. Miller: How many of those people bought the land when it was available to them?

Mr. HANSON: As I said, many of them foolishly fell for the false, devious propaganda disseminated by the Government. Well might Government members hang their heads in shame!

Former Country-Liberal Governments introduced the system of auctioning freehold blocks—a system similar to that used in towns and cities—and removed the restriction on people owning more than one block of land. Land sharks are now gulping land that ought to be available to young people and on which they can build homes and live for the remainder of their working lives and during their retirement. It is very wrong for the Government to engage in such an exercise, and it proves that it is insincere and has no desire to ensure that the young people of Queensland are properly housed or have a block of land that they can call their own.

In making subdivisions available to young people, the Lands Department should follow clear guide-lines that will be advantageous to purchasers. Many subdivisions in Queensland do not have one tree left standing on them, and in that respect the Government is as much at fault as anyone else. Trees are knocked down indiscriminately and burnt and the land is left absolutely bare. Neither the Government nor private subdividers should desecrate land, and the present practice is wrong and is causing concern to many responsible people.

For a number of years I have been concerned about the appraisal system under which timber royalties diminish as the estimated average cost of supplying the market increases. A similar system is used by each forest service in Australia when calculating royalties on logs obtained from Crown land. However, there are many differences in detail in the methods used by the various States in calculating royalties.

Although there is a desire to maintain equality of competitive opportunity in common markets between sawmillers, there does not seem to be any exercise which relates royalties to the cost of growing timber. Therefore in the final analysis the relationship of royalties to the eventual sale price of timber is rather loose. Royalties in the main are determined in an arbitrary manner and, in the industry of forest products, sawmilling is really the only section where royalties represent a significant percentage of the sale price of the end product. Today increases in royalties are not based on any set guide-lines, nor are they based on recognised formulae. At all times increases occur on short notice and at odd intervals.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I rise to a point of order. I direct your attention, Mr. Gunn, to the fact that the member for Port Curtis is reading from a prepared speech.

The **TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Gunn): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. HANSON: That is an absolutely silly point of order, Mr. Gunn. I agree with your ruling.

I believe that, in the long term, revenue costs (which involve maintenance, research and service charges) should be considered with capital costs (which involve maintenance and extension of hardwood forests and the establishment and maintenance of softwood forests) so that royalty could be established in the light of the margin of profit, ensuring a reasonable return to the operator.

All the costs should be equitably spread to cover quality, species and market accessibility. All royalties should be determined on a set time basis and not haphazardly. Many people believe that market prices should be the final and not the commencing point of royalty determination.

I hope that the Minister takes cognisance of the views expressed by the many people in Government and the industry who are vitally connected with it and arrives at formulae, guide-lines and determinations that will be satisfactory to those who are so very vitally concerned with the industry.

Another matter, which harks back to one I raised earlier in my speech, relates to the concern and anxiety felt by young people in their desire to purchase a home at the present time. I reiterate the fear that exists about this mad system of freeholding title that has been inflicted upon the people, with injurious results.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CORY (Warwick) (5.18 p.m.): First, I wish to reply to some of the untruths and bigoted, slanted expressions of the previous speaker. He referred to an alleged lack of National Party members in the Chamber. In reply I say that, if there was one National Party member who did not have more useful things to do than listen to the rubbish that he spoke, I would be very disappointed. He said, too, that he felt the Labor Party was the saviour of the man on the land. I suppose that in his estimation of one vote, one value, the amalgamation of Kennedy and Maranoa taking two-thirds of Queensland into one seat is a fair go to the man on the land. I imagine that is how he has assessed the situation.

The honourable member for Port Curtis also criticised the principle of freeholding, which I will have more to say about later. He said that freeholders were even subject to land tax. Obviously he has not been in this place listening to Financial Statements from year to year and observing the progressive increase in the exemption rate for land tax over the years. Probably he has not realised the comparatively small percentage of land tax paid by men on the land and the larger percentage paid by urban

dwellers. Obviously this is because he is not in the Chamber to listen on many occasions when these important documents are tabled.

He also mentioned that freeholded properties are subject to mortgage. One thing that a man who owns land is proud of is that he has in his land an asset which is acceptable as security for a mortgage.

He spoke against the Government's freeholding policy. He made great play on Labor's policy of perpetual leasehold and leasehold at 3½ per cent or whatever the percentage was at that time. This Government has been prepared to allow people to freehold, interest free, over a 40-year period at the same rate that Labor would have charged them and the generations to follow in rent. After 40 years, they will have paid for their land at a cost that would be very little more than the rent that they were paying—and without any appraisal adjustment after every 10 years. And now the honourable member asks who is giving the people on the land a fair go and who is trying to make political capital out of it!

Having disposed of the honourable member for Port Curtis, I congratulate the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service on attaining his position. This is the first time that he has had the opportunity to introduce Estimates. I congratulate him and his officers, without singling any out. Without a doubt, the officers of the Department of Lands and the Department of Forestry are dedicated men in their particular fields. On talking to them, in view of their expertise and knowledge in every facet of land settlement and forestry development throughout Queensland, it is difficult to believe that they are not fully trained legal men. Anybody who has dealings with them realises that right down the line they are experts who have studied the position and the policy of their particular department.

Why have those departments been so successful? I believe there are two reasons. One is the policies adopted by recent Governments which the Minister is following. He has inherited a good deal from previous Ministers. I am talking of the policies that allow freeholding, private ownership and inheritance rights to land. The second reason is the sympathetic understanding that is given to individual problems of the day. Of course there has to be a general policy but also there must be flexibility in cases of need. Right through these Estimates we can see this understanding, whether it relates to land settlement or to industries that are in trouble with meeting rural reconstruction requirements. It all amounts to a sympathetic understanding of problems. There is sufficient flexibility between the policy laid down and the administration of the need at a particular time. The extension of the principle of freeholding is the main policy that we should be proud of. The administration of bringing

it about from the commission through the commissioners has been very successful and is well accepted by landholders.

It is interesting to note that the areas alienated and in the process of being alienated represent about 16 per cent whereas 7, 8 or 10 years ago I think they represented about 9 or 10 per cent. I might stand corrected on those figures. However, this type of movement is occurring all the time and is an indication that people have the opportunity and are pleased to take advantage of the proposition that this Government has put before them. The people have the right to own their own home and their own land. Their children have the right to have it passed on to them. What this Government is doing in making that possible as far as it can and as quickly as it can is something that we should be very pleased about.

Before proceeding to deal with forestry and rural reconstruction, I should like to refer to some matters under the control of the Lands Department. In looking through its annual report I notice one section dealing with rabbit control. I think all members appreciate what has been done by the Rabbit Control Authority. I also think that there is an appreciation of the feral pig problem and the need for more assistance in coping with it.

I am not going to deal with the problems that have arisen in the control of these two pests, nor am I going to deal in detail with the inquiry that the Minister has instigated—it could be sub judice at this stage—but I will say that prevention is far cheaper than cure. If a problem is under control, it is foolish to risk allowing it to get out of control. This will happen in the areas protected by the Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board. Those who pay for the upkeep of the fence are very cognisant of its value and those in areas in which there are no rabbits know that they are free of them only because the fence is still there. It is therefore near and dear to their hearts that it be maintained efficiently because prevention is far better than cure. The merits of the other proposition are for the committee to consider, and it is for them to come to a decision.

While speaking on rabbit control, I should like to refer to the move towards aerial baiting. The annual report reads—

“During the year, the Authority carried out aerial baiting trials using the new pellets with an adaption of the ‘one shot’ poisoning technique.”

I think that this method will be used more and more and over larger and larger areas than it has been possible to cover by the normal trail-poisoning method.

Another matter that I should like to mention is the control of noxious weeds. The extent to which various control measures will in the long run come under the same authority is not very important at this time. I

would, however, like to say that I think Governments and local authorities have a responsibility to play their part in the eradication of noxious weeds. Some reserves and areas along main roads have become in effect breeding grounds for noxious weeds. I should like to see greater activity in the actual eradication of weeds rather than the appointment of more inspectors. I understand that noxious weed inspectors, some of whom have been appointed, will inspect and co-ordinate the efforts of local authorities within a region.

I can see a danger in having, as it were, more chiefs and fewer Indians, because inspecting weeds will not kill them. Some physical action has to be taken to eradicate weeds, and I should like to see some of the money that will be used for the employment of inspectors channelled to local authorities for the engagement of people to do the actual work of eradication. I know of some councils that are receiving for this work the same amount as they received four years ago. Because of inflation, their efforts are becoming less and less effective. Any money that is available to further this work should be used in the field for killing weeds, not inspecting them and reporting that there are weeds in some areas.

Before leaving the Lands Department Estimates I want to refer quickly to the Dairy Adjustment Programme. As the Minister said, the name of the scheme has been changed from the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme to the Dairy Adjustment Program. At the outset I would like to commend the work of Mr. Eaton, Mr. Parker and Mr. Worthington. Mr. Eaton and Mr. Parker have been with this section since its inception, to my knowledge, and they have a very clear understanding not only of the administration of the scheme but also the problems of dairy farmers. They cannot always help—this is quite obvious—but they are fully aware of the problems and they certainly help where they can.

I think it is regrettable that the Commonwealth saw fit to pull out of this scheme. I believe that shows a very definite insincerity of purpose in trying to help a rural industry. I think we all agree that we cannot have an active go-ahead scheme one year and no scheme the next year, yet this is the way in which the Commonwealth has tried to operate. The Commonwealth assisted in the development and expansion of this dairy adjustment programme, and it was a good one. Not only did it enable the purchase of a dairy farm but it allowed a dairy farmer to buy more land and further equip his property with irrigation plant, milking plant and that type of thing. This was well accepted. It broadened the scope of the scheme and made it more useful. The Minister said that Queensland made great use of this expansion scheme, and now

suddenly the Commonwealth, the Government that honourable members opposite said—

Mr. Hanson: Senator Wriedt wants a rap-up for this, too.

Mr. CORY: He wants a "rap" for cancelling it, and now honourable members opposite say, "These are the friends of the farmer." Last year we received \$28,000,000 for this scheme, this year nothing. It is as simple as that and I think the State Government is to be commended for carrying on as best it can in this field with the limited funds available. At the same time it still has to honour its obligations to the Commonwealth for the repayment of certain dues.

I now wish to move on to the operations of the Rural Reconstruction Board and make a few comments about it. I would like to congratulate Mr. Bill Mawson and wish him well in the job he has taken on. Mr. Lloyd Harris was a member of the Rural Reconstruction Board but he went upstairs to the Sugar Board and is no longer available. But Bill Mawson has a clear understanding of the problems of rural industries. In my experience he has been with the department for over 20 years. The point I want to make is that we need understanding and flexibility according to individual situations. An added pressure is put on the Rural Reconstruction Board because of the present high interest rates. The difference between the low interest rates available from the board and the high interest rates charged outside obviously means that there is great pressure on the board because everyone wants a share of this low-interest finance. Obviously everybody cannot get it, and these are the problems the board has to face. The board has to be flexible in its approach from year to year, and this is what it is doing. In its annual report the board stated—

"For the years 1973-74 and 1974-75 the States agreed to endeavour to allocate 70 per cent. of approvals to farm build-up."

This meant only 30 per cent for debt reconstruction, but with the fluctuations in rural industry profitability the board found it could not continue at this rate and has reverted to 50 per cent for debt reconstruction, with an even higher percentage if the demand is there. So the board just has to be flexible, and this is something we are seeing. It does shift its priorities from debt reconstruction to farm build-up and back again according to industry needs year by year following the rise and fall in industry profitability and export markets.

As my time is running out, I wish to say a few words about the Department of Forestry. I believe that the expansion of reforestation in Queensland is terribly important. Reforestation keeps the sawmilling industry active and viable and it provides a very good investment for the Government. After all, trees grow into money, and reforestation means money in the future and is

therefore a good investment for the Government. The availability of timber is all we have left to keep down building costs. Labour costs, transport costs and manufacturing costs are high and increasing. The availability of timber is all we have to counter the increasing costs structure. We do not want to see another boost to costs because of shortage of timber supplies. I encourage the Government to expand its reforestation programme in all areas, so that long-term adequate supply is assured.

In State forests, national parks and environmental parks there is always a great danger of pests breeding. They can all harbour dogs, wild pigs, kangaroos, wallabies and other pests. We need a scheme under which the respective administrators accept responsibility for controlling the breeding of pests. Probably adjoining landholders are spending thousands of dollars on the eradication of pests. We cannot have it both ways. We cannot encourage the breeding of pests in State forests, national parks, environmental parks and so on and, at the same time, try to help landholders outside of those areas with a pest eradication programme. Eradication must be carried out on a State-wide basis. Landholders and the Government should be working together outside State forests, national parks, environmental parks, etc., but the administrators of those areas should have an equal responsibility to control pest populations in the areas under their control.

Mr. ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (5.37 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to speak to these Estimates. I congratulate the Minister on his excellent handling of this portfolio. It is very interesting and informative to note the different attitudes adopted by the honourable member for Port Curtis and Government members. If we allowed the type of mentality displayed by Opposition members towards land tenure matters to prevail, we would have a disastrous situation throughout the State. They have this hang-up about freehold land. Whenever they speak of land tenures, they always trot out the same old chestnut. That applies particularly to the honourable member for Port Curtis. I have probably said a dozen times in this Chamber that unless we are prepared to make freehold land available we will not get the type of people on the land who will look after it. It is important that the land be cared for. That type of philosophy is important if the private-enterprise system is to flourish.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Is your land freehold or leasehold?

Mr. ELLIOTT: My land is freehold. I am very pleased the honourable member brought that up. People who own freehold land will always make certain they look after it. They guard against soil erosion and in every other way take care of their land. They know that their children have a future

tied up in that land. Therefore they have an incentive to make sure the land is not damaged in any way for future generations.

Mr. Miller: The A.L.P. doesn't understand the word "incentive".

Mr. ELLIOTT: That's true.

Very few people understand the ramifications and implications of land tenure policies. If we go to either extreme in arriving at what constitutes a living area, we will create immense problems in the social spectrum. What I am saying is that living areas should be neither too large nor too small. If they are too small, landholders will be on subsistence level, and we will see the recurrence of the tremendous social problems that existed in the past. At all times we must hold in the forefront of our land tenure policy the word "incentive", which members of the Labor Party hate so much.

I compliment the Minister on adopting a realistic approach to land tenure. Having travelled with him widely through North Queensland and seen him in action, I know that he is genuine in his approach to his portfolio and possesses a real understanding of the problems that beset people in the Outback. He is aware of the need to give them the incentive to do something for themselves. At the time when beef prices were at rock bottom he was out in the cattle country offering encouragement to beef producers. If it had not been for the incentives offered by him and his Government, many beef producers would have left the industry altogether instead of waiting for prices to improve.

I move on now to discuss some of the reconstruction schemes that have done a tremendous amount of good for our primary industries. It is unfortunate that they were found necessary, but I am sure that all of us remember the prolonged drought that devastated the beef and sheep industries from 1965 onwards. The schemes have been of tremendous assistance to beef producers and wool growers. I compliment the Minister and his departmental officers on the magnificent work they did in providing carry-on finance to beef producers. Many of them were nearly at the end of the financial road.

Through no fault of their own, the prices for their commodity were very low. Before the crash they were viable primary producers. Many of them survived only because, prior to the crash, they were wealthy. I would hasten to add that we must tailor our policies to the needs of the ordinary person, not those of people with great wealth from other sources. As I say, many primary producers were in dire straits and were saved only by the injection of carry-on finance. They are living to fight another day.

Recently, the cattle market has risen slightly, and it is to be hoped that when the present problems arising on the American market are overcome, there will be a return

to what I would term viable prices. I hope we will see a return to good prices. These people will then be able to battle on and get back on their feet again.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Poor old cockies! What about the workers?

Mr. ELLIOTT: That is typical of the honourable member for Archerfield. He is always going on about the poor old workers.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: And you are always defending the cockies.

Mr. ELLIOTT: My word I am! We defend the workers, too. The honourable member for Archerfield is good at this type of thing. He has absolutely no sympathy for the working people of the West. If Labor had any sympathy for the working people of the West, it would not have abolished the petrol price equalisation scheme. How does the honourable member defend that?

Mr. K. J. Hooper interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Gunn): Order!

Mr. ELLIOTT: I will not allow myself to be side-tracked by the ranting and raving of the honourable member for Archerfield.

I shall now deal with the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme, which is an excellent one. In my area, where most of the farms were originally too small, the producers got into trouble when the overseas markets collapsed and the Federal A.L.P. Government abolished the subsidy after coming to office. In spite of its promise not to abolish the subsidy, it took away \$9,000,000 in the first year and attacked the dairy farmers at every turn of the road.

Mr. Hinze: It has always done that.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I agree.

Dairy farmers are now able to buy a neighbour's property, increase the size of their dairy herds and make their businesses viable. This is the type of operation we must work towards. As I said, there is no future in subsistence producers. We must aim at the middle of the road, at producers who are able to make a fair living. On the other hand we should be certain that funds are not made available to very wealthy people—perhaps with an outside income—who have no real need of them. The public should not be asked to assist in any way people who might use the scheme to further a hobby interest.

As I believe that many honourable members wish to deal with the ramifications of the national parks and wildlife sections of the Minister's portfolio, and as I am not on the Minister's committee dealing with them, I shall conclude my speech at this stage to afford them more time to do so.

Mr. KATTER (Flinders) (5.48 p.m.): Although I have not been familiar with the machinations of the Lands Department in

past years, I can say, without making odious comparisons, that it is run as well as any department in Queensland can be run. I pay a high tribute to the Minister and the men running the department.

Outlining what I believe makes the department so excellent, I point out first that the men at the top have the courage to make decisions quickly. Sometimes their decisions are harsh, but people with less courage, ability and intelligence might dwell on such decisions for a long time. While doing that, people's lives would be ticking away and the savings that they have invested in small blocks could be eaten away. One thing that other departments could emulate—I believe it was introduced by the present Minister—is the concept under which administrators go out to meet the people. Since I came to this Assembly Lands Department people have visited the Flinders area constantly.

I cannot speak too highly of the results being achieved by the people, who now have established a rapport with the department. When administrators and the bureaucracy generally sit in an ivory tower here in Brisbane, making decisions affecting people a thousand miles away, it is reasonable to expect that certain things will be lost in their translation over that distance, because a thousand miles is a long way; but when they know that regularly they have to confront their masters and our masters—the people of Queensland; the electors—I feel that they will make intelligent decisions based on reality rather than abstract theory.

In Queensland we have many things to be proud of. In many fields we are ahead of the rest of the world. Maybe we are too far advanced. Maybe we are almost in the experimental stage. I refer in particular to education. Whatever else one might say, very few education systems in the world would be ahead of Queensland's. But relating our advances to the Lands Department—we are one of the very few areas in the world that have adopted the concept of a living area. As a Government we have consciously sponsored the concept of an individual owning his own block of land and working it by himself, as far as possible, or perhaps with one employee.

With that in mind, I ask honourable members to reflect upon two systems. One is the Russian system. After the Russian Revolution in 1919, the system of land ownership became the system of collective ownership. It was ownership by the State—State capitalism, if I might use that term. It was State ownership. The individual did not own or have any possessory rights in the land that he was working and the land that he lived upon. That was the Russian system—the system of State ownership.

Mr. Hinze: If they return old Gough in a couple of weeks, we'll know all about the Russian system.

Mr. KATTER: This is a very serious matter, because Labor people think along these lines. It is not a matter of making callous decisions to turn over ownership to collective farms. It is a matter of a series of little decisions. At the present moment in the beef industry, all one has to do is to stand aside and watch, because it will destroy itself very quickly. We will have to form State-run farms to supply Australia with beef, the way things are going.

Anyway, there was another country and another system. That country was the United States of America. Its system was introduced by Lincoln through the famous Lincoln Homestead Act, which gave every person who wanted to go on the land in the United States an area of a mile by a mile, on three bases: occupation (no absentee landlordism was allowed); cultivation (he was not allowed to sit on his backside; he had to work the land); and production of something of value (it was not to be the hobby of some rich man). They were the bases on which the land tenure system operated in the United States—occupation, cultivation and production.

We are watching the two systems because, unknowingly, these two men—Lenin and Abraham Lincoln—turned their two countries into vast laboratories to test the concept of private ownership—of the little man on his own territory—on the one hand, and, on the other, collective ownership as practised in Russia. Let us compare the results. Let us look at how the two systems have fared. In America one man working on the plough releases 12 men for work in industry. In Russia, one man working at the plough can support only one man for work in industry. In case any member is still in doubt about the respective merits of the two different systems, I point out that the collective farmers in Russia could not even produce enough food to feed themselves, so each family was given a half-acre block to work privately, and as much food was produced on the half-acre blocks as on all the collective farms in Russia—and remember that each family was working half an acre privately compared with some 50 or 100 acres under collective farming. In addition, a person working under collective ownership can rationalise his means of production.

In America every farmer has his own tractor, which is stupid because one tractor would be needed for something like 1,000 acres. In Russia one tractor was used for every 1,000 acres. Because each farmer in America had his own tractor, certain inefficiencies were built into the American system. In spite of that, there is a colossal and staggering difference. The one thing that is embarrassing America is that it has far too much agricultural production. The farmers there are very poor because they are

constantly over-producing. Russia is very fortunate. It has vast supplies of oil that it can sell to buy its food overseas.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Mr. Katter?

Mr. KATTER: I will take the honourable member's interjection.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Do you realise that General Franco has just passed away?

Mr. KATTER: I do not know what that has to do with the debate. I am used to irrelevancies from the honourable member for Archerfield and I might have expected a statement like that.

Because of the surface area of Queensland, we do not talk about farms; we talk about grazing leases. Instead of talking about one mile by one mile, we are talking about acreages far greater than exist in America where the farmer is more fortunate than the farmer in Queensland.

I have sat—quite often till the early hours of the morning—listening to people who are far older and wiser than I, and I have heard what they have had to say about what the future holds for Queensland and the pastoral industry. The Green Paper put out by the Opposition—our Federal counterparts—indicated a 23 per cent increase in wages during the next three years for people living in the cities and a 53 per cent decline in farm incomes. A staggering and worrying feature of our future economy!

Mr. McKechnie interjected.

Mr. KATTER: They have been actively promoted. I think it is a blueprint for future action.

It is very important for us who have some sort of part to play in decision-making to consider what size the blocks should be and what concept of a living area we must have. We have vast areas. It is very important that there be at least two men on each area. We heard of the death this week of a grazier who was bitten by a snake. A property must have at least two men to muster cattle. So we are talking about a very bare minimum of two people. I ask honourable members not to think for one moment that these are my thoughts; they are the thoughts of many people who have lived 50, 60 or 70 years in North-west Queensland. They look to a concept of no more than two people on the land—one the owner and the other an employee.

So we are considering cattle numbers of somewhere round 2,000. It could be a figure less than that if we had some sort of security against the ravages of drought and some sort of scheme to give us security in markets, at least on the home market. We are looking at a two-man concept. This is virtually the situation that exists in that vast stretch of rich black soil plain in the Flinders Basin and stretching from Mt. Isa to Charters Towers. Whether we like it or not and whatever the department does, it is an economic

reality that we are moving towards a two-man situation. At the moment, it is regrettable that the state of both the wool and cattle markets is such that owners are flat out employing one man.

Mr. McKechnie: There is the wife.

Mr. KATTER: That is right. The wife is doing the work. Recently I was with Mrs. Logan, a very distinguished person.

Mr. Marginson: You are handling it all right without his help.

Mr. KATTER: I am glad that the honourable member for Wolston is not helping me.

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

Mr. KATTER: I discussed at great length the difference between the two great laboratories—which is what they were in effect turned into—of collective and State ownership of land in the Soviet Union and the concept in America of the little man doing his own thing in his own time on his own piece of dirt. They are the two concepts, and I feel that statistics have shown one to be vastly superior to the other.

I now move to the next area that is of vital concern. The development of absentee landlordism is very worrying to me. The last five sales of properties in north-western areas have been to companies and absentee landlords of one type or another. It is difficult to find one example since the dawn of time of a revolution that was not in fact a land redistribution revolution. The most recent example on a vast scale is seen in China. There is a lot of talk about these people, a quarter of the earth's population, being Communists. I advise those who think that way to get a book on China and read what happened there. Before the revolution the Chinese worked very hard on land that was owned by war lords who lived in Peking or Nanking. The peasants worked for their whole lives for these absentee landlords. That was a shocking thing and it inevitably lead to what happened in China and in many other countries.

Some people wonder how a person such as Mao Tse-tung was able to take over a nation as large as China. But when one considers what was happening in the countryside of China, one wonders why he did not take over much sooner. He went to the peasants and said, "Why work for the fellow in Peking? I'm going to cut his head off very shortly and you will own these two or three acres yourself"—or "mous" as they are called in China. That is exactly what happened in the Chinese revolution. It was purely and simply a land redistribution revolution, and it was not until 1966 that the first movement was made towards collective ownership of land in China.

But I do not have only China to use to make my point. I could use any other country, even America, where British interests had large landholdings which were lost when America became independent. I therefore

plead with the department to do all that is humanly possible to arrest the trend towards absentee landlordism which is increasing at a great rate in western areas.

There is one positive measure that can be taken. I speak with authority on this matter because for years I worked the north-western area as an insurance agent and I am familiar with the incomes of the people who live there. There are six blocks of land lying in the hands of the Lands Department which have not been put up on some sort of basis for ownership by the people. In respect of one of those blocks there are 30 names on the wall of the Land Commissioner in Cloncurry of men who are desperately waiting, with the money in their hands, to be given a chance to obtain that block.

Some people say that smaller areas are not viable propositions in the Gulf country. This argument was forcefully advanced in respect of "Inverleigh" from which "McAlister" was cut off. The original block was approximately 1,150 square miles and the block that was cut off—"McAlister"—was 250 square miles. "McAlister" not only kept five families but made them all reasonably well off. The number of cattle turned off "McAlister" in the next couple of years will rival the number being turned off "Inverleigh", which is a far greater area of almost identical land. I do not want to go into detail on the other six blocks that are awaiting parcelling out in the Gulf country, but I could put up an argument in respect of each one.

One of the families very keen to obtain one of the blocks is the Chaplain family. They have worked that country for nearly 70 years. If they do not know that that block is a decent financial proposition, then I do not know who in Australia would know. I have never yet seen that family go into a bad business deal. They are very financially astute. So I would plead with the department to look at these huge blocks in the Gulf country and see what can be done, particularly the six that are now available for parcelling out.

Before I leave this subject, there exists an idea, and it is openly promulgated by a number of big companies, that in these areas they must have huge runs; they have to be big, and the bigger the run is the more efficient it is. The lie to that has been given in the recent crash in cattle because I do not know of one small block in my area which the people have walked off. Admittedly there are a number of cases where they are desperately battling to stay on the block but they are still there, whereas three of the biggest stations in the Gulf country have closed down. I do not want to name them here. They have simply closed down. Probably they have not informed the department. Probably they have been desperately trying everything possible to convince the department that they still have people there, but they simply do not have people there. One has cut down its staff from 30 to three, and another

has no-one at all on the property and has not had anyone on it for at least the past three months.

So there is the proof. At the present moment there are no vacant small stations in that area but there certainly are vacant stations belonging to the larger-scale companies. This has occurred partly because the wage scale has risen, although it is not just the wage scale. I said before that a living area was a property capable of being run by two people—the owner plus one employee. The cost of the employee is something like \$11,000 or \$12,000 a year. He has to be fed. That is something property owners have to provide for employees in the country. They have to house them, and house them decently if they want to keep them. They have to provide education for their children, which usually means a bus run or a governess. So the colossal expense of having employees makes it virtually impossible, or at least very, very difficult to work on a scale bigger than a two-man property. So I would plead with the department to stick with its present policy which seems to work for the down country where we are working on a basis of two-man operations.

Before I resume my seat I want to say that we are in an inflationary spiral and will probably stay in some sort of inflationary spiral for a while yet. The reason is that every sector of the Australian community has control of the price of its product. I cannot impress upon honourable members strongly enough the fact that every sector of the economy has control of the price of its product except the beef industry and—

(Time expired.)

Mr. SIMPSON (Cooroora) (7.23 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to support the Minister for Lands, the Honourable K. B. Tomkins, in his presentation of the Estimates for the Lands Department, the Forestry Department and the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Here in Queensland we have large areas of leasehold land still under the control of the Crown. Some of these lands are being freeholded, and here is an opportunity for people to take part in a scheme whereby they can farm on freehold land. It is interesting to see that the system has worked quite well with both freehold and leasehold.

We heard from the Minister that there have been problems with the eradication of weeds. One that is a problem in my area is groundsel. I think this will be with us for quite some time and it is difficult to find an answer to it. Feral pigs are likewise a problem in other areas. There is no ready solution to it. "1080" poison was very effective against rabbits and foxes, but it of course has made it more difficult to control the feral pig problem.

It was with interest that I listened to the Minister refer to the late-comers in the brigalow scheme. He still has confidence

that they will come through. I sincerely hope he is right. I hope he is something of a forecaster as to the outcome of the beef industry. It is difficult to reduce a deficit or overdraft when a profit cannot be made on the product that is being sold.

The Minister indicated that Queensland had been the major participant in the Dairy Adjustment Program. Unfortunately Queensland has been the State most in need of that assistance because the industry has been going through such difficult times. Partly this is due to internal causes and partly it is due to the elements; but rationalisation is necessary. This is in the hands not of the Minister but of the industry itself. However, it is good to know that the State Government has plans to assist those in need. Although similar plans have been dropped at the Commonwealth level, they will still be acted upon at the State level.

The setting aside of environmental parks will continue. I understand that 200 applications have been made. No doubt a system will be devised to bring about a land use programme under which vast areas of land will be sorted out for its best use.

I should like to put on record the excellent job done by volunteer fire brigades. A tremendous number of workers volunteer for this work at risk to their own lives. I know that in the main they look after their own properties, but this self-help system has worked very well. It cannot work without co-operation. Their tremendous effort indicates what can be done without paid staff.

It is unfortunate that debt adjustment has to creep in again. It is something we had following World War I. It reflects the hard times of the primary producer. Here again, help is available. The Commonwealth Government has been slow to come to the support of Queensland, but this State was the first to put the scheme forward. Similar finance is now coming from the Commonwealth Government, which I am sure will help.

The principle of removing fruit trees on the basis of the economic future of the industry is one that we may see applied in other industries. If it can be shown that on a long-term basis rationalisation should be applied, it could well be looked at.

The Minister briefly touched on national parks. Very little finance for this purpose is allocated in the Estimates. In the next few years we will see a need for far greater allocations for national parks so that better facilities by way of roads, parking areas and additional staff can be provided. Then national parks will be more easily enjoyed by the public. They are there now for people to enjoy but they require more promotion and need to be more accessible. People in southern States have a great deal to say about Fraser Island, but most of them will never go there. I am sure that when better facilities are made available by way of roads, parking areas and accommodation, our

national parks will prove to be a great tourist attraction. Queensland has many unique land formations that are also wonderful tourist attractions.

Forestry areas either adjacent to or included in national parks could be set aside for the enjoyment of the public. No doubt this could be done by co-operation between the Lands Department and the Forestry Department.

The Minister referred to reforestation on what was previously agricultural or grazing land. Pomona, in my electorate, is one area he referred to. I would suggest to the Minister that he inquire into the possibility of carrying out reforestation in dairying areas that are no longer economically viable. Pines of either exotic or indigenous species could be planted to the great advantage of the area.

In relation to the planting of trees, an anomaly exists in the assessment of probate duty. Trees that are planted by a landholder, even though they may have no commercial value whatever, are assessed at the time of his death for probate purposes. This matter should be taken up at both State and Federal levels so that such assessment could be waived, thereby offering an incentive to landowners to plant trees.

Reference has been made to the use of fire meters in the sugar cane and other industries. They are of great assistance to persons carrying out burning operations. However, no person without practical experience in firefighting should be allowed to operate them.

Future prospects in land use are exciting. The State will derive tremendous benefits from the use of land for grazing and agriculture as well as for national parks. They will be visited not only by tourists but also by those city dwellers who wish to get away from it all to the peace and quiet of national parks.

In relation to forest areas, arguments seem to have been put forward in favour of the planting of softwoods. I would be interested to learn of the projected demand for softwood in terms of future population growth. As many people believe that Australia's population will not increase at a fast rate, I wonder whether such an opinion will have any bearing on the planting of softwoods.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Minister on his administration of his portfolio. He has been given worth-while assistance by his dedicated ministerial staff, whose department is one on which the Government relies heavily for the stability and economy of this State.

Mr. BURNS (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (7.35 p.m.): In making my contribution to the Estimates, I shall speak basically about national parks and the need to extend national park areas around our city. It is all very well for people to talk about the percentage of the

State that has been gazetted or set aside as national park areas. If many of these areas are inaccessible to the vast majority of the population, basically they are only for people from the university or elsewhere who are studying.

As one of our first steps we should try to improve the lot of the average fellow, who is beginning to feel the growing pressure of the city on him. Brisbane and Townsville are large cities and other cities are growing fast. People want to get away from it all, but it seems that many local authorities do not want to assist. Recently I had experience with two local councils, one on the North Coast and the other on the South Coast, which are fairly obviously trying to phase out the man who uses a tent. In the past few years the Gold Coast City Council has carried out a deliberate policy of eliminating or reducing camping areas available to the ordinary fellow.

Within the Brisbane city boundary, or within 100 miles of Brisbane, we need major additional areas of national park.

A statement made by the Cooloola committee is in these terms—

“Fifty-five per cent of the State’s population are included within a hundred-mile radius of Brisbane yet within the same area only 1.1 per cent of the land area is reserved as National Parks practically all of which lies to the south of Brisbane. By comparison Sydney has 5 per cent of its land area within a 100-mile radius reserved as National Parks.”

At the same time the committee said—

“Reserving the Cooloola National Park proposed by Conservationists will increase the total park areas within a 100-mile radius of Brisbane to 2.4 per cent of the land area.”

Mr. Elliott: When will you take a little interest in soil erosion?

Mr. BURNS: I have taken a little interest in it. If I were to take any single item of the Minister’s portfolio, within 20 minutes I would be able to cover it fairly reasonably. At this stage I wish to talk about national parks.

My reason for giving such prominence to this matter is that, in the first of the famous Joh shows, which we all pay for—the shows in which the Premier goes on TV and speaks at your expense and mine—the Premier spoke of a new national park the Government would declare along the full length of the Great Dividing Range. I do not know what has happened since then, except that we have paid the bill for the show; I do not know whether we are getting the park.

Mr. Tomkins: Some national parks will be declared in North Queensland very shortly.

Mr. BURNS: I hope that when they are declared the Minister declares them in a different form from the one at Iron Range. The national park at Iron Range has been

referred to in the Press by the Minister a number of times. On each occasion he has said that people will be able to mine the park after it is declared. In my opinion an area is not a national park if people are allowed to engage in mining in the area.

The following item appeared in “The Courier-Mail” of 5 March 1975:—

“New National Park Areas

“The State Government will add a further 12,141 hectares of forest country to the national park system.

“The land is in the Iron Range area, on Cape York Peninsula.

“The National Parks Minister (Mr. Tomkins) said yesterday, ‘The new area involved establishment of two national parks, and a timber reserve, on the eastern side of the Tozer and Janet Ranges, embracing the area of the Claudie River tributaries.’”

I hope this refers to the area of Weymouth Holdings which, supposedly, was of major international significance. If it is, why should we say that no logging is to be permitted in the timber reserve but that the area will be subject to further mineral investigation and possible extraction before being dedicated as a national park. That statement was attributed to the Minister in the Press.

Under my concept of a national park and its use, people would understand that it will be left almost in its natural state. If we allow a team of miners into an area before we declare it as a national park, or after we declare it as a national park, we will destroy the national park concept. If it is to be mined, we should not try to fool anybody by saying that X per cent of the State is being set aside as national parks. Let us set aside as national parks those areas that will be left in their natural state for use by the ordinary person. And I mean “use”. If the areas to be set aside are ones that no-one should enter—and I have heard conservationists advance the argument that areas should be left completely untouched—I would like to put another tag on them. People believe that national parks are like the great national parks of America. They believe that they are there to be used. I do not know that we should have roads into them. The Americans are now discovering that road access has probably destroyed their national parks.

Whenever I go to Green Island, which I enjoy—it is one of our few marine national parks—I wonder about the great hordes of people (and I am one of them, of course) who pour over there daily and flood over the island. The island has been a remarkable piece of nature, having withstood the pressures of those people over so many years. I know that we are now spending money to restore one side of Green Island that the ocean is washing away.

If we are to have national parks close to Brisbane, we should have a sufficient number so that they will not feel the pressure

of the community to that degree. Areas should be set aside for camping and for visits by school teachers and their young pupils. We laugh and say that many of the young people in Sydney have never seen cows or other farm animals. I believe we are getting to that stage here. How many of our youngsters have seen birds or wild animals in their natural settings?

Lone Pine is a very attractive place but the setting is not really natural. To some degree, it is false—cage-like and artificial. A person can take his son or daughter there and enjoy the day out, but I think greater areas like Cooloolo, Lamington Plateau, Cunningham's Gap and others should be extended. It is necessary that there be some form of protection. I just do not accept that story about putting Iron Range aside as a national park.

Mr. Tomkins: Those statements have to be read in the light of the facts. In some cases there are mining requirements. Some people have taken up leases. That is what that means.

Mr. BURNS: If the people who made the study on behalf of the Government have said that this land is of international significance (apparently it contains the last of the low wetlands or the only piece of land of that type available in the Far North) and the Minister, on recommendations from his experts that these pieces of land should be set aside as national parks, decides to make them national parks, the decision should then be made that they are not be mined.

In amongst all the material I have here it is said that that area of Weymouth Holdings and the Iron Range area contains the last undisturbed lowland rain forest left in Australia. It is the home of interesting and spectacular wildlife forms such as the cuscus.

Mr. Moore: Where is that?

Mr. BURNS: Weymouth Holdings and Iron Range, in the North. It is the area that the Minister was saying the Government is setting aside as a national park; but at the same time he said that it might be mined anyway. I think we are only kidding ourselves.

Mr. Moore: There is nothing there to mine.

Mr. BURNS: If there is nothing there to mine, well and good. Then the statement should not have been made that it was going to be mined or that it might be left for mining.

Our experts have said that it is of international significance. If it is of such value to the national estate (if I might use those arty, crafty words that are associated with putting a piece of our own area aside for the future needs of our country) that it should be set aside, I do not think we should be putting any qualifications on it. We should

say that we need it, we desire it, we are prepared to buy it out and we are prepared to pay whatever compensation is involved. It should then be put aside.

When I think of some of the places that are under threat, my thoughts turn to Moreton Island, which I visit rather regularly, though not as frequently today as I did years ago as a fisherman. I can remember recommendations in the 1972 report on the Moreton Bay islands. In fact, the report refers to it in this way—

“There has been considerable debate over national park proposals on the island since 1951.”

Here we are in 1975. We have an island that is only 15 minutes across the bay from the million people who reside nearby. It is unspoilt to a certain degree, though there is no doubt that there has been a certain amount of development at Bulwer and at the bottom end at Day's Gutter, as well as residential development. There is a tourist resort on the island and there have been some isolated cases of mining. The Minister and I were there together and had a look at it. The island has no timber of any great value. It is nothing but an island that could be left unspoilt for future generations.

Right back in 1951 recommendations were being made about the island, yet in 1975 land-use studies, coastal-management studies and other studies are being carried out. The report commissioned by the Government in 1972 says that the area around the Blue Lagoon and the Triangle and the beach frontage to the existing national park as well as the big and little sand hills and other areas should be set aside. It worries me that these recommendations were made 20 years ago about an area that will cost us nothing to do something about.

Since that report was brought down and since certain declarations have been made on further land-use studies in the area, more mining leases have been granted. Surely if these areas are being considered as national parks, no further mining leases should be granted. We should wait for a little while. We should be able to speed up the investigations so that we know whether this land should be set aside as a national park or used for mining because it is desirable for mineral production.

When speaking of Green Island (and the threat that occurred to it) and Moreton Island, I think I should also deal with Peel Island. A recommendation has been made that it should be a national park. This is a very good recommendation which should be adopted and endorsed as soon as possible. One of the reasons given for setting Peel Island aside was the coral and other natural deposits around it, yet Queensland Cement & Lime Co. has authority to dredge the coral up to the high-water mark. Questions on this matter have been asked and answered in this Chamber in the past 14 days. So

while we will be setting aside an island, we will not be setting it aside because of the coral that surrounds it.

I remember you, Mr. Miller, making a speech not long ago about the Brisbane City Council and the use of parkland for private purposes or by sporting organisations. It is fitting to remind you that the decisions on many of the areas you were talking about were made by the Lands Department. It granted the leases for the organisations setting up in those parks.

Also in that speech, Mr. Miller, you referred to Balmoral Park and the buildings in it. A search of departmental records would show, for example, that the new building for Meals on Wheels that is being erected in that park was approved by the Lands Department. We know of the development in the new Regent Park by the marching girls in my area. It is easy to blame the Brisbane City Council, but if it were not for the good offices of the Minister and his department they would not have got that area.

It is easy to play politics in relation to these particular areas but we should look below the surface. Many of the areas of parkland in this city are not controlled by the Brisbane City Council to the nth degree because the final decision on a lease is made by the Lands Department. I, and I have no doubt many other honourable members, have been to the Minister asking for the lease of a piece of parkland because the Brisbane City Council has said that it is up to the Lands Department, and if the Lands Department does not approve it, the lease is not granted.

I suggest to you, Mr. Miller, that before you start talking about parks and the buildings in them, it would be a good idea to check through the Lands Department records. You were well off the mark in regard to Balmoral Park.

Mr. Akers: The council is passing the buck.

Mr. BURNS: It is not, because finally, in relation to this parkland, the Meals on Wheels people tell me that there was some hold-up. The Brisbane City Council did not want to grant the lease, so the lease was obtained through the Lands Department. It is not simply a matter of saying the other fellow is to blame. It is very easy to pick on one side and say it is its fault when in essence there is more than one group involved. If we get into political arguments, we might find later on that some of them rebound on us. In this case, Mr. Miller, I hope they rebound on you.

I recall that Mr. Groom, from Binna Burra, went overseas some time ago on a Churchill scholarship and on his return he made a number of suggestions and recommendations. I do not know what happens after a person has been overseas on a Churchill scholarship. Is his report published on his return? Mr. Groom made a number

of comments on the development of parks and the influence of tourism on them. Now that the Minister has placed on the Business Paper a notice of motion that suggests that a decision has been made in respect of Cooloola, I wonder how large that national park is to be, and whether the Government will accede to requests that it be a fairly closed area. On the other hand, will the people be allowed free access to it?

It has been suggested to me that possibly one road could go through the Cooloola area and that there should be limited access only from that road. It has been suggested that by that means the community would be given every opportunity to use the park and become aware of what it has to offer.

Mr. Tomkins: You would support access to it, wouldn't you?

Mr. BURNS: Yes. I think there must be access. But I would worry about how much access. The more one reads about American national parks, the more concerned one becomes about what is happening there. Every "National Geographic" magazine contains reports from American park rangers in which concern is expressed about the number of people who speed through parks in cars. Speed bumps and other restrictive devices are now being installed to prevent people from using parks as speedways and taking an afternoon drive through them at 50 miles an hour. That is not the purpose of national parks. They are supposed to be quiet, peaceful places that people visit to get away from the pressures of the city and the motor-car. If there is to be a road through this park, let it be so constructed that people will get out of their cars and walk.

Mr. Doumany: Put bumps in the road.

Mr. BURNS: That is right.

I question the desirability of the development of North West Island on the Great Barrier Reef. The more one looks at development on the Barrier Reef, the more one realises that those who go into this field do not seem to make a great deal of money from it. It does not seem to be one of the most profitable businesses today. Reports on the profits from most island resorts lead one to believe that there are already sufficient at this stage, and that before new ones are developed those at present operating should be assisted to become more profitable. The owners of such resorts put up the argument that they need assistance for the provision of jetties and other facilities. I wonder therefore why the project on North West Island is being pushed when so many people suggest that it will be damaging to the environment to make it a major international tourist resort.

Whenever there is talk these days about international tourist resorts on islands, there is mention of heliports, airports and other major developments. This applies more and more pressure on the smaller islands. I can see where another major resort could be

established on Moreton Island, and there is probably a need for major assistance to the resort on Fraser Island, which is obviously going broke, if it has not yet reached that stage. Certainly it is really struggling. Before allowing new developments on islands, I think the Government should do what it can to stabilise those already in existence. There is so much argument about North West Island that there is real concern in the community about what will happen there.

This brings me to the subject of marine parks. There do not seem to have been any more moves in this field. Are they still under the Minister's control?

Mr. Tomkins: They are right now, but they will soon be under the control of the Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and Fisheries.

Mr. BURNS: At present the two marine parks are at Green Island and Heron Island. Each is under some degree of pressure, perhaps not so much Heron Island because it is not so close to the mainland. But there are a number of other islands off the coast on the Barrier Reef that need protection. I support the argument that the \$50,000,000 tourist resort will ruin North West Island.

Mr. Tomkins: We will have a very good look at it before anything happens, I can assure you.

Mr. BURNS: That is doing it a bit back to front. Shouldn't we have a look at it before we start calling tenders or do anything about development at all?

(Time expired.)

Mr. TURNER (Warrego) (7.55 p.m.): First, I congratulate the Minister on his appointment earlier this year to the very important Lands portfolio, which covers many fields. I believe we are fortunate, Mr. Miller, in having a man of the calibre of Mr. Tomkins as Minister for Lands. As he comes from a western area, he has a vast experience of land matters, and I believe that the majority of people in rural areas are thankful for that.

I congratulate the Minister also on the presentation of his Estimates and his attitude to his portfolio. In company with his departmental officers, he has visited many rural areas of the State, one of them being the western area that I have the honour to represent. In fact, they visited no fewer than eight of the 11 towns in my electorate. I think that is wonderful, and I thank the Minister in particular for displaying such interest in western rural areas. He travelled from my electorate to the Gregory electorate and other western areas, discussing the beef industry assistance scheme and also explaining the new legislation brought down during the last session of Parliament to replace grazing selections with perpetual lease tenure. He has a very busy and important job.

I thank also the Minister's personal staff and the officers of the Lands Department to whom he referred earlier. They are a wonderful team and are very co-operative and courteous. Of course, that is what one has come to expect from officers of the Lands Department in the years since the Government took over from a Labor administration.

I listened earlier to the contribution made by the honourable member for Port Curtis. I am sorry he is not present at the moment, Mr. Miller. He said that very few National Party members were in the Chamber to hear the Minister and expressed the view that they were not interested in the Estimates then being introduced. I point out that when he said that, only one Labor member was in the Chamber.

Mr. Gibbs: How many are there now?

Mr. TURNER: Two. That is typical of the interest of the Labor Party in land matters.

The honourable member for Port Curtis told the Committee how interested the Labor Party is in land matters. It has certainly shown in an unusual way its concern for the rural industries of this State. The Federal Labor Government that was in power until recently removed the fuel subsidy and the superphosphate bounty, increased postal and telephone charges, removed taxation concessions, and cut-back educational allowances, air services and spending on roads. That shows the way in which the Labor Party has expressed its concern for rural areas.

My heart bleeds when I hear the honourable member for Port Curtis express these thoughts. I have listened to virtually every member of the Australian Labor Party speak at some time or other since I entered this Chamber. Each of them has expressed in almost the same way as the honourable member for Port Curtis his concern for the grazing and farming industries in rural areas. I assure the honourable member for Port Curtis and other members of the Opposition that 99.9 per cent of graziers would rather be left in the middle of the Pacific Ocean in a wire-netting canoe than vote for the Labor Party.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: Mr. Miller, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to the state of the Committee.

(Quorum formed.)

Mr. TURNER: Before the honourable member called for a quorum, I had expressed the belief that 99.9 per cent of graziers and people in rural areas would much prefer being set adrift in the Pacific Ocean in a wire-netting canoe to putting up with a Labor Government dedicated to destroying free enterprise and changing Australia into a socialist republic.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: The only difference between you and me is that I am a socialist and you are a National socialist.

Mr. TURNER: I would not say that, but I certainly know that the honourable member is a socialist. He has said so on numerous occasions, and he has been supported by almost all honourable members on the Opposition benches. He does not have to tell me he is a socialist. Everybody in the Labor Party today is a socialist. Socialisation is in the platform and policy of the A.L.P.

When replying to the interjection of the honourable member for Ithaca, the honourable member for Port Curtis said that members of the National-Liberal Government should hang their heads in shame because of their policies on rural matters. Some other honourable members should hang their heads in shame because of their policies in the political field in Australia today.

Earlier in the year the Minister introduced the legislation to which I referred earlier. It provided for a tenure of grazing homestead perpetual leases in the 20-inch rainfall area, which in turn replaced grazing selections, and it was well debated at the time. I congratulate the Minister on the introduction of that legislation, which has been of considerable assistance in my area. As I mentioned, the Minister went to the trouble of making an extensive tour to outline its provisions.

In the time available to me it would be impossible to refer to everything covered by the Minister's Estimates. He has an extensive portfolio that covers many phases of Government activity. At the moment, I wish to speak mainly of rural areas.

Stock routes and the availability of water are very important in western areas. Possibly they have become less important in recent years because of the improvement in road transport. However, with the desperate situation now prevailing in rural areas, I suggest that stock routes will be used more and more as time goes on unless the return from wool and beef improves.

The Minister is responsible for the control and destruction of prickly-pear and noxious plants and weeds. Bathurst and Nagoora burr pose a major problem in many of the wool-growing areas and cause a tremendous amount of concern to local authorities and landholders. There has been a shortage of weedicides for the control of such pests, and I hope that action can be taken to make these weedicides more readily available to rural landholders.

Mr. Hanson: The department should sell it at the correct price instead of fleecing landholders.

Mr. TURNER: I do not particularly want to accept that interjection, because I was about to refer to the eradication of pests such as dingoes, foxes and rabbits.

Mr. K. J. Hooper interjected.

Mr. TURNER: I did not intend to talk about galahs, though. They are not pests—except in certain quarters.

All honourable members are aware of the problems created by rabbits in plague proportions many years ago, before the introduction of myxomatosis. Anyone who experienced those problems would realise that we must be vigilant and ensure that similar problems do not arise again. That responsibility falls on the Minister and his department, which constructs and maintains rabbit and dingo fences.

Feral pigs have become a major problem in most areas of the State, from the grain-growing areas to the Far West, and "1080" has been used extensively in the Lands Department's campaign to control them. Although opposition is expressed in some quarters to the use of "1080", I believe that every effort must be made to destroy feral pigs. They carry a tremendous number of diseases, such as foot and mouth disease, brucellosis and leptospirosis, that afflict cattle and other livestock, and every effort should be made to control and eradicate them.

The Minister is responsible, too, for national parks and wildlife. It is pleasing that Queensland has a large number of national parks. Vast unused areas of the State are being converted into national parks, and I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that they should not be commercialised to such an extent that they are traversed by highways and converted into what are virtually urban areas.

The Minister also controls flora and fauna, so it is pertinent to comment on kangaroos. Some years ago kangaroos were in plague proportions and posed a problem as bad as that posed by rabbits. I do not believe that kangaroos should be eradicated, but I suggest that a workable solution to the problem could be the controlled harvesting of kangaroos. This would satisfy almost everyone. Under pressure from the Minister and certain sections of the community, the Federal Labor Government that was removed from office recently lifted its ban on the export of kangaroo skins. Prior to that, the stage had been reached when kangaroos that were killed were left to rot in the paddocks.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: You would be paying rents and rates to run kangaroos.

Mr. TURNER: The Minister has a point.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Or galahs in Moura.

Mr. TURNER: No, the galahs are in Archerfield. Sometimes I think that members of the Opposition have heads only to keep their ears apart.

The Minister administers the Rural Fires Act. I raise with him the question of the payment by householders of a premium on properties that are not given fire protection by fire brigades in towns. Such a premium is an iniquitous levy and I should like to see it removed.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. TURNER: I realise that the honourable member for Archerfield loves to interject.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: I didn't say a word.

Mr. TURNER: I am terribly sorry.

In 1962 the brigalow scheme was implemented in the Fitzroy Basin. It has been of tremendous value to the State. However, prolonged drought and low cattle prices had an adverse effect on the scheme. Of course the Fitzroy Basin is not the only area that has been affected by drought or a fall in prices. The Minister outlined the problems associated with the scheme, and also gave details of expenditure incurred under the Dairy Adjustment Scheme. As he outlined, up till 26 July 1974 over \$11,000,000 was expended under the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme and \$15,000,000 under the Dairy Adjustment Scheme.

The functions of the Rural Reconstruction Board were outlined by the Minister. A large number of problems arise in rural areas. For example, my area does not have the capacity to diversify into sugar or grain and primary production is limited to beef and wool. The beef and wool industries were once prosperous, but escalating costs and inflation have caught up with them. They need all the assistance they can get. Although one hears accusations from some quarters that rural industries are always crying and as a result receiving assistance, I point out that the motor industry and other secondary industries have received tariff protection and assistance that has propped them up and enabled them to provide employment. I am sorry that I have not the figures with me at the moment, but the point I make is that any assistance that can be given to keep the beef and wool industries viable is in the long-term interests of the nation and its people.

Although not all of the \$10,000,000 provided to assist beef producers has been taken up, many producers have benefited. It is essential that this assistance be maintained. The money made available so far has been used for the payment of rates and accounts with business houses. It has also assisted local authorities to overcome their problems by allowing them to continue development work and keep staff employed. In adverse seasonal and financial conditions the Lands Department has given rural producers very beneficial rent concessions.

The Minister's portfolio includes forestry. The plantings that have been carried out by the Forestry Department will be a tremendous asset to future generations. I was interested to note from the Minister's speech that 16,000 jobs had been provided in the forestry industry alone.

In conclusion, I again congratulate the Minister, not only on the presentation of his Estimates but also on his general attitude

to his portfolio. It is all-important to this great State of Queensland, which I hope will always be a free, democratic State.

Mr. GIBBS (Albert) (8.12 p.m.): In speaking to the Minister's Estimates, I compliment him on a job well done. Tonight I shall deal mainly with suburban areas. Today, we have heard much about the country, big land holdings and many other aspects of land use.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. GIBBS: The honourable member for Port Curtis is the greatest hypocrite ever to draw breath in this Chamber. Today, in his speech on the Land Act, he talked like a socialist. But he is the greatest capitalist to draw breath and live in Gladstone. He is a millionaire, a man in the hotel trade. He is the greatest rip-off of all time of the people of Gladstone.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Miller): I ask the honourable member to return to the Estimates before the Committee.

Mr. GIBBS: I was just saying how much the honourable member for Port Curtis has ripped off the public in Gladstone.

Mr. K. J. Hooper interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. GIBBS: I thank you, Mr. Miller, for pulling those fellows into gear.

I shall deal with the Lands Department, the Forestry Department and the Wildlife Service.

Mr. Alison: Speak slowly. We want the honourable member for Archerfield to hear you.

Mr. GIBBS: He could do with a little education. The National Parks and Wildlife Service has its eye on the honourable member for Archerfield in case he goes into some of its areas and dumps more rubbish. We don't want that to happen.

I wish to speak now on the importance of the land that is owned by the people of Queensland.

Mr. K. J. Hooper interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

Mr. K. J. Hooper interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. GIBBS: I would put him out, Mr. Miller, if I were you.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not need any help from the honourable member for Albert.

Mr. GIBBS: The Spit and many other areas have been recently turned over to the Gold Coast City Council under trust. The Gold Coast City Council's new works depot is situated on land that was made available

to it by the Lands Department, as was the tip that is on land behind it. The people of the Gold Coast and the Albert Shire have been saved many thousands of dollars by the Lands Department.

We have two reserves—R93 is now in the process of being turned over to the Gold Coast City Council for what will possibly be one of the greatest sports arenas ever seen in Queensland. When it is completed, it will probably outdo Brisbane. Work has already started on it. This has been made possible only by the Lands Department. It has co-operated greatly with local authorities right throughout Queensland. I would go as far as to say that, of all the Government departments, the Lands Department would be the one that would enjoy the greatest respect of the Queensland people and local authorities.

Recently railway land in the centre of Southport that was controlled by the Lands Department was made available on lease for the building of bus depots, community halls and other amenities. The Gold Coast City Council could never have afforded to buy the land. The lease is the result of work done by Cec Carey. He promised that he would try to have a bus depot established on that land. It now looks as though it will become a reality. I think a former member for Albert, Mr. Cec Carey, is owed a debt of gratitude. Of course, the electorate of Albert slipped a bit for a short period when someone else represented it. Now it is back in good hands, with good representation.

I turn now to Stradbroke Island. In fact the Forestry Department is to be commended for the way it looks after all of our islands. Take, for example, the work it does on Lindeman Island to keep the walkways clear. The department does a great job for tourism in that way and swells the income earned from tourists who are attracted to Queensland. So it can be seen that it plays a great role in Queensland's welfare.

As I said the other day, the three essentials of life are food, a dollar in the pocket and a home on a block of land. No doubt the honourable member for Port Curtis, who has spoken about freehold, supports Mr. Connor, who said that he wanted to buy back the farm and leave no freehold land for anybody. That was the eventual plan—to borrow money from overseas companies to buy back the farm. Who would own the country then? Would the Middle East own it or would Australia own it?

A Government Member: Mr. Khemlani.

Mr. GIBBS: Yes. It would be interesting to see the result.

Mr. Turner: Mr. Hartley.

Mr. GIBBS: Yes. He is a P.L.O. fellow. They would probably rob a bank over there, and it wouldn't cost us any interest at all.

On what was formerly Forestry Department land, the Molendinar Estate has been

established in Southport, taken over and leased by the Department of Industrial Development. It is one of the most successful ventures it has undertaken in our State. It has been very successful. Through co-operation between departments, it became a reality. Behind that is another big area of Forestry Department land that has been made available for the establishment of an institute of advanced education. Because of the willingness to make that land available, in the future we will have there one of the best institutes of advanced education in Queensland. I could discuss a thousand matters when debating the Lands Department and the Acts it administers.

A city, town or shire can vest in the Lands Department any parkland that it gets from developers. It is then put back under the control of the council in trust. This preserves it for all time and makes sure that nobody can interfere with it or dispose of it. It is one of the many responsibilities of this department.

It is a pleasure to deal with the officers of the department, such as Mr. Heffernan, Mr. O'Gorman and, now, the Director of National Parks and Wildlife, Dr. Saunders. They give everybody a great hearing and their officers will always talk to the Albert Shire Council or the Gold Coast City Council about their problems.

The introduction of environmental parks was a great step forward in Queensland. It allows variety in the types of park or reserve so that everything is not designated as a national park. It is good that environmental parks can be set aside, because they are a little more flexible than national parks. Perhaps it would be a good idea to go further and establish State parks, which would play a different role again. We must preserve as much open space as possible without affecting people. A balance must be struck in this matter.

To build the Advancetown Dam, 13,000 acres has been acquired. A great, open-space reserve will be established around the dam. Eventually it will probably be held in trust by the Lands Department so that it cannot be disposed of in the future.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975 dovetails in with the planning report on the wetlands from Jumpinpin to the Nerang River Bridge. It would be one of the best reports ever turned out by this Government. It protects all of the islands and is decisive on what happens to them and the wetlands that go with them. This will be a marvellous guide to the local authorities and Government departments. The Director of National Parks and Wildlife will have to administer this Act to a large degree in his daily work.

I wonder if, for our young people, the Lands Department could make available some land in Queensland at a reasonable price. I believe that the local authorities now demand that such land be of the highest standard.

Any land set aside by the Lands Department has to be developed to the standard expected by the local authority in which the land lies. It will be more expensive now but it will turn out to be cheaper in the long term. If the department does not do it the local authority will have to and in view of the present rate of inflation the cost would run into many millions of dollars.

I have had many dealings with Mr. Kennedy, an officer of the Lands Department, who visits the local authorities and attends many of the co-ordination meetings that I attend. We have always had a good relationship with him in local authority matters. He is a very responsible person who gives great leadership in that department.

I understand, too, that the Lands Department gives a good deal of land to charities to enable them to achieve what they normally could not achieve without the assistance of a department that is willing to participate right down to the grassroots level of the people living in the towns and cities.

The Minister has taken up a new portfolio. I believe that he has done a wonderful job in the short time he has been in it and that he will continue to do so. I know that he has great responsibilities in the western parts of Queensland, where there are currently tremendous problems in the cattle industry and where there have been over the years considerable difficulties in the sheep industry. I know that the Minister and his department will be doing their best to assist the people in those industries in their time of stress, which was increased by the actions of the Federal Government that has just been sacked.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: His knowledge and experience in those areas over the years has been invaluable.

Mr. GIBBS: That is so. I believe that the Minister's knowledge of those areas is of assistance to him in his portfolio, and that they will progress under his control.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: You are the only person who could go into a revolving door ahead and come out behind.

Mr. GIBBS: Turner's galah again!

South Stradbroke Island is in my area and the Minister recently made a visit to it. I approve of all the things that are being done there. The Minister is cleaning up some of the leases and looking at problems in conjunction with the Department of Harbours and Marine. He is taking a very realistic view of the progress of the island. It is necessary to ensure that the land remains virtually as it is and that not too much is made available under lease. It is an island of great value to the boating fraternity of Queensland, and I think there has to be close co-operation with the Department of Harbours and Marine to ensure that it is preserved rather than spoilt. It has been mined, so that prospect does not have to be faced. It has been redeveloped by the

mining company. Its re-establishment has been a little slow but it has been very successful. I believe that it will finally be better than ever.

One day it is hoped to pump sewerage effluent from the Gold Coast and pond it in tanks on the island. Perhaps the island could then be irrigated to produce one of the best natural parks in Queensland and a place that people would want to visit. The spraying of effluent would stabilise the sand dunes and the growth of vegetation and, all in all, make a great place of the island. This could be continued on North Stradbroke Island. Over the years I believe that this area will become the Mecca for the boating fraternity of Queensland, especially in the south-east corner of the State. I should like the Minister to keep those comments in mind. I think that the preservation of these islands is a very important aspect of the future of the south-east corner of Queensland.

Mr. DOUMANY (Kurilpa) (8.29 p.m.): I rise to commend the Minister on the presentation of these very important Estimates. I stress that they embrace what is basically the fundamental resource of this State, namely, land. In the early study of economics land was described as one of the three fundamental resources on which the economic activities of man are based. Since those days it has been discovered that there are other resources, and according to Karl Marx there are others still. But, irrespective of the political ideology that one pursues, there is no questioning that management of land and its productivity remains one of the most important functions and responsibilities of government. From the speech that the Minister gave today in presenting his Estimates, I am certain that he is cognisant of the very wide range of responsibilities involved. In fact, this makes any speech on these Estimates a fairly difficult task in the time allotted because there is such enormous scope, such a wealth of subject matter and such a variety of problems and issues covered by the Department of Lands that one must confine discussion to a few points if one wants to get anything meaningful across.

I would like to look at the assistance to primary producers for which the Minister is responsible, and in particular I would like to look at assistance to beef producers because there is no doubt that in the past two years, and particularly over the past 12 months, the Minister has faced extreme difficulties with the beef industry. The dearth of co-operation by the Commonwealth Government over that period and the obstinacy of the Federal Minister for Agriculture at that time, Senator Wriedt, who claimed that there was no problem facing the beef industry—

Mr. Alison: He wouldn't have a clue about primary industry.

Mr. DOUMANY: No. Notwithstanding that fact, that Minister displayed a very obstinate attitude which prevented him from

acknowledging that this great industry deserved a much higher level of assistance in its time of need than it received. Our Minister has certainly done everything possible with the limited resources that have been available to assist this industry. It is quite interesting to see that, despite the baying and the braying from Canberra, the suggestion that very few people wanted to avail themselves of that high-interest money—although the term “high-interest” was never used to qualify it—and the argument of the Federal Government that, “very few cattlemen want to borrow; therefore they must not be in trouble”, from June up till now nearly all of the \$10,000,000 that the State Government made available has been taken out. This has been because a more realistic level of interest has been applied.

When we look at this question of assistance to primary producers, whether they be beef, wool or dairymen, there is no doubt that the impact of inflation and high interest rates, exacerbated by Federal Government policies over the past two years, has made the task of our Minister extremely difficult and has meant that a larger and larger proportion of the scarce funds that he has at his disposal has had to be directed into the alleviation of short-term difficulties and far less has been available to be directed into the long-term area of amalgamation of properties and structural changes that will assist industries for many years to come. This is most regrettable, and the longer we have economic chaos, the longer we have economic mismanagement, and God forbid that such an event might come about on 13 December that would continue such a trend—

Mr. Alison: It won't.

Mr. DOUMANY: I am sure it will not, as the honourable member for Maryborough has indicated. I share his confidence that it will not continue after 13 December, but make no mistake, if it does continue we can be assured that more and more of the Vote of this department will have to be directed into patching up and holding things together, and that is most regrettable because this is a time when in Queensland we want to see our primary producers, through the Minister's policies, being given a chance to equip themselves and to strengthen themselves for the long term, to become more viable producers and more efficient producers at lower unit cost so they can fight more effectively for overseas markets for their products. We do not want to see, instead, most of our resources being poured into holding things together and propping things up. That has been an obligation on us for the last 12 or 18 months, because there has been no alternative course of action.

One very important point that emerges is that the Industries Assistance Commission has presented recommendations to the Federal Government, but up till last week when the caretaker Government under Mr. Fraser

was appointed, no indication had been given as to whether those recommendations had been accepted. We had a continuation of the very vague attitudes of the previous Federal Government. Mr. Fraser has since pledged that he would adopt the I.A.C.'s beef aid proposal. I refer those who are sceptical to page 12 of yesterday's issue of “The Australian Financial Review” (Wednesday, 19 November). It is quite clear that Mr. Fraser is already taking the realistic attitude which is so essential to meeting the problems and challenges of the beef industry at this time. For instance, he will be adopting the first of the I.A.C.'s recommendation, which calls for the suspension of the export levy on beef of 1.6c a lb. The previous Government refused repeated requests from the industry and its representatives to lift that simple fee, which has meant a lot of money being drained from the pockets of cattlemen. These are simple measures, but they are so essential.

We must come more and more to grips with economic realities in areas such as land administration. Without doubt, this Government is doing that. It is looking not just to the short term in its assistance to the beef industry but to the long term. The market prospects for beef in the long term are still very strong. The Minister is one of the first to recognise that. As a cattleman, he knows that the most important thing for Queensland is to put its beef industry in a position where it can relaunch itself into expansion, development and growth when the market definitely turns upward. That will not be very far in the future, either. Let us make no mistake about it; the allocations in the Estimates for beef industry assistance are very important to put a key industry on a sound footing for future expansion and growth. I venture to say that when that comes, it will match the growth of the mining industry in this State in terms of rate of development and sheer dollars of development. It is an industry with massive prospects, and one that we must pay particular attention to in Queensland.

I shall refer briefly to the land settlement policy referred to by the Minister. The positive, constructive and forward-looking policies for brigalow development and amalgamation of properties in such industries as dairying have been very important, irrespective of their cost. Once again, in the long term we will benefit from those moves. That is despite the fact that many of the cynics and sceptics say, “You put those people out in the brigalow. Look where they land. They land in all the trouble of seasonal stringency and market stringency.” Once this period is over, with the support that is being given to them to maintain their position in these difficult times, we will have a major addition to the rural investment picture in this State, which will mean a great deal to the strength of the State's economy and the national economy. We

want to see this constructive attitude continued. In land settlement every move we make towards alienation, towards giving the private individual a greater stake in and greater attachment to the resources for which he is responsible and to which he is committed, is to the benefit of the State.

I for one welcome the move made earlier this year in this Chamber to enable certain categories of landholders to move from term leases to perpetual leases. I welcome every move from leasehold to freehold. We cannot expect private enterprise to take the risk of putting its money where its mouth is unless it has security of tenure and security of investment. No matter how good land is, unless it is married to management and capital it will not produce. We must make conditions of tenure and land settlement such as to encourage the best management and the greatest amount of capital in agricultural industries. In this area of policy-making the Minister is the person responsible for making some of the key decisions. If he does not take them, all the other efforts made will not count for anything.

We have heard a lot of fuss about suburban subdivisions. Today the Minister referred to the progress that has been made by the Lands Department in the subdivision of allotments. I am sure that the Minister would endorse my point that we, as a private-enterprise Government, should never seek to replace private enterprise in the subdivision of urban land.

In the very near future there will be a tremendous scarcity of subdivided urban land. Added to that will be an enormous escalation of prices. All this will result from the incentive-killing policies emanating from Canberra and the theoretical nonsense uttered by Mr. Uren. He absolutely ignored the realities of business—not business in the big sense, but in the individual sense. The problem was aggravated to a large degree by the impact of inflation and high interest rates. They killed the opportunity of receiving a reasonable rate of return.

There is a tremendous shortage of urban land, and I am certain that after 13 December this Government will look to Mr. Fraser and his newly elected Government to take up the challenge and work together with us to encourage private enterprise to provide suitable areas of urban land for the housing of our young people. Until now their lot has been one of despair. It has been impossible for them to purchase land and to build a home or, alternatively, to purchase a home. We have seen a despicable state of affairs.

We even had the spectre of a tax on a person's own home. I am not saying that the previous Federal Labor Government endorsed that principle, but the mere fact that the study group had the temerity to bring it forward is intolerable.

Mr. McKechnie: How many A.L.P. members demand freehold land for themselves?

Mr. DOUMANY: While the honourable member for Port Curtis was speaking I tried to ask him whether his properties were freehold.

Mr. Gygar: He's probably a member of the Property Owners' Association.

Mr. DOUMANY: Most probably. To come back to this question of home-ownership—it is needed, and young people should be given every opportunity to own their own piece of dirt, to put it in the colloquial sense. Therein lies the muscle of the nation—make no mistake about that. The Labor Party is petrified with fear that, when that happens, people get a sense of independence and want to think for themselves. That is not what the A.L.P. wants.

Mr. McKechnie: They say, "Do what we tell you, not what we do."

Mr. DOUMANY: I commend the Minister on the presentation of his Estimates, on the breadth that he covered and the constructive stance taken by his departments. I hope that the free-enterprise emphasis that is characteristic of his administration continues to strengthen. I am certain that, after 13 December, he will have every means at his disposal to strengthen it infinitely compared with what has been possible in the past three years.

Once we see inflation and interest rates cut back, the Minister's Estimates will go much further in renewing Queensland's economic sinews and regaining a pace of growth akin to that of some five years ago.

Mr. POWELL (Isis) (8.47 p.m.): In speaking to the Minister's Estimates, I first congratulate the honourable member for Kurilpa, who spoke on the freeholding of land and explained very clearly—and supported—everything we believe in. He certainly highlighted the hypocrisy of A.L.P. spokesmen on this matter. It is ludicrous that people in this Chamber should talk about the State being the only landholder when they want to own their own block of land in town and their own properties. As was said earlier, their policy seems to be, "Do as we tell you, not what we do." The Government's freeholding policy is wise. We must maintain it. Without a right to own land, people will not develop it properly.

Dealing firstly with the Lands section of the Minister's portfolio, I sincerely thank officers of the Lands Department for the courtesies shown to me in my short time in this Assembly.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: You will always find them the same.

Mr. POWELL: I am sure that I will. Only today I spent some time with the Lands Commissioner. I certainly appreciated the courtesy with which he received me.

On searching through the records I was able to find a fair amount of vacant Crown land in my electorate. While some of the

country is described as useless wallum country, it can be developed and used for production. Certain sections of it worry landholders in my electorate, especially one large unfenced area to the east of the Howard-Torbanlea section, which breeds vermin. Many cane farmers with land adjoining this unfenced Crown land are also worried about the possibility of fires. The land is not well looked after in the way of fire breaks and so on. Another problem has arisen because certain unscrupulous people have been buying cattle very cheaply and letting them loose on this vacant Crown land. The cattle are able to grow fat in this area. Their owners are paying no rent for it. The problem is that the land is unfenced and, as a result, the cattle cause considerable trouble on adjacent cane farms. The farmers have gone to a great deal of expense and spent a lot of time preparing their land by clearing it and then planting cane, only to find that the cattle running loose in this Crown land come in and chew it down.

Land tenure in my electorate concerns the people greatly. There is a lot of leasehold land. A number of the people who have leases are considering freeholding the land. I believe that the Government is right in allowing them to do so.

The Forestry Department in this State is to be commended. Under the Chief Conservator (who with that title is well named, I suggest), the Forestry Department undertakes serious conservation and reforestation projects, which are of benefit to the State. While some of us will not see the benefits of the timber harvested from areas of reforestation, our children and our children's children will benefit from the farsightedness of the Forestry Department in the past few years, and its continuing programme of planting. It is pleasing to see the way that timber is harvested as a crop. The department does not allow people to go into paddocks or forestry areas and clear the land "wall to wall"—or clear-fell it—so that the land is left open to the ravages of the weather.

Another aspect on which the Forestry Department is to be commended is its fire control. Landholders who are adjacent to forestry country have no worries about fire breaking out and taking over their properties, because the Forestry Department is always very careful to make sure that uncontrolled fires do not break out in their areas and ruin the stands of timber that we in Queensland so badly need.

It is a source of disappointment to me that Queensland has to import so much timber. It is probably only because of the short-sightedness of our forebears that that is so. Certainly, with the large acreages under the exotic and indigenous pines that are being planted in the State, it should not happen in the future. A number of plantings have been made in my electorate. Near my home town, hoop pine is being planted, or replanted, and *Pinus elliottii* and *Pinus caribaea* are

also being planted. It is heartening to see plantations in areas that probably cannot be regarded as productive. Pines are planted and later thinned out—the thinnings are used for various purposes—and when the trees mature after 45 years (in the case of exotic pines), they are harvested and used for building and other purposes.

Generally speaking, the Forestry Department has maintained cordial relations with the people, too. The way the Minister is able to instill into his departmental officers the idea of getting on well with people is probably a reflection of his influence. His department is involved in land use, one that is very important to this State of ours.

The third section of the Minister's portfolio—National Parks and Wildlife Service—is the newest in his portfolio and certainly one that I welcome greatly. Such a department under one Minister, who is responsible for what we might term the environmental aspects, has long been required in the State. The Minister is to be congratulated on steering through the Parliament earlier this year a Bill to form the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The director is a dedicated man. He is doing his best in every possible way to co-ordinate this particular aspect of the Minister's portfolio.

Many people approach the idea of national parks and wildlife with a little trepidation, whereas others of course approach it with quite an amount of hostility. For some obscure reason there are those in our community who, as soon as they hear the word "conservation" or "conservationist", seem to go right off and do not become rational again until the subject is dropped. Frankly, I cannot understand their attitude, because the vast majority of people in our community are certainly concerned that we should have national parks and have them in areas where they can be used.

Earlier tonight I listened to the Leader of the Opposition speaking about national parks. Perhaps he has seen some of the national parks in the United States; I do not know. I have had the pleasure of visiting the Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona and some of the desert national parks there. The way that the United States Forest Service looks after national parks is a blueprint for what we should be doing. The national park use in the United States is graded so that not all parks are areas of land locked away, where nobody can go unless they are prepared to walk. Some parts are open and it is possible to drive through them and view their beauty.

Obviously there are people who have not the ability to carry a rucksack and walk for hours enjoying the beauty of the scrub. Probably there are those who, if they did so, would not find much beauty in it anyhow. While we have people who want to use national parks for recreation, we should open some of them or some parts of them so that people can use them in this manner.

Isis has a number of national parks and park areas. They are all now administered by the Minister's department. Adjoining landholders do have some problems and some reservations on whether the formation of a national park in a certain area is a good thing. They are concerned about vermin such as dingoes breeding in national parks. They are also concerned about the danger of fire. Obviously we do not want a fire raging through a national park. But we must have some areas set aside so that the natural bushland is maintained and the people of the future can study and view the natural beauty of the bushland.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Many people could look at a piece of bushland and see no beauty in it while others who are skilled in looking for certain things and wide awake know what to look for and can see the beauty of the delicate flora and fauna.

The National Parks Branch has an extremely difficult task. I would hate to venture to suggest that all national parks should be fenced to contain all the vermin and keep them out of nearby farms and grazing leases. It is a problem, and many people whose properties border on these parks are concerned about this matter.

A national park should be for the people. It should be an area that people can enter and enjoy. I have enumerated some of the problems with national parks. Some people cannot appreciate them. I think the Education Department should come in on this and assist people to appreciate our national parks. The agricultural project section of the Education Department is setting up environmental schools adjacent to national parks and also in national parks themselves. Children are shown the national parks as part of their education. They are given a questionnaire on what to look for, and go through the area and study it. They become more observant. I think that this section of the Education Department needs to be upgraded and given closer attention. The study of national parks by children must be undertaken seriously.

Care must be taken that some sections of national parks are not over-used. I have Fraser Island in particular in mind. Some parts of the island are particularly beautiful. Indeed, the whole island could be regarded as a beautiful area, but some parts are being changed at the moment. The areas that are being left alone are very beautiful, and the Forestry Department controls the sensible harvesting of timber. That is the correct use of the forest.

I return to consideration of the over-use of parks. Certain camping areas on the island have been over-used. The area around Eli Creek is a pleasant camping area. It has excellent water; it is flat; it is close to the beach, and it is fairly close to good fishing areas; but it is being over used. It has no facilities. The Lands Department, the Forestry Department, and the National Parks and Wildlife Service are now under one

Minister, and together they should be providing camping grounds in specified areas on Fraser Island and in other national parks. The Woodgate area is another that should receive consideration. I believe that, if the departments got together to decide where camping areas should be established and then provided toilet and other facilities in those places, national parks would be used in the way they should be.

I am well aware that legislation will have to be introduced to spell out the uses of national parks because the traditional use of national parks in Queensland is, in my opinion, foreign to what it should be. There should be areas set aside which people cannot enter except on foot, and other areas in which no other form of land use is permitted. But there should also be other areas just as beautiful and quite accessible to the people. It is their accessibility with which I am most concerned. There is a strong lobby that is trying to convince the Government that people must not enter national parks in vehicles. Such a prohibition would be a tragedy. The simple way of getting from point A to point B is in a vehicle, and there is less chance of littering if people move quickly. Within national parks there should be set aside areas that are accessible to the people, with camping grounds and fire-places.

It is no use piously saying, "We have X acres of national park in this State," and at the same time saying, "But you can't go into them." That is a waste of time and of land use. I am particularly concerned that we strike a sensible balance so that people can make use of their national parks. The Education Department already has facilities and trained staff for this work, and the department should be encouraged to establish schools on the fringes of national parks so that children can be given training that will help them to grow up knowing the correct way to use national parks. I think the Minister has the job in front of him. I am certainly excited to be a member of his committee and to have the opportunity to assist him in bringing about a sensible balance in the use of national parks.

I think that a tribute should be paid to conservation groups. I know that some people see red at the mention of the word "conservationist", but I think a tribute should be paid to some of the conservation groups which have lobbied so hard and with such tenacity that Governments at long last—not only the Queensland Government but other Australian and American Governments—have seen the sense of their arguments that national parks are needed and that we should not be wearing out our land as was being done. Now the State Government has seen the wisdom of what has been argued.

In the past we have seen conservation practised by the Forestry Department and the Soil Conservation Branch of the Department of Primary Industries. Now we see men and women working in our Government

departments to protect our land use, to stop people over-using the land, so that in the future we will be able to have areas set aside where our young people can go and enjoy themselves and see nature in Australia as it is today, beautiful and unique.

In summing up, Mr. Miller, I would like to congratulate the Minister on the presentation of his Estimates. I would like to thank his departmental officers for the courtesy that they have shown me in the past and that I hope they will show me in the future. I am completely in accord with the Government's policy on the freeholding of land. As the honourable member for Kurilpa mentioned before, the crisis that we are facing with the shortage of blocks of land in our cities and towns will have to be faced very, very shortly. If we do not get off our backsides and do something about the freeholding of land, the price of land for home-building will be beyond the reach of young couples.

(Time expired.)

Mr. ROW (Hinchinbrook) (9.7 p.m.): Mr. Miller—

Mr. Hanson: It looks like we hear from Joe McAvoy again.

Mr. ROW: I do not know why the honourable member for Port Curtis always insists on interjecting at the beginning of my speeches by referring to a person with whom I was associated for many years in one of the most progressive primary industries in this State. Apparently this person to whom he continues to refer has created some degree of envy in the honourable member because of his success. Perhaps some of it has rubbed off on me.

As a member of the Minister's lands committee I have a great deal of admiration for his handling of the various facets of his portfolio. As a back-bencher in this Parliament and one who has perhaps as many land transactions in his electorate as any other honourable member, I would also like to congratulate the departmental officers for their assistance when one makes representations on behalf of one's constituents.

I have perused the annual reports of the Forestry Department and the Land Administration Commission and have been greatly interested in the activities of the past year and the projected activities for the coming year which are covered by the Estimates which we are debating.

I was tremendously interested in the report of the Conservator of Forests, and I would like to take this opportunity of paying my small tribute to the contribution of Mr. Haley over many years. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Bryan on his appointment and on the way he has continued to promote the activities of that department. I think the organisational development programme that is referred to in the report is one of exceptional interest and value.

Speaking of organisational programmes brings me to the question of sawmill quotas. There has been a tendency in the sawmilling industry in these times of economic pressures, inflation and the need to achieve economy of scale, for small mills to be absorbed by larger ones or closed in the interests of economy and for the raw material to be processed in a centralised and more sophisticated manner with greater throughput and bigger machines which cannot be dispersed around the country in smaller mills. The forest management section of the department has done a great deal to keep up with that trend. The new system of non-competitive sales may be of some assistance to the smaller mills.

I was involved in representations to the Minister's predecessor last year in connection with mill quotas. At that time I found it was not a simple matter to adjust the quotas of mills on their performance, absorption or changing circumstances. The department has taken positive steps to try to meet the circumstances that crop up from time to time.

Perhaps the retention of the auction system for surplus timber could continue to cater for larger mills that are capable of expansion and capable of going on to a competitive market for their forest timber supplies. I hope this process turns out to be successful, because the preservation of communities in the forest regions of the State is very essential, particularly from the point of view of decentralisation. We have conflicting factors in the commercial field in regard to economy of scale, but we still have to try to preserve the livelihood and domicile of people in the forestry industry who constitute small groups in the community and probably enjoy a more satisfying way of life than others in large provincial centres. I think it would be every Australian's wish that that way of life should be preserved. Forestry is a land-based industry which probably offers the greatest opportunity for the retention and extension of that kind of rural community.

The licensing of portable forest mills for such operations as sleeper-cutting to meet railway requirements is, to some extent, satisfying the demand. In my own electorate I have several units of that nature. I congratulate the Forestry Department for its co-operation in licensing as many people as are capable of carrying out this work and qualified to be licensed.

It was interesting to read in the departmental report that some new particle-board plants have been established in Queensland. I know that the wood pulp question has been very contentious for some time in this State. Although there were some moves by large commercial enterprises to enter the wood pulp field in Queensland, it has never been proven that their establishment on a large scale would be feasible at this time. But the day must inevitably come when that form of wood utilisation will be practicable in

Queensland. A lot of mill waste is destroyed because there is no way of using it. It is quite possible that the establishment of particle-board plants will provide an economic way of absorbing this waste. Waste from the sugar industry is largely consumed in the creation of energy for the manufacture of the end product, but cane fibre is largely wasted. Perhaps there could be a merging of that kind of industrial waste with waste from the timber industry to bring this State into line with other nations that have succeeded with that type of enterprise.

I recall a most interesting experience I had a few years ago when given the opportunity to tour the island of Taiwan with other members of an international organisation with which I was associated. I was amazed at the wide variety of enterprises that existed on that relatively small island, which is no bigger than the area lying between Bundaberg, Warwick and the Northern Rivers of New South Wales, and has a climate similar to that of many parts of Queensland. Of course, its population is much denser than that of this State; it would be nearly equal to that of Australia. I saw there a great deal of integration of utilisation of industrial waste as well as a good deal of intercropping.

I was interested to read in the report that some form of intercropping is planned in the management and development of some of our forest regions. There is wide scope for this activity. In fact, from time to time I have had pressure put on me by people who are interested in entering the grazing industry, particularly when small units were feasible in the industry and the return was quite satisfactory. People were putting a great deal of pressure on the Land Administration Commission for permits to graze cattle on forest areas. The proper development of those areas and the ability to manage pastures within forest regions could be of substantial benefit to the State.

This brings me back to decentralisation. For the survival of our society as well as our economy, it is important that we rehabilitate and repopulate the rural areas, which, in an earlier era, were the economic backbone of the State. We will not see the proper distribution and balance of population as well as of social benefits and amenities that go to make up a happy community if people are forced to conglomerate in urban areas. I am not being derogatory of urban areas. I am very proud of the capital city of Queensland. But I am also proud of its rural areas. The whole of the State has to be looked after, and we won't do that unless we look after all the people.

The establishment of national parks has been to the forefront in the policies enunciated by this Government. Our national parks are equal to if not better than those in other States. The allocation of funds to national parks has, generally speaking, been quite

satisfactory, and the department can well be proud of its achievements over recent years.

The establishment of the Wildlife Service must be of great benefit to our national parks. At this point I pay tribute to the Director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dr. Graham Saunders. I became acquainted with him 20 or 25 years ago, when he was involved in the operations of the Forestry Department in North Queensland, and I have known him very well since then. I was very pleased when he achieved his doctorate, as I was when he was appointed to a position in which he can use his undoubted capabilities. Dr. Saunders and his officers had to break new ground. In doing so, they met with a lot of resistance, which was natural. As the honourable member for Isis said a few moments ago, administration and legislation relating to conservation always face thorny problems. On occasions I have been the first to complain, especially when I have had to deal with over-zealous, amateur, poorly qualified people, who are genuinely interested in conservation, but carry it to the point that in some ways they interfere with normal industrial development. I am pleased that we now have a department which can iron out the problems and provide solutions that will be satisfactory to all—the industrialists, the developers and all people who are interested in proper, balanced progress of the State.

The important fauna-based industries are involved with conservation. All honourable members will agree that there has been considerable trepidation about the vicissitudinous kangaroo skin industry in Australia. Only a few years ago the change of Government in Canberra brought with it drastic curtailment of the export of kangaroo skins. Some of the reasons for the change were undoubtedly genuine, but many were political. I am sure that all honourable members will agree that kangaroos in some areas are reaching plague proportions. That can be attributed mainly to the fact that rational control of the industry came to a halt. While the kangaroo is a unique animal, and a wonderful Australian emblem, like everything else it can develop into a pest if not properly managed. I do not see why, in controlling pests, we should not make use of valuable by-products, which, in this instance are the hides and furs that are highly valued throughout the world. Some kangaroo fur is beautiful and competes favourably with exotic furs for which people pay high prices. I believe that through this industry we were giving satisfaction to many people in moderate circumstances. I believe that we should continue to look after them.

The uniqueness of our native fauna and flora is not always appreciated. In my small tropical electorate it is always a source of wonder to contemplate the variety of unique species to be found in this area of a couple of thousand square miles. Within 100 miles of the Queensland coast there

may be half-a-dozen strains of one unique species. I am proud to say that in my electorate there is a unique species of ring-tail possum. Unfortunately, some of them inhabit the ceiling of my home and at times create quite a disturbance. When I wrote in all good faith as a member of the Ingham Hospital Board to Dr. Saunders and told him that we were having a problem with these rather nice little animals in the ceiling of the Ingham Hospital, he said, "Catch them all and take them out to your farm."

I congratulate the officers of the Lands Administration Commission on the courtesy extended to me as a member of Parliament. Land matters probably predominate in the representations made for my electorate, where grazing and sugar are the major industries. A great deal of tenure change and manipulation or adjustment of land is involved. But for the co-operation and prompt attention given by the Lands Department—I know that I impose on the officers at times, but I do not think they take umbrage—I would be in trouble.

I wish to refer particularly to the recent expansion in the cane-growing industry. There we have had two statutory organisations. One is the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board, which is vested with the power of controlling the expansion of the industry and issuing licences to people for new and increased assignments, and the other is the Land Administration Commission, which is responsible for the allocation of that land.

Expansion within the industry sometimes happens quite unexpectedly and is required to be dealt with expeditiously. In the recent sugar expansion there was a good deal of anxiety at one stage because of the anticipation that suddenly within one season a substantial increase in sugar production was called for by the Sugar Board, which as our selling agent is responsible for keeping good faith in our sugar marketing arrangements. Unless the quotas to the people to whom we contract to supply our sugar can be met, we break faith with those markets. It is important that this country be in the top ranks of reliable sugar producers and remain there. When we remain as reliable producers, people look to us for their requirements. The less reliable producers must cope with a lot of ups and downs. Orders not filled are orders cancelled in the next year.

I particularly thank the Land Administration Commission for its speedy work in making adjustments in order to meet the requirements of the Sugar Board and the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board. In many cases decisions are taken with a great deal of haste. The Land Administration Commission is to be greatly admired for its tolerance and its ability to make the necessary adjustments to facilitate the expansion.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BYRNE (Belmont) (9.27 p.m.): In rising to speak in this debate, I wish to concentrate on that section of the Minister's department that deals with national parks and to approach this subject from a slightly different point of view. It is indeed true that in Brisbane, the capital city of Queensland—and in the capital cities of all States of Australia—the urban sprawl is a reality. Many people in Queensland live in the country and are thereby able to understand what wide-open spaces mean. They are able to live with the flora and fauna and the natural beauty that Queensland possesses.

It is an unfortunate fact, however, that when development occurs in a city, no matter how large the country and how small its population, centres of population tend to concentrate in as small an area as possible. Development in cities engulfs all the available areas of greenery and parkland. It is unfortunate because it means that families and children are deprived of much-needed recreation areas. They are deprived of the natural environment that man has lived in since the commencement of time.

In countries such as Japan and the Philippines, but specifically in Japan, it might be thought that, because of the dense population, land in the city areas for building purposes would be at a very great premium. That is indeed true. No housing blocks on which the people dwell are as large as the 24 to 40 perch residential blocks in Brisbane. However, those countries have enormous city parks—and they are their national parks within city areas. That is true in cities such as Tokyo, and is definitely the case in Kyoto. Not only do they have those but they also have vast areas set aside for national parks. Those areas are also very close to the city areas.

But the point I wish to make here is that in some parts of Brisbane at present there are areas where this greenery is in existence—where some of the natural flora and fauna of the State still exists. It is my desire to see that those areas are designated and maintained as national parks. I refer specifically to areas within my own electorate. It is an electorate of several square miles—a large electorate for Brisbane, though it may not be large according to members representing country electorates. They are indeed fortunate and possibly do not fully appreciate that although there may be fewer people in a much larger area of land, those people enjoy the fortunes and benefits that exist because of the larger area of land around them. They are able to appreciate and understand the natural beauty of the State.

Barely half of the area of Belmont's 10 or 11 square miles is presently caught up in the urban sprawl and that half is completely caught up in the urban sprawl with perhaps a few acres in 5 square miles set aside as parklands.

Presently half of the electorate can still be set aside and is still open virgin area. In the past couple of years areas in the Carina, Cannon Hill and Morningside area; in the Holland Park, Mt. Gravatt East, Camp Hill and Carina area; and in the Bulimba Creek, Cannon Hill and Belmont area have been designated as parklands of a sort, if one can find them on a map. All of these areas are presently being destroyed and ruined and their flora and fauna affected by young children who ride through those areas on trail bikes and mini-bikes, set fire to the bushland and kill the various birds, possums and other wildlife that still exist there.

It is the responsibility of a Government to maintain our quality of life and it is also an obvious understanding of those within the Parliament and within this Government that the people are entitled to the recreational enjoyment that open spaces present. Although the Brisbane City Council has failed in this regard, it does not mean that this Government must also wash its hands of responsibility.

In an earlier speech in this Chamber I mentioned that the Brisbane City Council had been very good in setting aside areas of parkland and in using money taken from the rates of the people on the south side of Brisbane to develop parklands at the foot of Mt. Coot-tha. That is all very well and good, but parklands established at the foot of Mt. Coot-tha are not of very great benefit to the people in the Housing Commission areas and the other residential areas of Mt. Gravatt East, Holland Park, Camp Hill and Carina. Unless some consideration is given to these people, their conclusion that council and governmental authorities have no real concern for their quality of life or their need for recreational areas can be fully understood.

The Pine Mountain Reserve has a great degree of potential as an urban national park. Very great consideration should be given to it. The cost would not be prohibitive. The land is presently designated as parkland. Apart from the area that is being quarried, it is used by some residents who walk through it occasionally and, as I mentioned, by young children who ride through it and destroy very much of it. A great deal of littering occurs there. Much of its flora and fauna is destroyed.

Why is it not possible for areas to be set aside as national parks within an urban area which, being designated as such, would enable the development of the flora and fauna and perhaps even the introduction of animals that were once there and were killed by those who do not appreciate the necessity of having these animals in the area? It is unfortunate that the natural flora and fauna which exist in many areas of Brisbane—and specifically in this area—are to be lost. Many varieties of eucalypt, spotted gum, blue gum, tallowwood and bloodwood exist there and many bird varieties such as

kookaburras, magpies, soldier birds, peewees, willy wagtails, mopokes and mountain parrots add to the natural beauty of the area.

Unfortunately, those areas have not in any way been developed as recreational reserves; nor has any Governmental authority endeavoured to improve them so that they can be used for the benefit of the local people. The lantana undergrowth is destructive of much of the flora and fauna and it certainly restricts people who would like to use the areas for recreational purposes. There are still some possums and bandicoots, and certainly some reptiles, in the area. It is important that they be preserved and not eventually destroyed by the continuation of the urban sprawl.

The natural beauty of the Pine Mountain Reserve is still present. It has natural creeks and the flora and fauna that I have mentioned, which, together with slopes, add to its beauty. As I have said, not a great outlay would be needed to develop it into a suitable urban national park.

The principle of management of national parks is prescribed in section 17 of the Forestry Act Amendment Act 1968, which repealed section 40 and inserted a new section. The section inserted reads—

“The cardinal principle to be observed in the management of National Parks shall be the permanent preservation, to the greatest possible extent, of their natural condition . . .”

Certainly that has not been done in any of the urban areas or recreational park areas that I have mentioned, and I feel that it would be unfortunate if this situation were allowed to continue. It is something that Governments need to take into account. Governments must assume this responsibility today so that in the future there will be places in which children and their families can come to a better appreciation of the environment and the beauties of nature.

Section 17 of the same Act also inserted a section dealing with specialised management within national parks. I direct specific attention to the section that enables certain areas of national parks to be developed as recreation areas. I point out that this would indeed be a suitable course of action to follow in relation to the Pine Mountain Reserve on the south side of Brisbane.

Section 40C of the same Act provides in subsection (b)—

“The Conservator of Forests in pursuance of his powers under this Act may construct walking tracks, huts, shelter sheds and other facilities for the use and enjoyment of the area by the public, but shall carry out such construction in such manner as will least disturb the natural condition of the area.”

It is obvious that the original intention and purpose of the Act was the setting aside of areas for the purpose of which I have spoken. I hope that in the future the Government will take the action required

in the Pine Mountain Reserve and other green belts in urban areas so that they can be set aside and developed as recreational park areas in which the flora and fauna can be preserved and in which children and their families can come to an understanding of the beauty of the environment and the part that flora and fauna play in their lives.

Until such a situation arises, children will continue to grow up in the jungle of suburban boxes without a full appreciation of the beauties of nature and where they are to be found. They will grow up without an appreciation of the importance and value of the natural flora and fauna. If the present trend is allowed to continue, they will be the victims of gross oversight and neglect to which many older people were not subject, because in their younger days they were not so tied down by the urban sprawl. Unless we take steps today to counter the effects of the urban sprawl, we will be failing in our duty to the children of the future.

Mr. LAMONT (South Brisbane) (9.39 p.m.): I rise this evening to make two points in the debate on these Estimates. First of all, I should like to make a very short plea that the Mt. Coot-tha national park project go ahead. Originally, as I understand it, there was inflexibility within the department where the feeling was that there could not be the co-existence of a recreational area and an area designated as forest. That inflexibility has been surmounted. It now seems that we are facing inflexibility on the part of the Brisbane City Council, which is loath to give freehold land owned by the council for the benefit of the people of Brisbane, particularly those residing in the western suburbs.

The Brisbane City Council seems to want to prevent those people from having a national park based on Mt. Coot-tha and stretching into the plain. I believe we ought to urge the department to push the Brisbane City Council much harder. I believe we must take a much stronger line on behalf of the people of Brisbane in order to get a national park close to the city. It is a very short drive to that area. I was escorted out there, together with other members of this Assembly, by the honourable member for Ashgrove and I was very impressed with what I saw. I hope that the proposals that the honourable member for Ashgrove and some others of us have supported in a petition will be able to go forward.

The second point I wish to raise is the problem—I assume it is a problem—of the scarcity of good land in the inner city area for development. My attention was drawn to this in a rather dramatic way very recently when a real estate agent who, I believe, is a member of the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, had multi-listed a property very near to my home for an elderly lady. He multi-listed it at well over \$22,000, and when it had not shifted after two months he then went to her and said that it must have been overpriced and that he would get a carpenter

to have a look at the dwelling to see if it was the dwelling itself which was not attractive to buyers. Subsequent to that this man, whose name is Mr. D. Loughrey—he is not the owner or manager of the real estate firm, but in fact the son of the owner-manager—then talked to the elderly lady about the price of the property and eventually signed a contract with her for \$11,500 for the entire property, the property which was originally multi-listed at well over \$22,000. I thought a *prima facie* case of injustice existed. In fact, I thought it was highly undesirable that a real estate agent should in fact become the buyer of a property when he was actually representing the vendor originally. I was told that in this case the gentleman concerned also charged the lady a \$500 commission fee, but that is another matter.

When I came to look into it, I found that the estate agent signed a contract with this vendor, who was a client of his and therefore to some extent dependent on his advice, and that contract was for the sale of a home worth in excess of \$22,000. He sold it to himself for \$11,500, allegedly throwing in a commission to himself. It would seem from the evidence that I have that he then applied for and received a fire insurance cover for the same house for \$10,000. This is where I was able to put a few two and two's together and come up with a few fours.

Originally I was concerned that possibly the value of the property had in fact dropped in a matter of two months from \$22,000 or \$23,000 to \$11,500 because after all one would not expect a real estate agent representing a vendor, particularly an old lady who had no husband to look after her interests and who did not at the time of the transactions think of having a solicitor present, to enter into a contract for \$11,500 on a property that he had already multi-listed at \$22,000. But I felt that possibly there was a drop in property values in my area and I was worried that people in my electorate might feel that their land values had dropped, and so I investigated further. The solicitor of the good lady who was the vendor assured me that the real estate company itself knew very little about this transaction and when the manager and owner of the company, who was the father of the buyer, found out about it he was horrified. In fact, I am assured he told his son he could never again work for that real estate company. If that is true, it is a tragic thing to happen in a family.

Then I happened to visit the lady and while I was there the postman arrived. We opened a letter which was addressed to her address, but we found out later that it was not actually addressed in her name. We accidentally opened the letter and we found that the buyer, the agent, had in fact sought a fire cover note from an insurance company to the value of \$10,000 on the house. He multi-listed the property at \$22,000 or \$23,000, he signed a contract with the lady

to buy the house for \$11,500, and then he got a fire cover note for \$10,000 on the house. It would seem that one of two things happened. Possibly the value of \$22,000 placed on the property was grossly overstated, but that assumption was dispelled because a subsequent potential buyer offered \$22,000 for that property. It seemed possible that property values in East Brisbane might have dropped drastically—in fact, by half. But that seemed unlikely, too. When we found that the house had been insured against fire for \$10,000 (thus in the opinion of the real estate agent it appeared that the land on which the dwelling stood must be worth only \$1,500), that vexed us because the Valuer-General recently put a rateable value of \$8,500 on that land.

We felt that the agent and the buyer, being the same person, knew of this, and so we had a dilemma. Was this a matter for the Lands Department to investigate? Was there a great drop in land prices? Or was it a problem for the Justice Department? Now, as the Justice Estimates are not to be debated in the near future, and therefore there would be no opportunity to raise this matter in such a debate, I thought it might be a matter for the Lands Department to look into as land was part of the transaction. If land had dropped so considerably in value, that would naturally interest me, not just as a member of Parliament but as a resident of the area. So I decided to bring this matter up in this debate.

I have since received a letter from the solicitors of the buyer-agent. First of all they said that there was another explanation, but in fact they did not give it to me. They also warned me or, to use their word, "cautioned" me against raising this matter in public. I take "in public" to include the Parliament. I found it rather worrying that I should be cautioned by solicitors not to raise a certain matter of justice in the Parliament. I should have thought that solicitors would realise that I could do so without bringing any legal action upon myself. When the solicitors threatened me, warned me or cautioned me not to raise this matter, I thought it was my duty to take up the challenge and bring this apparently reprehensible matter to the attention of the Assembly.

I would ask the Minister to look into this. It might well be that the buyer-agent has in fact another explanation. He certainly felt he had done nothing legally wrong. I admit that apparently he has done nothing legally wrong. He felt he had done nothing "commercially objectionable"—to use the words of the solicitors. I do not know what that means, but I felt he had done something morally wrong. He seems to think he has an explanation for it. His solicitors tell me that they have advised him to act in the manner he has. I find that regrettable because if in fact he is wrong, it means that they have given him morally reprehensible advice. I ask the

Lands Department to look into this matter and advise me whether there has been a drop in value of a property in East Brisbane from \$8,500 to \$1,500 in the last couple of months. If that is not so, I am quite prepared to withdraw the matter from the debate and take it up with the Real Estate Institute of Queensland and the statutory body for auctioneers and agents. I hope the institute will look into this independently, because I would not want to prejudge a man. I hope it will look into it and clear the matter up once and for all, because all of us involved are very concerned about the good name of the real estate company and the price of land in East Brisbane.

Progress reported.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 21 October (see p. 1388) on Mr. Campbell's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. LAMONT (South Brisbane) (9.50 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable that the Government has been put in a position where it must legislate to ensure industrial sanity. And today in Queensland it must do that for the simple reason that the A.L.P. is either uninterested or else so bereft of talent and leadership in its industrial wing that it allows so many sections of its industrial wing to be dictated to and controlled by members of the Communist Party such as Halfpenny, Carmichael, Hamilton, Munday and Chard.

The strength of the Left Wing in the trade union movement is on the increase. It has recently increased to the point where four representatives of the Metal Trades Group, which is controlled and dominated by the Communist Party, now sit on the executive of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

Communists can speak for unionists, both militant and moderate, for one reason, namely, that the A.L.P. allows them to capture and maintain positions of authority within Labor organisations.

I hark back to a tragic time in Australian politics and Australian unionism, when, in July 1945, the Communist Party of Australia, with its supporters, had a majority of 90 in a total delegation of 400 at the annual congress of the A.C.T.U. In a victory celebration held later by the Communists, Comrade Ernie Thornton said, according to his fellow comrade Cecil Sharpley, "Today we have passed a vital milestone on the road to proletarian revolution in Australia."

Last Friday we saw a further vital milestone on the road to proletarian revolution in Australia, and it was achieved by trade-unionists of a political colour similar to Ernie Thornton and Cecil Sharpley. Last

Friday we saw the need for this Bill. Last Friday we saw the need to throw unionism and the decisions of unionism onto individual unionists rather than leave them to the rabid Left-wing union leaders.

I am not saying that everyone who went to the City Square to hear Mr. Whitlam was a rabid Left-winger. Many went out of curiosity; many went because they had been given a few beers; many went because they were a bit scared of being known to be absent; many went because, even if they weren't scared, they thought it probably advisable to be seen there. Job sites were deserted for party-political reasons, and non-militant unionists were either caught up in the march—in the swell, the surge—to the City Square or else they remained lingering on the job sites, as we saw on television. The latter complained to interviewers that they had been told that, if they dared to continue to work while the other workers went off to hear the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Australian Labor Party, their colleagues or their comrades or their workmates—call them what you will—would go out on strike and boycott the job sites until such time as these men were sacked.

On Friday we indeed saw another milestone on the road to proletarian revolution in Australia; last Friday we indeed saw the need for this Bill. I commend the Minister on bringing it forward tonight so that we can see the benefits flowing from it in the very near future.

In an earlier speech at the introductory stage I said that what is needed in industrial relations, as they are in fact a form of human relationships—and a very important form of human relationships—is harmony. We need the will to create industrial harmony. I believe that in certain areas of the work-force—by no means in the majority of areas, but in certain key areas—that “will” does not exist.

It is in the interests of all to have harmony. It is in the interests of the worker, of his children and of his wife; it is in the interests of productivity; it is in the interests of the consumers; it is in the interests of those who would check inflation; and it is in the interests of the employers, who seem to be regarded by some sections of the work-force as invariably the enemy.

I know that there are faults on both sides. There are people on our side of the political fence who tend to talk about unions as if they were a boggy to scare little children. By the same token, there are people on the other side—some of them sit in this House and we have listened to their utterances in earlier speeches—who regard employers and the establishment as a boggy to scare the children of unionists.

I have listened to all the speeches that have been made on this Bill both at the introductory stage and on the second reading. It seems to me that the objections to it fall into one broad category which is

expressed only from the union's viewpoint in isolation to all else. No consideration is given to putting that viewpoint into the context of wider society. All anti-democratic acts with respect to union activity, as with all acts with respect to the present political crisis, are laid at the door of government, the police and the employers but, conspicuously, never the union; never is it the union's fault. The old saying that it takes two to make a quarrel is disregarded. No-one on the Opposition benches has admitted any blame on the part of the unionists. It is always the Government, the employers, or the police, who are to blame for some form of brutality or outrageous acts of capitalism that is charged to be at the root of the trouble.

In this debate two questions have gone begging in the contributions made by members of the Labor Party. The first is: does a union have responsibility to society as well as to its members? Secondly, how responsible to the individual union members should the union executive be? This Bill seeks to answer those questions, not by Government interference, as has been alleged by some Labor Party speakers in this debate, but by opening the gates to a collective source of decision by throwing responsibility on the individual unionist.

Let us examine the implications of this Bill, which are tremendous. Striking workers can win official recognition for the legality of their industrial action. The Opposition spokesman on this matter referred to the Swanbank, Calcap and Collinsville disputes. On one of these disputes, he said—

“... ballots were declared. The decisions were positive support for strike action and support of the union leadership.

“But did the result then make the strikes legal or authorised strikes?

“It did not for the employers' representative, referring to the Collinsville dispute, then said that workers involved in the ballot conducted by the registrar were confused and did not know what they were voting for.”

I can understand the outrage of trade-unionists who accept a secret ballot and are then told that because they did not understand what they were voting for, therefore their ballot decision was not a proper result. If this Bill goes through, in such a circumstance as that, the strike would be recognised as legal. That is what the blindness of members of the Labor Party prevents them from seeing.

This legislation recognises, therefore, the right to strike. That is in the Minister's statement, which I think is terribly important. Although it is not part of the legislation I think it is a quasi-legal document. Anybody interpreting this legislation in future would be bound, I should think, to look at the statement made by the Minister when introducing the Bill to see what his intention

was, and would be guided in interpreting the legislation by the Minister's expressed intention. I will quote what the Minister said—

"The present section 98 *inter alia* declares a strike to be unlawful unless authorised by a secret ballot taken before the strike occurs. . . . it will be repealed . . ."

That section 98 is thus replaced and the way is open for a strike to have legality.

The Opposition spokesman fails to recognise that such proposed ballots would be taken only after the strike had occurred. I wish to take up these points because they were made by the honourable member for Rockhampton North, who is the Opposition spokesman on this matter. The Bill, I stress, establishes a means to determine whether or not a strike will continue and if it does continue whether or not it will have legality.

The unions clearly want legal recognition of their right to withdraw or withhold their labour, but many do not want to pay the price of having to seek the stamp of approval. They want the cake and they want to eat it, too. They want the legality, but they don't want to pay the price of putting it to the individual unionist through the secret ballot box of their unions. The private decision of unionists is what would give a strike legality, according to the legislation we are being asked to pass tonight. I fail to see the objection to that particular principle which has been attacked by so many A.L.P. members in this Chamber. It is important to note that the ballots to be held on the continuation of a strike would be held after the men struck and not before—not at the stop-work meeting; but after the time when the strike had taken place. Then it would determine whether or not it was time in the public interest, in the unionists' interests or in the interests of the economy to continue the strike.

This point has been misrepresented by the members of the Labor Party to the degree where they have said—I cannot quote it because I do not have it here, but I remember it clearly—that this aspect of the legislation would prevent union leaders from timing their disputes. According to the honourable member for Rockhampton North, it would deprive them of the tactical advantage of the timing of strike action. That is not so. According to this legislation, the strike would occur and the ballot would take place only after the strike had occurred. The tactical advantage of timing would still be there, but then the unionist would have the right if he so desired to go to the ballot-box and determine whether, in the best interests of himself, his family and the economy and society at large, the strike should continue. All this claptrap about losing the tactical advantage of timing is just pure nonsense. It does not exist. It is a misrepresentation of the legislation by members opposite.

The question ought to be asked: why should there be a secret ballot? Quite clearly there are members of this House and members of the unions who do not believe in secret balloting as a natural right.

Mr. Powell: They are scared of it.

Mr. LAMONT: Yes. I have said that before, and I will say it again—probably before I finish this speech.

I ask: why should it be secret? There is a very simple answer. Look at the title of the Act—the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. What comes first? What has always come first? What do the unionists themselves want to come first? What does the Industrial Commission want to come first? What does the Australian community want to come first? What do we in this House want to come first? Not arbitration, but conciliation. The secret ballot—the privacy of the ballot-box—is the first and finest form of conciliation that the democratic society has ever been able to devise. It is a form of conciliation that I hope the members of the Australian Labor Party accept will in fact decide on 13 December what will happen about the Government of this country, because there have been dire threats as to what will or will not happen if a non-Labor Government—a non-socialist Government—is elected on that day. I hope that they will respect that the secret ballot-box is in fact an instrument of conciliation and that is why we insist that the provisions for secret ballot go into this legislation with respect to union strikes. Conciliation must always come first. Conciliation must always be tried before resorting to arbitration or any other course of action, and so I repeat that the secret ballot-box is the first and finest form of conciliation devised by our democratic society.

Some union leaders jump to the conclusion that everybody who speaks of a secret ballot automatically assumes that, when there is not a secret ballot, there is intimidation. Occasionally there is. I am certain that even members of the A.L.P. will admit that there have been cases of duress and intimidation in union ballots. We know that in fact there is duress and intimidation in other places where non-secret balloting occurs. The raising of hands can often be embarrassing, particularly if the people being voted for or their friends happen to be in the room. I am certain that the eleven gentlemen who sit across the floor from us tonight would not go into their caucus and elect a Leader of the Opposition by a show of hands, because five of them would be far too embarrassed to do so. They would probably want a secret ballot. That is precisely why many unionists want a secret ballot.

There is sometimes intimidation. There is often embarrassment. But there are other reasons why we ought to have a secret ballot. These reasons were summed up in the words of my colleague from Chatsworth (Mr. W.

D. Hewitt) when he spoke about mob psychology. I do not think he used these exact words, but this is what he was talking about—the herd instinct; the instinct that we see when a crowd of people says, “Come on. We are going to walk off the job site.” They all go. They say, “Who wants to go? Put your hands up.” There is a flood of emotion and they all put their hands up. It can be seen everywhere, as with teenagers at rock shows; we have student bravado and recklessness. We have peer pressure. All of that is summed up in what the honourable member for Chatsworth said—people getting carried away on the spur of the moment for a multiplicity of reasons. A secret ballot does not necessarily guarantee calm and reasoned voting, but it does tend to encourage a reflective decision and for that reason also the secret ballot provisions are in this Bill.

The Bill does not seek to impose a secret ballot. It only entitles those members of a union who feel that it is propitious to ask for it in a given situation to in fact do so. I ask once again that reference be made to the Minister's statement to see that that is the intention. That is the intention in all normal circumstances. There is in fact only one departure from this principle and that is where, in extreme and extraordinary circumstances, as I would hope, there is the right—not the mandatory wording that applies where 20 per cent of the unionists ask for a secret ballot—but the reserved right for the commissioner to call for a secret ballot upon his own judgment. The words in the Bill are “he may on his own initiative.”

This brings us back to the question of what is the paramount responsibility of the Government. Clearly it is to protect the best interests of the whole society. It is not the paramount responsibility of the Government to protect the unionists or to bow to what they say. The paramount responsibility of the Government is to protect society and that is why that provision exists in this legislation. I would hope that it would be used in only the most extreme circumstances and in all other cases the only time that a secret ballot would be taken is when at least 20 per cent of union members ask for it.

The next important question is—“Who can participate in a strike ballot under this legislation?” I am concerned on this question just as members of the Opposition are concerned on it, but I say to them that we must trust the registrar. I know that there are implications in the Bill which give us reason to believe that some ballots can go beyond the shop. That is perhaps a dangerous thing to happen. But what can be done if three electricians for example hold up 1,000 workers in a factory because they go on strike whereas the other 1,000 do not want to strike; do not want to go without their jobs? What happens? We have to accept that the registrar can use his discretion in that instance and decide who will participate in the secret ballot because 1,000 men and women could

be held to ransom by three who hold key positions. In such a case it is surely reasonable that more than the three may participate in the strike ballot.

Moving on—concern has been expressed at the question of police presence at pickets. The question of arresting picketers without warrant has been raised. Here unionists and the spokesmen for unionists in this Chamber clearly fear the worst in police. They fear bias; they fear officiousness. But we should not be carried away with this. We on this side of the Chamber, too, are worried about officiousness and about bias. We are worried about people going beyond reason. I worry about it in many fields, not only among police but also among unionists. Unfortunately we see it among some unionists who are not responsible.

Many unions fear police abuse of that particular clause. May non-militant unionists and their employers fear the same offensive characteristic in some union leaders. That is just as relevant and just as important. Our formula is to provide some means for a unionist to supply his own remedy, namely, restraint.

Police must be present where there are pickets. We cannot have people gathering together in a common mind to agitate and not have some sort of law and order in the background ready to moderate activity if things go beyond control. Because when passions are aroused—as we have unfortunately seen in the last 36 hours—and deliberately aroused by some people, it is not always possible to say, “That is where the passions will stop.” And so some source of law and order must be available and at hand.

Let us look at the question of pickets. It has been said that in fact this Bill outlaws pickets. It does nothing of the kind! It recognises the right to picket. What this Bill does say—and I see the honourable member for Archerfield diving to read his copy of the Bill. He must do his homework before he speaks, and I am glad he is going to have a look at it because it is about time he did so. He has been talking about it for three months. What the Bill does say is that at the balloting place itself, pickets will not interfere with people who are balloting. Now that is reasonable.

Mr. Lane: There will be no duress.

Mr. LAMONT: I thank the honourable member. “No duress.” Those are the exact words.

We have this in our own State elections; we have it in local government elections and we have it in Federal elections. Isn't it good enough in union elections to ensure that the pickets remain a reasonable distance away? Of course it is, just as a political information booth must remain a reasonable distance away from a polling booth during general elections. Just as the Electoral Act contains a provision that voters must not be jostled or placed under duress by party workers

handing out how-to-vote cards, so there must be a similar provision in this legislation regarding picketers.

A further matter of interest, namely, the question of workers having seven days in which to comply with a strike ballot has been raised by the Opposition spokesman. What is wrong with workers having seven days to think over whether they will comply with the vote of the majority of people to return to work—or, for that matter, to remain away from work? They will have time to consult their wives and consider their position and their economic situation. The honourable member for Rockhampton North said that this is blackmail. If talking it over with wives, consulting bank managers and bank accounts, considering long-service leave and pensions, is blackmail in the eyes of the honourable member, I am astounded at his logic. I would call it responsibility—the logical actions of a responsible husband, father and unionist. That is what the Bill attempts to do. It attempts to strike a blow for the responsible unionist.

The honourable member for Rockhampton North also said that there is a discrepancy in the Bill because this provision applies only if the ballot is in favour of returning to work. He said that the period of seven days will apply to only those who do not want to follow the majority decision to return to work. Why, he says, should there not be a provision for people who decide to go back to work even though the majority vote not to return. What hypocrisy! The answer is obvious—no one can go back to work if the majority of his union mates decide not to. The unions have their own remedy in dealing with such people. They have a very cute and quite unfortunate word for such people, and I think the honourable member must have had his tongue in his cheek when he made that point.

Sweetheart agreements were also discussed during the introductory stage of this debate. I do not want to elaborate too much further on them. I will say, however, that I am convinced by the arguments of Opposition members and some trade-unionists that perhaps we are in error in calling them sweetheart agreements. It is a bad term. It is usually used when someone is deliberately disadvantaged, usually the union rank and file. This clause does not mention sweetheart agreements in that sense, so "sweetheart" is probably a misnomer. The intention is not to prevent unions from getting higher wages and better conditions when such are agreed to by employers, as has been implied by members of the Opposition. However, some agreements are disadvantageous to society generally.

I therefore return to my original question: does a union have a responsibility to society generally as well as to its own members? I refer once again to the Woodward agreement, the first of the so-called agreements under which unions were given rates well

above the award when in fact they ought to have been submitted to some authority representing the Government to decide whether or not they should be allowed. In the case of the Woodward agreement, the Australian employers of waterside labour agreed to give waterside workers far more than in fact the award provided. They did this not to bring about better industrial relations and not with a will to see better harmony, but in the cynical knowledge that they could pass on the additional costs to the consumer because they held a monopoly of the services being provided. In those cases I think that someone ought to be able to exercise scrutiny over agreements and say, "This is not in the best interests of society," even though the employer has agreed to give the unionists something more.

I think that unionists themselves must surely realise that they cannot expect agreements to their benefit which would in fact be disadvantageous to the rest of society in general. I do not think that unionists themselves would want employers to act cynically at a cost to the society as a whole.

In looking at the role of employers, I am moved to say something about the tragedy that has occurred since the introduction of the Bill. I speak of the Federated Clerks' Union having to return to the Trades Hall. This is an example of a non-militant union being forced to seek refuge and consolidation in solidarity with the Trades Hall unions. They have had to do this chiefly for one reason—because their views and their aspirations were not respected by employers.

I should like to cite a very simple case in 1968 at Bulwer Island when a site allowance was negotiated by craft unions for the workers there. There were four clerks working there, and they were not given the site allowance. Mr. Freddie Brown, now the Federal conciliation commissioner, was secretary of the Federated Clerks' Union at the time. He went to the site manager and asked, "Why aren't the four clerks going to get the site allowance?" He was told, "Because your union is not militant. We don't have to give it to you."

That typifies why the Federated Clerks' Union has gone to the Trades Hall. I said on that occasion that I did not blame them. For the benefit of those who wrote to me and harassed me for saying that I did not blame them, I say that that is why I said it. When good, moderate unionists are told, "You are not militant, so you don't get it," unions consolidate. I believe that there is a clear message in this situation. More recently, I am reliably informed, the building societies in this State have refused to employ clerks who are members of the Federated Clerks' Union. Moreover it is alleged that they have told those people who do work for them, who are clerks, that their jobs would be at risk if in fact they joined the clerks' union. When we get that kind of attitude from employers, when we get that

kind of irresponsibility from employers, I do not blame the Federated Clerks' Union for going to the Trades Hall and I do not blame the consolidation of the workers in their cause.

All this leads to one particular point, and that is that I believe that ultimately there must be in this country some form of compulsory unionism, or that at least every worker must belong to a union, and I say this for more than one reason. It would give unions such as the clerks' union the industrial muscle they need. Those clerks who work for the building societies are getting less than the wage of their counterparts who are members of the clerks' union for the simple reason that they do not have a union to look after them and their jobs are threatened if they go to join the union. The industrial muscle that the clerks' union would have if every clerk belonged to it would give them the wherewithal to be able to negotiate with employers without having to take the kind of action that they have taken—a decent, upright, moderate union uniting with that bunch of executive rat-bags on the hill on Wickham Terrace merely because employers will not give them a fair go!

The other reason I am in favour of some form of compulsory unionism is that we must say to our moderate unionists, "Get into the unions. Get into the unions and vote." Then we would not see the Half-pennys, the Carmichaels, the Hamiltons and others like them becoming union leaders. We would not see the Communists controlling the industrial wing of the A.L.P. because of the dereliction of duty or the A.L.P.'s bereftness of industrial leadership. We would not see these things happening, because moderates could take charge of union affairs and unions might then act more responsibly than they do at the hands of some of those who control them at the moment.

Many unions for want of industrial safety tend to join the A.C.T.U. to ensure that membership remains high, and membership is important to unions because, first of all, the cost of industrial arbitration is high and, secondly, the cost of servicing their members is high and they must look to their membership and try to increase it. To those who have come to me in my own electorate and complained about the clerks' union using muscle to get clerks into the union I say, "Have a look at this problem. Have a look at what is arising and realise that, if the employer does not take a better view of this and does not realise that his employees have a social obligation to join the union, then in fact they will have a far greater problem in the future as more and more moderate unionists comply with Trades Hall leadership."

Just as compulsory unionism would save unionists like the clerks from solidarity moves, so it would assist the operation of many difficult aspects of this Bill. I believe that some unions exist in which we will

never get 20 per cent of members as provided in this Bill seeking the secret ballot to challenge the decision of the executive. But there are some where we would not get 20 per cent of the unionists coming forward at the moment and asking for a secret ballot but where if we had all the moderate workers—all the so-called silent majority—as members of that union, there would be no trouble getting 20 per cent of the unionists banding together much the same as did Laurie Short and the "Groupers" in unions such as the Seamen's Union, the Waterside Workers' Union, the ironworkers' union and the boilermakers' union back in 1945-49, when they simply tossed out Communist leaders like Ernie Thornton because moderate, decent working men got together, formed a band and said, "We will get rid of this rat-bag leadership." That is what we need today.

If we have to do it by compulsory unionism, then that does not offend my principles of liberalism one little bit. But I believe if we are to get the kind of activity from unionists such as we seek through this legislation, where 20 per cent of unionists or more will go and ask for secret ballots to be held when they believe it warranted then we must in fact support a move for total union membership, and until the moderates get up and speak and vote and go to their union meetings we will not be guaranteed responsible unionism.

I recall only two or three weeks ago there was a Public Service stopwork meeting and one Minister in this place said to me, "Members of my department came to me and said they don't want to go and they will stay at work." I said to him, "I hope they won't, because if they don't go and that is repeated in too many departments, if there are too many hard-working, loyal, decent, industrious people in the State Public Service who boycott the meeting, then only the rat-bags will turn up and decisions will be made on behalf of the entire union which in fact will not reflect the views of the membership at all." That is what we are talking about when we talk about compulsory unionism. I believe that compulsory unionism would assist many of the clauses of the Bill, but I digress.

The last point I want to deal with specifically concerns union representatives going onto job sites and having to notify the employers of their presence. This is not an attempt to restrict union organisers from going onto job sites. It is not an attempt to restrict them to lunch hour visits. I am assured by that paragon of virtue of the union movement the honourable member for Archerfield (who is still running through the Bill to confirm that I am sticking to the truth) that when he was a union organiser he always very wisely went at an opportune time for the employer so that he did not interfere with business. I would accept that he did that; I accept that most union organisers in fact do just that, and that they take into account what is the best

time to talk to members and look to their needs. All the Bill does is formalise what decent union organisers (as the honourable member for Archerfield claims he used to be) already do. It simply formalises that by asking them to go to the employer and say, "Look, I am coming onto the job site because so-and-so has a problem and I want to talk to him." There is nothing in the Bill to suggest that he will be told that he can't go onto the job site at a certain hour but that he must go only in the lunch hour or anything else. The criticism from the A.L.P. of that part of the Bill is absolute nonsense. When the union organiser acts in this way, he will achieve a better understanding with the employer and we will get better human relationships and greater industrial harmony because this clause of the Bill simply seeks to ask all union organisers to have the will for industrial harmony, which clearly the honourable member for Archerfield already has, and already cherishes.

Let me express one final thought on secret ballots. Earlier my colleague from Isis interjected. And I ask along with him: why in fact is the Labor Party so worried about secret ballots in trade unions? Why is it so opposed to them? I ask every honourable member to reflect on the fact that Governments change more frequently than do union leaderships. That may well be because Governments are elected by secret ballot, but very often union leaderships are not. And it may well be the realisation of that fact that causes members of the union movement and honourable members sitting opposite to yelp and run and curse when we talk about introducing the secret ballot and giving the individual unionist the right to seek a secret ballot on union affairs.

The honourable member for Rockhampton North said that it was good enough for his bowls club, the Scouts Association, the Y.M.C.A. and other organisations to elect presidents and secretaries by a show of hands. He said, "If it is good enough there, why is it not good enough among mates at work, who trust one another?" There is a simple answer to that. Union leaders control bread-and-butter matters. These are literally bread-and-butter matters. That is why it is not the same as the election of presidents and secretaries of the Y.M.C.A., the Girl Guides or any other organisation the honourable member may belong to. The union leader in fact has tremendous responsibility towards the men and women in that union and also to society. We should do everything in our power to ensure that the individual unionist has the right to see that the affairs of his union are conducted the way he wants it, not the way some leaders of the industrial wing of the A.L.P., who may or may not be members of the Communist Party or the Labor Party, or even political neuters, may want it.

I commend the Minister for what I believe to be the most far-reaching legislation in this field in Australia today. I believe that

if the Bill is passed, it will be copied in every other State of the Commonwealth and the Minister will gain great respect. He already is far more respected than any of the honourable members opposite who have gone to great pains to draw red herrings and misrepresentations across the trail of this legislation. It is an entirely plausible and admirable Bill.

Mr. JONES (Cairns) (10.25 p.m.): In the course of the debate we have heard a great deal of theorising and many impassioned submissions. Before entering Parliament I was a practical, unpaid, voluntary union official within the diversified industry of the railways. I began as a reluctant participant in the trade union movement; I began also as an idealist. I trust that over the long period since then I have not lost that idealism. I have, however, lost some of my hot-headedness (people had told me that because, as a young man, I was hot-headed I would not be successful in the trade union movement) and perhaps become a little hard-headed. I am certainly now more resolute, more composed and much wiser.

I believe that we should look at the statistics relating to the cause of strikes. If we do that we will see that the causes are set out in this order: wages, hours of work, leave, pensions, compensation, managerial policies, conditions of work on the job, trade-unionism, and others.

Mr. Lindsay: Who wrote that?

Mr. JONES: These details have been compiled by the Bureau of Census and Statistics for the period since 1913.

It is relevant, too, to consider industrial disputes in relation to these statistics—that is, the disputes that have arisen in each State, the industries in which they have occurred, the number of workers directly involved, the number indirectly involved by being out of work even though they are not parties to the dispute, the working days lost and the estimated loss of wages.

It is pertinent also to examine the methods of settling disputes. These statistics reveal that at the top of the list of the methods of settlement is settlement by negotiation between the parties without intervention by State or Commonwealth tribunals, followed by mediation not based on any State or Commonwealth tribunal and action on the part of the State Conciliation and Arbitration Commission or Wages Boards of Reference or State Government officials. Next come action by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and the implementation of the Coal Industry Acts and the Stevedoring Industry Acts, and they are followed by reference to a Commonwealth Government official. The fifth is filling the place of workers on strike or lock-out, closing down the establishment permanently, or resumption without negotiation or other.

In addition to taking into consideration the estimated lost working days, we must look at other forms of industrial losses, such as accidents, sickness and absenteeism.

In the ingredients of strikes in relation to man-days lost or wages lost, we should look at the history of the relationship between labour and management. Strikes occur most frequently in industries in which there is a history of bad labour relations. We must also look at the fundamental fears of employees—the fears of loss of economic relativity, unemployment or long-standing attitudes of either employee or employer. The fears of employers also create strikes, as do the loss of trade and profit, the loss of status and the loss of command. Of course, we must also take into account what my vocal friends on my left are talking about. We must all consider the pressure of agitators, particularly in areas in which there is a bad history of labour relations. We must consider the role of governments and tribunals and the role of pressure groups in the media, the churches and business. We must consider the relative economic strength of both sides and inter-union rivalry.

I think I have been fair and reasonable in my assessment of the history of trade unionism and the history of industrial disputes. If we had fewer impassioned pleas, less theorising and fewer smart alics in the House, we probably would make a more reasonable approach to industrial disputes in this State and throughout the nation.

I believe that Australia has one of the best records in the world in industrial relations, both in the number of disputes and in the settlement of them. Strikes in Australia are of shorter duration than those in other countries.

Mr. Katter: Do you realise they went up tenfold in Labor's term of office?

Mr. JONES: Not true. Because this is important, the honourable member does not want to hear it. I am talking to Mr. Speaker and the Minister, believing that they have studied the situation and realise that I know what I am talking about when I refer to industrial relations in Australia today.

In the policy speech delivered by the leader of the Liberal Party (Sir Gordon Chalk) before the 1974 election, the Deputy Premier said that his Government had a good record in labour relations and that he now proposed a new system of secret ballots that would enable or allow employees, where a strike had been called, to determine for themselves whether the strike would continue. I think it was the Minister in charge of this legislation who said that section 98 of the industrial legislation declares a strike to be unlawful unless authorised by a secret ballot before the strike occurs. In effect, we already have legislation providing for secret ballots. I have heard a lot of crowing on my left from honourable members on the Government back benches about secret

ballots, but provision for secret ballots is already made in the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

Mr. Lowes: Do you agree with secret ballots?

Mr. JONES: Of course we agree with secret ballots. Our very democracy is founded on secret ballots. No-one has any fear of secret ballots. If the honourable member does a little research, he will find that most, if not all, union officials in the Australian scene, irrespective of their political backgrounds, are elected by secret or court-controlled ballots. It will be found that the trade union movement today has one of the most democratic systems. I do not know what the Government is concerned about. The honourable member for Ashgrove was about to interject. I will allow him to do so.

Mr. Greenwood: Does your party support secret ballots?

Mr. JONES: We have always supported secret ballots. Secret ballots were introduced into the original legislation in 1916. I know it was by the Australian Labor Party. If Government members do a little bit of research, they will find that that was one of the fundamental points in the history of the trade union movement.

The difficulty that now arises with disputes is that sometimes job action is taken and fellows go out on strike. It is my experience that such action usually is unknown to the State officials or the paid officials of the union. On most occasions a dispute is on before the officials are notified and before the Industrial Commission is notified. That became obvious recently when officials of the Trades and Labor Council had to go up to the coalfields and try to convince the fellows to go back to work. It is not a question of getting them off the job. As a practical, local trade union official, I found the greatest difficulty was in getting men back to work. It is not a matter of getting them out; it is a matter of getting them back.

Once they go out, they are incensed and they feel they have a grievance. It is then very difficult indeed to maintain the confidence of those fellows and get them back on the job without their feeling that they have been betrayed, that they have been let down, or that they have been sold out to the boss. That is the difficulty the trade union official faces. If this legislation resolves that problem it will be marvellous and miraculous, but I do not think it will. I would like to hope that it could, but I am afraid that it will not.

No matter how the Government legislates and how it lays down rules, no matter how realistic the attempt to apply the rules may be there will always be a situation in which they do not apply. For example, the Government talks about the right of union officials to enter premises. My experience on the job was that on most occasions when

I entered premises to talk to fellows and negotiate and conciliate on the job, I did so at the behest of the foreman or the district superintendent of railways or the station-master.

When Government members read what I said earlier, they will learn that mediation at job level is the best way to resolve a dispute. If a union official has to chase permission to go on to the job to talk to the men, it will be found that the men will decide first. Then, instead of resolving the dispute, the official has a dispute on his hands before he begins. Sometimes—it has been said here before, and I have said it—there may be a troublemaker or an agitator on the job. Usually the union official can go in and talk with the boss and the fellow on the job who is creating or aggravating the dispute and the matter is resolved there and then. The official says, "Look, Paddy, come over here and talk to me and tell me what your trouble is." Then the official goes to the boss and has a yarn with him to find out what the problem is from his side. Generally disputes can be resolved at that level. But if the Government restricts the right of entry of union officials it will have some problems on its hands. The boys will come off the job to see the official instead of the official going onto the job to see them.

Contained in the Conciliation and Arbitration Act is what in my day we knew as section 77. It has probably changed now. I was an employee of the Government in those days and section 77 was imposed quite rigidly and quite often by the managerial head, whoever he may have been at that stage. He called me off the job and I had the right to leave my job to go and negotiate at the job level.

I was a guard in the railways and I had to go into the goods shed, the workshop, the loco shop or the carriage shed. I was called from my job, and sometimes relieved, so that I could negotiate at job level. If the right of the union official to go onto the job is withdrawn, negotiation and mediation at job level will be at risk. It is all very well for the union official to be allowed to go onto the job only during smoko periods or during the dinner hour to address a meeting, but the job rep, the sub-branch official or the fellow at a lower level is being alienated under this provision and he is the one who does most of the mediation. Most of the common-sense politics of trade unionism is worked out at that level. Once the boys get outside the gate, the only body that can resolve the matter is the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, or perhaps it may be resolved at a higher level. There is then a dispute, the number of disputes is increased and the dispute statistics are increased. There is dissension on the job and immediately there are problems.

This is a very bad provision and it should be reviewed. The Minister should take cognisance of what I have said and also of the tenor of the previous debate.

I have some questions that the fellows on the job asked me to raise. I want the Minister to answer them and have the answers recorded in "Hansard". The questions are—

1. Does the legislation give the strikers a vote to find out what the majority wants?

2. Is a majority decision considered to be the ruling decision?

3. Are the strikers bound by the decision?

4. Will a person be considered to have resigned from his job if he does not resume work within seven days of the majority decision to end the strike?

5. If the answers to above are "yes" we know that to hold his job a worker must return if the majority votes to return or be penalised by the automatic loss of his job.

6. What penalty does the Bill provide for a worker who returns to work when the majority decision of the secret ballot is that the strike should continue? And, conversely, what is the penalty on employers?

7. If no penalty is provided will the Minister include one equally as harsh as that in No. 5?

Mr. Moore: Full stop.

Mr. JONES: This is torn off the back of a working in the railways. It is not a submission by a trade union official. That came right from the shop floor, as the honourable member would call it in his section of the railways. I talk to the fellows on the job to get my information. These are the people who know and trust me because of my work within the trade union on the job. I believe that the fellows want to know what penalties are imposed on the worker and the majority of those directly involved.

In deciding a ballot of those on strike or those involved in a strike, it is unfair to take a simple majority. I think a two-thirds majority should be required in such a vote. It may work out that because employees in the goods shed are involved in a dispute, everybody in the traffic section will have a vote to say whether they go back to work. That is a rather unfair provision for the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, the Railway Department and those involved in the dispute which may exist.

Mr. Moore: You are right.

Mr. JONES: I know I am right because this is the practical side of the matter. It is wrong to have goods shed employees on strike and the traffic section, the loco section or the whole railway staff voting for or against staying on strike. It is impracticable.

Mr. Lowes: Do you prefer craft unions to industrial unions?

Mr. JONES: I do not think that question is relevant to the provisions of the Bill. Craft unions have a traditional place in the trade-union movement. They go back to the craft guilds in the early 17th Century and they have a place in the history of unionism. I do not think that they provide any basis for argument on this legislation. Nothing will be resolved, either, by inane interjections or by politicians shooting off their mouths.

Mr. Lowes: Don't you think their rights should be protected?

Mr. JONES: The rights of all should be protected. I do not see that that has anything to do with the Bill, either. Craft unions have always operated in the Railway Department, and they will continue to do so. In the early days when my father worked as a stationary engine driver at the brewery, the large union there was the craft union of tradesmen—coopers—who used to make barrels. That union no longer exists as the craft became redundant because of technical advances in the industry. We could go on and on in that argument, but it has no basis in the Bill now before the House.

I think that what we have to consider is one basic fact. If a layman's rights are taken from him and he is bogged down with technicalities, and an attempt is made to write everything into legislation, the issues will be confused. When a worker is confused, in the heat of the moment he will withdraw his labour and walk off the job. Once workers are off the job, the whole dispute is complicated and there is more than just a simple problem to solve. There is then a big problem and it will not be resolved by standing over the workers. A fundamental principle of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act on its introduction in, I think, 1916 was the setting up of a laymen's court in which the workers would not be confused by "therebys", "whereupons", "whereases" and other legal jargon. The workers want to know in plain language exactly what are their rights on the job, and how they can go about obtaining justice in wages or conditions and having disputes resolved as quickly as possible.

In most disputes there is misplaced trust by employees or employers on the job. Sometimes it is simply a conflict of personalities on the job that creates a dispute. Whatever the cause of a problem, it will not be resolved by highfalutin words written into the Act. On most occasions disputes are resolved by mediation. In more serious disputes most employees will be loyal to their unions because in the end it is to their benefit to act in conjunction with each other. In such cases the old union adage "Unity is strength" comes to the fore. Another is "Injury to one is a concern for all." It is very interesting to have a look through the history of the unions and find some of their mottos. Honourable members would see that this basic tenet flows through all

of them, that this is the fundamental thing that binds them together. If one falls, they all fall.

Mr. Lowes: How did you relate it to the Labor Party?

Mr. JONES: Once again we are going into histrionics. If honourable members follow the history of the Labor Party as such, they will find that it evolved in the shearers' disputes of 1890 and 1891. From those disputes came the realisation by the workers that they could not gain everything by industrial strength and by fighting on the job. They found that Governments were too strong and they felt that they had to have a voice in the field of Government, that they had to have their voice heard in this august Chamber.

It might be novel to remember that one of the first Labor men to enter this Chamber was Tom Ryan. He lasted only three years. He said something like this, "The seats were too soft, the whisky was too strong and that is not the type of life for Tommy Ryan." While I am quoting great politicians, I think honourable members should read a book "Things Worth Fighting For" by J. B. Chifley. He said, "Beware of the whispered word 'Communist'." He appealed to all Labor fellows within the unions, "If you want to succeed in the union make sure you do the job better than the Communist official." That is how it has applied over the years. Honourable members will find that people on the job vote for the Communist officials in the secret ballots because those Communist officials are seen to be doing the job.

Mr. Lowes: You can't exclude the unity ticket, can you? You're stuck with it!

Mr. JONES: The honourable member is digressing. That is another argument and I do not know whether Mr. Speaker will allow me to follow it up. But if the honourable member looks in the conventions of the Australian Labor Party he will find that we do not appear on platforms in conjunction with any other political party. So it is quite fallacious to argue that sort of a case at this time of the evening.

Mr. Alison: You're talking through your hat.

Mr. JONES: If the honourable member for Maryborough reckons that I am talking through my hat at this time, I would just ask him, if he has any basic knowledge of the trade union movement, to follow my argument through from the time I started and then ask those fellows over there in the lobby whether it is good horse sense that I have been talking and not all that crap that honourable members opposite have been going on with throughout this debate. He will find that the common-sense approach has been my approach. When he starts going onto the job and telling men that they cannot go in such and such a direction to cast a

vote and that they cannot move in such and such a direction because this fellow or that fellow is policing picketing, he will find that he has trouble on his hands. I caution him not to go and try to distract people going to a ballot. I think it is wrong in principle and I think the honourable member will find that he is barking up the wrong tree in that advice.

I would hesitate to commend that section of the Bill relating to the conduct of elections. The other provision relating to the conduct of elections and the secret-ballot provisions are already contained in the Act. When honourable members opposite start talking about sweetheart agreements, they do not know what they are. Sweetheart agreements are not agreements. They are worked out between the employer and employee outside the Industrial Commission. They are agreements arrived at behind closed doors, generally between the employer and union representatives, and honourable members will find that most times the rank and file do not know anything about what is contained in that sweetheart agreement. Usually the men are completely oblivious to what is going on behind closed doors.

Earlier I said that one of the hardest things for a union official is maintaining the confidence of the men on the job. Those on the job always have a certain amount of mistrust in the union official and fear that he is consorting with the boss and undermining them and betraying them. That is a basic and fundamental fear we have in the Labor Party because we have been betrayed so many times by people who have purported to represent us both inside and outside Parliament. Over the years we have had our traitors, so we always watch very closely indeed.

A sweetheart agreement is usually a treacherous agreement which betrays the ordinary fellow on the job. It is not an agreement that is registered in the Industrial Commission. It is the result of what is done behind closed doors, and it is usually the workers who are "done". Let Government members study up and they will see that sweetheart agreements subvert the conciliation provisions of the Act.

Mr. Katter interjected.

Mr. JONES: Let the honourable member get his terminology right before he argues. I have been a practical trade union official, and I know the situation on the job. He shouldn't start telling me—

Mr. Katter interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. JONES: We should hasten with caution with this legislation. We should look at it more closely. We should be trying to resolve disputes rather than create them. We should not look at the Bill in the prevailing climate. I wonder why the Bill has moved from the bottom of the Business Paper

to the top at this time. I must agree with what the honourable member for South Brisbane said in an impassioned way, but I will put it differently. We must legislate to ensure industrial sanity. I do not believe that in the present highly volatile situation we can legislate in the best interests of the ordinary fellow on the job. We should defer the Bill so that we can give it a little more consideration and a little more study. We could then debate it later in a less heated political climate.

Mr. LANE (Merthyr) (10.59 p.m.): The major provision of the Bill deals with industrial power and in whose hands that power shall lie. What the Government is seeking to do is spread the power to call strikes and create stoppages across the broad mass of the trade union movement into the hands of every legitimate trade union member. We seek to take the power to call unnecessary strikes out of the hands of trade union officials and the fat cats at the Trades Hall, and place it in the hands of each and every member of a union employed on a particular job. There are inbuilt safeguards to ensure that in doing so the power is not placed in the hands of the militant shop steward or perhaps Trotskyite-motivated action committee on the shop floor. I do not see how any reasonable unionist or, for that matter, any reasonable person, could have any objection to this legislation. In fact, everyone should commend it.

I am sure that, if it were not for deeper motives of a political and ideological nature that move some people who interest themselves in these things, there would be no objection. However, today in this nation and in fact right throughout the world there is continual conflict. It is a class war, created in the mind of a gentleman named Karl Marx and spelt out by many of his essayists, such as Lenin and Trotsky, in the years that followed. More recently it has been spelt out by members of the four separate Communist parties in this country. It has been spelt out, agreed to and even endorsed by many members who find themselves in the Left of the political spectrum. Unfortunately a number of those persons now hold seats in our House of Representatives and Senate.

Jim Cairns, who at one stage was Deputy Prime Minister and even for a short time Prime Minister, rose up through the ranks of the A.L.P., frothing Marxism at the mouth at every turn. In spite of that, he received the Labor Party endorsement. He was a militant and, if he had been more frank with the community, he would have confessed quite openly to being the Communist that he is.

The honourable member for Cairns has said that his party has no part of unity tickets. The fact is, however, that unity tickets still exist in the form in which they were introduced a couple of decades ago. They exist on the floors of meatworks in

Brisbane and others throughout Australia. Probably no union makes more use than the A.M.I.E.U. of unity tickets between A.L.P. nominees and Communist Party candidates at union elections. The comments of the member for Cairns are plainly incorrect. I would hope that it is merely a matter of his being naive or dull or probably so far removed from the industrial scene that he does not know about such things. On the other hand, it may be that, like a number of his Left-wing cronies, he endorses unity tickets.

To get back to this motivation in the minds of persons who seek, for political or ideological reasons, to place the power in the hands of certain chosen union officials or militants on the shop floor—I think it is quite proper for this Government to act to remove this power and to give each decent unionist and each decent working man a say in whether or not he shall deprive himself of a day's wages, a week's wages or even a month's wages in support of some cause that he may or may not agree with.

I am a supporter of trade-unionism. Those of us who adopt reasonable attitudes know what the role of trade-unionism is. A trade union should be an association of workers who, in any trade or industry, form themselves together with the object of furthering their social, economic and industrial interests.

The principal aim of a trade union should be to secure for its members fair and equal rates of pay, moderate hours of work, healthy, safe and pleasant working conditions and benefits such as annual, sick and long service leave, or to assist members financially when on strike or absent because of sickness or injury. If the trade unions to which this legislation refers were to confine themselves to those aims and objects, there would be no need for this legislation.

As I said, the legislation is being introduced against a backdrop of society that has motives other than the ideals I outlined. Many of them are based on the class struggle which is fostered and manipulated by prominent members of the several Communist parties in Australia today. It is not only members of the Communist Party who hold ideals other than those. It is pertinent to look at the aims and objectives of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the largest and most powerful union organisation in Australia. Its first stated objective is—

"The socialisation of industry, that is production, distribution and exchange."

The second aim is—

"The utilisation of the resources of Australia for the benefit of the people—ensuring full employment with rising standards of living, real security and full cultural opportunities for all."

I find nothing objectionable in the second aim, but surely those of us who do not share in the political ideology of honourable members opposite would object to the first. I

am sure that many decent trade unionists also object to that socialist objective of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

Another aim of the A.C.T.U. is that it shall work towards political action to secure satisfactory working-class legislation. The aims and objectives of this very powerful organisation are set out very clearly.

In practical terms, the hierarchy of the A.C.T.U. is identical with that of the political wing of the A.L.P. At Federal level the president of both organisations is identical, as are many of the office bearers in Labor's family tree.

I come now to the aims and objectives of the Australian Labor Party at the political level. It, too, favours socialisation of industry, means of production, distribution and exchange. At the local level, at which the honourable member for Lytton is the leader, there should be no confusion about the objects. At conferences of State branches of the A.L.P. held in recent years, certain statements have been reiterated which we on this side of the House find objectionable. They are blatant political objectives. One to which I shall refer is that which calls on an A.L.P. Government to establish the eventual collective control and ownership of industry. That comes under the heading of "Worker participation" in Labor's policy document, and reads—

"... we stand for their eventual collective control and ownership of it rather than being servants to it as now applies."

That was stated at the 27th Labor-in-Politics Convention in Queensland while the Leader of the Opposition was, I think, general State secretary of the party. More recently, at the State Labor-in-Politics Convention held at Cairns in October 1974, these aims were restated, once again. At that conference a report was received, in which it was stated—

"The Australian Labor Party stands for the eventual collective control and ownership of industry."

We would be interested to hear what comments the Leader of the Opposition has on it. I would like to hear him stand in the House one day and expound on this plank in his party's policy. On some occasions he goes along as guest speaker to dinners of the Chamber of Manufactures, the Employers' Federation and the like. He kides to them and tries to moderate his image in their presence. He pretends that he is some sort of quasi-free-enterprise man. In fact, he is the leader of a party which released a report saying that the State branch of the Labor Party stands for the eventual collective control and ownership of industry. That is the same sort of collective control as practised in Russia—exactly the same thing. So I invite the Leader of the Opposition to expand on that in the House at some time. There is probably room in this debate for him to make a few comments on it.

Having passed the topic of worker participation—a reason why I think this legislation is so essential—perhaps I could move to the subject of worker control. It is a fact that over Easter 1973 a national workers control conference of 450 delegates was held in Newcastle. A further conference, involving about 80 delegates, was held in Brisbane on 17 and 18 November the same year. Those conferences decided on a policy directed towards worker control. The Communist Party met with their coalition-of-the-Left partners to formulate that policy.

Present at those places was, of course, Hughie Hamilton, the State president of the Communist Party in Queensland and State secretary of the Building Workers' Industrial Union—the same Hughie Hamilton who has just over a week ago convened a mass rally of striking workers in the City Square to support the Leader of the Australian Labor Party in his campaign to get back into Government; the same Hughie Hamilton who stood up there and attempted to incite the workers and decent people in industry to go out into the streets.

It is against that backdrop that this legislation must be introduced. It must be introduced to ensure that the man on the job has some say about when he goes on strike. So the Bill provides for secret ballots and the machinery to enable them to take place.

Mr. Moore: It won't work.

Mr. LANE: The honourable member for Windsor expresses some doubt about whether it will work. I sincerely hope that it will work. It is up to us to provide an opportunity for the average man on the job to have a say as to whether he shall deprive his wife and his children of their bread and butter merely to further the political ends of many of the people in the Labor Party today who are nothing more than opportunist—opportunist at the Federal level in the person of Gough Whitlam and, I suggest, opportunist in the State level in the person of the Australian Labor Party leader in this House.

Just a few weeks ago—on 22 October 1975—the Communist "Tribune", under a half-page heading reading "Stop Fraser", called on workers to go on strike for political purposes. These were the words that were used—

"Workers have the power to stop the nation. They can take over the streets to demonstrate their resolve to stop the reactionary parties. They need only bold, imaginative leadership. The Communist Party of Australia will work for this in industry and on the streets. The most effective way workers can act is to stop work and take to the streets. All on the Left must face up to their responsibility in this emergency."

We saw a coalition of the Left here last week, with mass rallies in the City Square. One was called by Hughie Hamilton and

participated in by Labor Party officials and another was called by the Labor Party and participated in by Hughie Hamilton. Tit for tat; the same thing! And there was this call made in the "Tribune" only a few weeks ago—on 22 October!

It went on to say—

"We should rise above the differences between those who believe in the Parliamentary road to socialism"—

and that is allegedly the gentlemen opposite—

"and those who believe in the revolutionary path or strategic or tactical disagreements among the latter."

This statement in the Communist "Tribune" calls for unity between all parties on the Left and for all tactical disagreements between the four Communist Parties to be buried for the time being, because it is so important to the Communist Party to have Gough Whitlam and his fellows back in Canberra. This is plainly an old-fashioned call for a united front of the Left against society. Each and every man in the Labor Party in this Chamber and each and every man in the Labor Party walking around this city wearing a Labor Party badge or having a cheap sticker on the back window of his car stands condemned for participating in just such a thing with members of the Communist Party.

They do not seek democracy; they seek to control this nation from the workshop floors because they know this can be guaranteed to them with the great, powerful union structure in this country presided over by fat cats, opportunists and militant Marxists. The average unionist will not have a say in whether he shall go on strike and that is why it is important that this legislation be passed to give the average man on the job a say in that decision.

In case anyone should think that some of the senior people in the A.L.P. at the Federal level have moderated their views recently, I shall quote a statement which appeared in the October issue of the Federal Government publication "Community" which came out only a few days ago. Every honourable member would have a copy. The article by the Honourable J. F. Cairns, M.P., the great ideologist of the Australian Labor Party reads—

"In developed capitalist countries socialism made little progress because the revolutionary wing of the movement was too extreme to be acceptable; and the parliamentary wing was too acceptable to be socialist."

During the past week or so, we have seen a combination of those two paths—the revolutionary path and the parliamentary path. It is absolutely essential that the people of Australia recognise this for what it is—a united front of all Left parties against democracy in this country.

We hope that this legislation will play some small part in preserving the democratic right of the average unionist. That is why I refer to it now. Average, decent Australians will have no part of the violence that we have seen in the streets and the bashings that took place in the City Square under the auspices of this united front between Labor and Communism—the innocent people who walked through the City Square, did not open their mouths but walked away with eight or nine stitches in their lips, bashed down by these militants, Communists and radical Labor Party people.

Mr. Moore: They didn't put \$2 in the bucket; that's why.

Mr. LANE: That is exactly why.

They had no opportunity to make their choice or have their say any more than the average unionist has these days on whether he wishes to go on strike. That is why this legislation is so essential. The Leader of the Opposition sits over there pretending to play no part in all of this. He might as well stay out of the Chamber as he has done during the past week. He has been frightened to come in here because of the blast he would get. He hides his head. He has probably been basking in the sun over at Tangalooma with his friend Jim Kennedy.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will return to the principles of the Bill.

Mr. LANE: It is a matter of a person's choosing democratically whether he wishes to work or be stood over, pressed and bludgeoned to go on strike for political purposes. That is what the legislation is all about.

The Leader of the Opposition has been very much part of the campaign to press people into striking and taking to the streets. I heard him on "A.M." only last week saying with tongue in cheek, "I hope the people will remain calm, but it is going to be very hard to contain certain people." And what a "but" it was! In other words, he was saying, "Get off the job, fellows, and into the streets." It was the same call that has been made by Communist Party leaders in their journals in recent weeks.

Mr. Moore: Shame!

Mr. LANE: That is right—shame on Labor!

I commend the Minister on bringing this legislation forward. One hopes that, in the true spirit of Liberal philosophy, it will allow the individual to decide whether he wants to work or to deprive his family of the basic needs of life to further the political ends and shoddy ambitions of the opportunists and Marxists who unfortunately are running both the political and industrial wings of the Labor movement in Australia today.

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (11.21 p.m.): I rise to support the Bill and to refute some of the remarks made by the the honourable member for Cairns. He spoke about union leaders being democratically elected. I have with me some interesting figures. The A.M.W.U., of Laurie Carmichael fame, has 174,000 members, yet fewer than 3,000 voted in the ballot to elect the union president this year. This Communist-controlled union can call its members out on strike any time it likes, yet its president was elected by between 1 per cent and 2 per cent of the membership.

The union is managed by a Commonwealth council of 21 members. A breakdown of the council membership shows that 15 members belong to the A.L.P., five are Communists, and one is a non-party Left-wing militant. Whilst the A.L.P. has a majority on the council, it does not control it, because there are so many Left-wing members of the A.L.P. who side with the Communists that this union is noted for its Communist activities.

Data collected by the Department of Labour show that, of 15 industries, the metal trades ranked sixth in wages in 1968. This year they ranked 13th, with only the ailing textile industry and the home service group bringing up the rear. That proves that Laurie Carmichael aims for industrial strife rather than improved conditions for his members. I am pleased that Queensland unions that are different from those under Federal control will not now be under the dictatorship of leaders elected by a minority.

Another recent example of the way in which a small cadre of Communists can hold up the economy of a nation was illustrated by the chairman of the Australian Wool Growers and Graziers' Council shipping committee, when he said that the former Federal Transport Minister himself acknowledged that frivolous strikes were significantly responsible for cost increases incurred by the Australian National Line.

We are well aware that at the biennial congress of the A.C.T.U. about 25 per cent of the delegates were known Communists and they combined with the Left-wing members of the A.L.P. to get control. And what has happened since this occurred? A newspaper article of 18 September 1975 stated—

"The ACTU executive after elections yesterday at the biennial congress is weighted heavily in favor of the left wing of the union movement.

"Of the five leading positions open on the 18-member executive, four went to candidates who share the leftist views of Mr. R. J. Hawke."

People in this country have the hide to say of members of Parliament who point out that there is a Communist threat to this nation that we are seeing Communists under every bed. We are not; we are saying that a small group of highly trained Communists have

worked themselves into positions of influence and are dictating the way in which this country is run. They are in key positions in key unions. It is no secret that Mr. Carmichael has a very great influence on the oil industry, and honourable members know the trouble that we have had in that industry.

There are plenty of other things that I could talk about, but there are other speakers who wish to follow me and the hour is late. I would just like to say, though, that we have a Federal election coming up and there have been headlines in the newspapers in recent months stating such things as "Unions slam Whitlam over economy bungle". Even these people who have been put in positions of trust for the sole purpose of destroying this nation have now come out in the newspapers and condemned the Whitlam Government for the mess it has made of the economy. I hope that the people of Queensland will get behind the Minister and give him all the support that he deserves in trying to restore a little bit of sanity and a little bit of democracy in strike situations in Queensland and that they, in turn, will maintain a little bit of democracy in Canberra on 13 December by putting back the Liberal-National Country Party coalition.

Mr. DOUMANY (Kurilpa) (11.28 p.m.): I would like to reiterate the points that I made in my speech during the introductory debate in which I supported the Minister in respect of the secret ballot provisions contained in the Bill on the grounds that these provisions sought to recognise the right of trade unionists to strike but also sought to provide those trade unionists with the right and the democratic means to end such a strike.

This is a very important quid pro quo, but I would like to move from that position and look at some of the recent events and developments that have made it imperative for this debate on the second reading to be brought on. The honourable member for Cairns wondered why the Bill had been moved from the bottom of the list on the Business Paper to the top. Surely it is obvious why this happened. It is because in addition to the monstrous economic situation that has confronted workers and has naturally led to their unrest and dissatisfaction, and has certainly been at the base of so many of the stoppages and disputes—all of which have been caused by the mismanagement of the previous Federal Government—we have seen an assault on democracy in the trade union movement over the past few weeks, an assault that has been aided and abetted by Mr. Whitlam and by the fellow-travellers of the Communist Party in this nation.

In support of the Minister I say that we must recognise the frustrations of the thousands of responsible trade unionists, indeed, the majority of Australian trade unionists, who in the past weeks and days, by coercion, have been compelled to enter

into disputation and lose wages, and commit themselves to actions in which they do not believe. Make no mistake about it: they are fed up to the back teeth with being pushed around. In those circumstances, in the present political situation, it is incumbent on the Government to introduce the secret ballot provisions in this session of Parliament. They are the provisions that will give some hope to thousands of people—thousands of decent people—in trade unions who are not getting a fair go at the present time.

Let us look at some facts. Let us remember that infamous day last Wednesday week in the streets of Brisbane. I quote from "The Courier-Mail" of Thursday, 13 November. The headline read—

"Who's for Whitlam? 3,000 clenched fists. Against? 15 were silenced."

That has been the technique. On that day in the streets of our city we saw not the typical trade unionists, but the extreme Left, the trouble makers and the coercionists. We saw every element that sets out to undermine democracy in this nation and throw it to the dogs. That is what the Bill is all about. It is not a lot of fancy talk and codswallop as to whether secret ballots are practicable or not. They are not just practicable; they are essential.

Let us look at some of the double standards. Let us look at the friends of those people in the streets. On the front page of the 12 November issue of the "Tribune" we see the headline—

"Defeat—Fraser-Kerr Coup
National Stoppage"

On page 2 of the same issue we see the headline—

"Doctors' Strike:
holding community to ransom"

Who are we to believe? It is the greatest charade and con trick that has ever been put over any nation. That is the sort of rubbish we are supposed to swallow.

A Government Member: What newspaper is that?

Mr. DOUMANY: The "Tribune", a Communist newspaper. I will throw it down on the floor where it deserves to be.

Let us come back to some wisdom. Let us look at "The Courier-Mail" of 15 November, where we see the headline—

"Unionist defies order to strike"

This was at the height of that critical period last week when trade-unionists were being called on by every means to contribute their time to rallies whether they wanted to attend them or not, and whether they were going to vote A.L.P. or not, and when they were asked to put in a day's pay. I have it on very good authority—I will not name the source, because I know what would happen to the man involved—that a person who was working for an organisation in the A.L.P. structure

was not even asked to contribute a day's pay; it was deducted from his wages without authority.

Government Members: Shame!

Mr. DOUMANY: Shame indeed!

I quote from "The Courier-Mail" of 15 November, under the headline "Unionist defies order to strike", as follows—

"Australia's political and economic troubles were not the fault of Mr. Whitlam or Mr. Fraser, an angry unionist, Mr. David MacCargill, said yesterday.

"Mr. MacCargill, a senior leading hand on the new Queensland Institute of Technology library site in the city, is a member of the Building Workers' Industrial Union which called a strike yesterday morning in protest against the Federal caretaker Government.

"He said he and other men employed on the site were threatened with violence and black bans if they did not walk off the job at 10.45 a.m. yesterday.

"Mr. MacCargill said he objected to 'another typical fiasco of union stand-over'.

"We were told that irrespective of our feelings or political beliefs we were to go out on strike', he said.

"A lot of the men on this site can't afford \$40 less each week in their pay packet because of strikes.

"We've had two strikes this week and we believe more are to come.

"We are compelled to be in this union which is the mediator between us and our employers not the politicians."

There is no need for me to read any more.

Let me highlight another example of wisdom on the part of the little people. About a week ago, in Adelaide, a woman named Natalie Richardson stood up at a meeting of approximately 4,000 members of the Vehicle Builders' Union at which union officials were striving to have members adopt a proposal for a 32-hour week. She grabbed the microphone from the rascals on the dais and swung the vote to 2,500 against and 1,500 for. She showed great common sense. She may well be an A.L.P. voter—she probably is—but she is a sensible person. She made the point that each one of us, whether we be in trade unions, in business, or in any other sphere, has a responsibility to our nation and to its productivity.

Mr. McKechnie: She's not too popular with the Leader of the Opposition, is she?

Mr. DOUMANY: She would not be; she was successful as an individual.

I draw attention now to another of Labor's double standards. In the Labor Party platform, after the enunciation of principles on democratic socialisation, we read—

"The Australian Labor Party seeks to secure through democratic socialism:—

"...

"(2) Freedom of speech, education, assembly, organisation and religion."

Last Wednesday week we saw this so-called freedom of speech in the streets of Brisbane.

Later—

"(4) Free election under universal adult equal and secret franchise with Government by the majority with recognition for rights for minorities."

I hark back to the previous newspaper article that I quoted—3,000 clenched fists against and 15 silenced. Is that a recognition of the rights of the majority?

Mr. Gygar: Come on, Tom, give us an answer.

Mr. DOUMANY: He cannot answer it.

The Bill's provisions in relation to secret ballots are absolutely essential. They uphold the sound common sense of the MacCargills and the Natalie Richardsons as well as the thousands of other decent trade-unionists who want a fair go.

I have had a gutful of the whingeing and whining of various trade union leaders who cry, "Secret ballots can't work." What negative nonsense! What rot! Of course they will work. Anything can work if it is done with diligence, conscience and enthusiasm.

I commend the Minister on bringing on tonight the resumption of the debate on the second reading of the Bill. I add my voice to that of other speakers on the Government side in the firm and sincere belief that this legislation is most opportune. At this time, when Queenslanders and Australians are crying for a means of individual expression and protection of individual rights, the provisions in this Bill will be very important contributions towards protecting and continuing those rights. I urge every honourable member of the House to vote for the Bill at this stage.

Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs) (11.41 p.m.), in reply: I appreciate the tolerance and reasonable approach by all honourable members to this legislation. The honourable member for Rockhampton North expressed concern about the justification the Industrial Commission would need to move on its own motion to order a secret ballot. The justification for the commission to move would be that a strike had occurred which involved a stoppage of work. The commission might wish to have recourse to the opinion of those involved in ordering a ballot. The honourable member asked what would happen if the employer provoked the dispute in the first place. Surely if that happened, employees would be unlikely to go back

unless the employer retracted. He then repeated what seemed previously to be a catchcry about the Bill, namely—

“The new anti-picketing legislation strikes at one of the long-standing traditional activities of the trade union movement.”

All the Bill does is ensure that when the worker goes to cast his vote in the strike ballot he will do so without having to run a picket line and be subjected to insulting terms such as “scab” because he is exercising his right to vote.

The honourable member also questioned the seven days provided in the legislation and suggested that workers who were disgruntled with a decision to return to work would sit out this period. What the legislation aims to do at all times, whether the free exercise of the vote or the cooling-off period after the ballot indicates a desire of the majority to return to work, is to ensure that no worker is stampeded into a decision. In this context it is a serious matter for any worker to decide whether he feels so strongly on an issue that he is not prepared to accept a majority decision and face the consequences of a statutory termination. Surely the honourable member is not entitled to label this a “crazy provision” when it gives the worker time to make up his mind.

I now turn to the honourable member's reference to the I.L.O. He referred to sections 11 and 29 of the I.L.O. constitution. I gather that he intended to say that clauses 4 and 7 of the Bill contravene the I.L.O. constitution. That is arrant nonsense. I am surprised that the honourable member should show such lack of understanding in his reference to the I.L.O. conventions. What he might have inferred was that by some tenuous links the Bill could be in conflict with I.L.O. convention No. 87 on freedom of association and protection of the right to organise. If he was inferring that, he was wrong. There is absolutely nothing in the Bill which will prevent a group of individual workers from forming themselves into an association, under whatever title they wish.

I thank the honourable member for Mt. Isa for his constructive criticism of the Bill and propose to reply to some of his comments. He sought my assurance that the Industrial Commission would at least confer with the parties before it made any changes to an industrial matter or rejected an agreement with respect to it. Whilst I cannot speak for the commission, which is an independent tribunal, I should think it would be most unlikely to make decisions in regard to agreements without hearing the views of the parties to the agreement.

Commenting upon the proposed section 98, the honourable member for Mt. Isa suggested that ballots should be taken where overtime bans and go-slow tactics are in operation. This proposal requires very careful consideration and is a subject that I am having examined.

As to the honourable member's suggestion that an employer or an employer's association should be given the right to request a secret ballot, there are good and valid reasons why such a provision in the Bill would be undesirable. Firstly, in the eyes of union officials, and, indeed, union members themselves, a request from this source would make the ballot suspect and it could be anticipated that the best or worst endeavours of the union officials would be directed to boycotting the ballot or, if it took place, to ensuring that the strike continued.

The honourable member then suggested that the removal of the present section 98 entrenched the right to strike and that it should be possible to retain some vestige of the existing section 98 as well as the new section 98. I must point out that the existing and the proposed sections 98 are incompatible and, if they were retained together, the rather Gilbertian situation would exist of the employees having a ballot before they go on strike, followed closely by a further ballot to see whether the strike will be continued.

The honourable member suggested the formation of a small specially trained industrial relations force in substitution for the Police Force, to police the conducting of a secret ballot. The suggestion is wholly unacceptable as any action taken in this regard would not be conducive to the promotion of good industrial relations. But I do agree with the honourable member's suggested need for an education programme for management and unions when the Bill becomes law, and I am asking my officers to have such a programme implemented.

The contribution by the honourable member for Archerfield (who again is not here) in the second-reading debate does not induce me to pay him any more attention than I did in regard to his participation in the debate at the introductory stage.

I thank the honourable member for Chatsworth for his very rational contribution to the debate. His comments on strikes in essential services were most constructive and his appeal for good will and tolerance to give the legislation a fair trial was most timely. He gave an excellent summation of what is proposed in the legislation, as did the honourable member for South Brisbane, and indicated that a very in-depth study of the provisions of the Bill had been made by him and that he has a very realistic and comprehensive appreciation of what comprises good industrial relations.

The approach of the honourable member for South Brisbane to this legislation and the comments made by him and several other members on this side of the House are typical of the understanding of Government members of the problems of trade-unionists and trade unions. As that has not been denied by members of the Opposition, it must be taken now as accepted fact. It must be quite alarming to members

of the Opposition to see that members on this side of the House can take such a broad view of this subject.

I thank the honourable member for South Brisbane for his comprehensive review of so many aspects of the Bill, for some very pertinent comments on the consequences and for his particularly telling comments on the type of reaction that has been provoked in the last couple of weeks by the union heavies. While I am speaking about that, I here refer to the contribution of the honourable member for Kurilpa, who said there are the provisions in the Bill which will give decent unionists a fair go. He referred to the militants and the Communists who took to the streets last week.

I wish to say that it is my belief that a great deal of panic occurred in the ranks of the Labor Party last week. From the remarks of their leaders, who appealed to these fellow-travellers to break down their demonstrations and agitations, it is quite obvious that members of the Australian Labor Party are panic-stricken that so many Communists and radicals latched onto the Labor Party in the campaigning. No doubt great overtures will be made to them to break down their extreme actions, which must only lower further the regard of Australians for the Labor Party.

The honourable member for Cairns intrigued me with his opening comment. He said that we should look at the causes of strikes, the ingredients of strikes and the man-days lost. I cannot help recalling the brave words of the Labor Party in its 1972 campaign. It said, "Elect a Labor Government and the need for strikes will disappear because of our special relationships with the unions." That was the comment of the former Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam. Despite the special relationship then claimed we have seen the worst strikes and the greatest number of man-days lost since the actions of the militant Communists in the post-war period that resulted in the Menzies Government coming to power. Never in our history have more man-hours been lost than in 1973-74.

Mr. Jones: The figures won't prove that.

Mr. CAMPBELL: The figures will show that.

In that context, I should like to refer to some comments made by the Queensland President of the Australian Labor Party, who is also the President of the Trades and Labor Council, in an interview recorded at page 30 in this month's issue of "Rydge's". So that I will not be accused of taking his comments out of context, I shall read first the question of the interviewer, which was as follows—

"The Australian government is now trying very hard to maintain an industrial peace. Do you think this is ever possible for any significant period with strong and militant unions?"

Mr. Egerton replied—

"I strongly support a militant and a strong trade union movement and a country has nothing to fear from this. However I get worried when unions behave irresponsibly and irrationally and unfortunately, under today's democratic processes one small section of a union can determine its whole policy. Some of the more militant unionists spend about 90 per cent of their time furthering the aims and ambitions of about 10 per cent of their members and the great majority of the members suffer."

That is what Government members have been indicating during the debate this evening. As most of their very valuable contributions dealt with that matter, I do not think I need have recorded in "Hansard" any elaboration of what they said. I use the words of the Queensland President of the Australian Labor Party and President of the Trades and Labor Council to bear witness to the contributions they made.

I should like to refer to a letter which appeared in today's "Courier-Mail" from a shop steward who declared himself proud that democracy was working at Clyde Engineering, New Farm. He said that no coercion had been practised and no threats had been made in attempts to persuade workers to stop for political reasons. I commend that shop steward, Mr. Peter McFadden, on stating what he apparently believes to be the truth. I have not the slightest quarrel with any actions of trade union officials when conveying advice to members and when carrying out decisions as long as they are done strictly in accordance with the rules of the union.

I wish Mr. McFadden's remarks applied to every shop and union. I assure the House that, despite what has been said by honourable members opposite, some militant union leaders last week gave lip-service to democracy whilst at the same time directing their members to take part, without choice, in a political strike. I, my colleagues and party officials have had innumerable letters and telephone calls attesting to this and, in some cases, to directions to contribute to funds of the A.L.P. and those of an individual candidate. Whether the rules of the union were complied with is open to question. Unionists have also told me that they were given no opportunity to vote and that threats were made to black-ban their place of employment if they refused to strike over the double dissolution. That is what I was referring to when I said earlier that the Labor Party organisation is becoming panic-stricken because of the tactics of heavy-handed union officials last week. They are wondering if they will be able to recover the ground lost. It is becoming obvious that the ordinary Australian worker, who, incidentally, is in the overwhelming majority in unions, is getting sick and tired of being pushed around by arrogant, militant union leaders, without a say and with a denial of his rights.

I conclude by saying that there is nothing in the legislation to support the claims made by Opposition members and a very few union officials. I do not think I am making any presumption when I say that the moderate unions of this State look upon this legislation with a certain degree of favour and that critical comments have come only from a minority of militants.

I also indicate that matters associated with clauses 4 and 7 are still exercising my mind and the mind of the Government, and, consequently, at the Committee stage I will be moving that those clauses be deleted.

Motion (Mr. Campbell) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.58 p.m.
