

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 1976**

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

#### AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

##### TREASURER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his report on the Treasurer's Annual Statement for the year 1975-76.

Ordered to be printed.

#### PAPERS

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

Report of the Commissioner for Transport for the year 1975-76.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the Acquisition of Land Act 1967-1969 and the State and Regional Planning and Development, Public Works Organization and Environmental Control Act 1971-1974.

Orders in Council under—

Racing and Betting Act 1954-1975.

Workers' Compensation Act 1916-1974.

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.

The Southern Electric Authority of Queensland Acts, 1952 to 1964.

Regulations under the Libraries Act 1943-1974.

Statutes under the Griffith University Act 1971-1973.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

##### AUSTRALIAN SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs) (11.4 a.m.): I feel it important that the records of this House should incorporate details of the sorry story of shipbuilding in latter-day Australia and of the hypocritical concern now of the Labor Premiers of New South Wales and South Australia and previously of Labor members of this and the Federal Government. As honourable members know, the Industries Assistance Commission has recommended that no more large ships be built in Australia because it says the industry is inefficient and uneconomic. This is too sweeping a statement unless the word "uneconomic" also covers the whole sorry story of strikes, bans, limitations and poor productivity performance, so much a feature of the

history of Queensland companies like Walkers Ltd., Maryborough, and Evans Deakin, Brisbane.

I deplore the prospect of the large shipbuilding industry going out of existence. I have always regarded subsidies to shipbuilding as a contribution to our defence capacity as well as to the retention of specialist skills. But it is useless for New South Wales and South Australia to complain now. The history of the Labor political party and Labor organisation there is a carbon copy of that in Queensland.

When Evans Deakin and Walkers were plagued by stoppages and limitations and costs were skyrocketing while output was dropping, the A.L.P. put its head in the sand. The political wing of the A.L.P., as allegedly represented by honourable members opposite, did nothing to alert their industrial counterparts to the danger that was obvious to everyone. They refused to criticise either the unions or the Federal Labor Government—and stand condemned.

It fell to me—a Liberal—to bring unions and management together at Evans Deakin to ensure that discussions on disputes were held in relative industrial harmony. This resulted in a formula for resolution of disputes, which was honoured completely for the duration of contracts in hand; but it was, of course, too late.

Without the slightest protest from the political wing of the A.L.P., the then Federal Transport Minister (Mr. Jones) demonstrated his callous disregard for the Queensland industry and workers in it by deliberately passing over an Evans Deakin tender for a large job—a tender, I may add, which qualified for acceptance in every respect—and awarded the contract to the Newcastle shipyards, which happen to be in his electorate. It took me—a Liberal—three months to get a fleeting interview with Mr. Jones, as he went through Sydney airport, and to ask for a review.

And where was the action one would have expected from the Queensland A.L.P.? Where were even the catchcries and political mouthings to which we have so long been accustomed? The Labor Party sold out an industry in Queensland without a whimper.

Evans Deakin shipyard employees in three unions saw it differently. In October 1974 they joined with the Vehicle Builders Employees Federation and the Building Workers' Union in opposing Federal Labor Government policies which threatened their jobs.

At that time I attended a meeting in the Evans Deakin yard between the shipyard manager and unions. Subsequently, I received a letter, signed by eight shop stewards in the three unions—Metal Workers, Shipwrights and Painters and Dockers—conveying the text of a unanimous decision of a mass meeting of employees of Evans Deakin condemning the Federal Labor Government.

The resolution read, in part—

“This mass meeting of shipyard workers strongly opposes the recent decision of the Federal (Labor) Government to quickly remove the subsidies to shipbuilders, and protests at the immediate mass unemployment which will follow in the wake of the decision.

“We see this as a complete reversal of policy outlined prior to the Federal elections, such policy providing for a continuity of employment within the shipbuilding industry for all major shipyards in Australia.”

It was obvious even then that shipyard workers were to join the long list of disgruntled and disillusioned workers who had put their faith in the word of a discredited Government.

There was justifiable concern that the Evans Deakin shipyard division might go the way of Walkers Ltd., Maryborough. It did. The unions honoured an industrial agreement belatedly reached between the management and the Trades and Labor Council, but they may have saved themselves the trouble, because they were in the process of being sold down the drain.

So it came about that, Queensland having been disposed of, the only yards capable of building large ships happened to be in Charlie Jones' electorate in New South Wales and in the Labor State of South Australia. But even this creation of a two-part monopoly has not been enough, and Labor Premiers Wran and Dunstan—so notably silent during Queensland's travail—are calling plaintively for the retention of this national industry. I have no sympathy for them.

The Federal Opposition spokesman on industry and commerce, Mr. Mick Young—also from South Australia—terms the Industries Assistance Commission report as “further evidence of the indecisive and cowardly administration of the Fraser Government”. Where was his voice on behalf of Queensland in 1974? He had lost it, as had the Opposition in this House.

Also in 1974—in February of that year, to be exact—the then Labor member for Wide Bay (Mr. Brendan Hansen) claimed that the Queensland State Cabinet had sabotaged efforts to save Walkers Ltd., in his electorate of Wide Bay. But he said nothing about the impact of industrial strife on the firm's economic viability and nothing about his own Government's policy of progressively reduced shipbuilding subsidies. It has always been very easy for Labor politicians to utter words. It is an entirely different matter to criticise their own.

In two years two Queensland companies which had fostered skills vital in peace and war gave up the struggle for orders and for continued viability, and national defence capacity suffered a grave set-back.

In 1974 the Federal Labor Government placed orders worth \$150,000,000 with West German yards. In the same year the Federal Labor Transport Minister announced that the Federal Government had decided to buy or have built overseas enough tankers to carry 40 per cent of Australia's oil imports.

Little wonder the Queensland firms opted out. Now New South Wales and South Australia are squealing. In all my consultations with unions and shipyard managements I refused to play politics. My sole concern was for Queensland industry and its workforce.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** Any moment now I should imagine—and it has happened—that members of the Queensland State Labor Opposition will suddenly become vocal. But it is all too late. Even they will have difficulty in finding words to excuse shocking betrayal.

## QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

### 1. COMMONWEALTH NATIONAL ESTATE PROGRAMME

**Mr. Burns**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) As Queensland's allocation in the Commonwealth National Estate Programme has been cut from \$567,000 in 1975-76 to \$183,000 in 1976-77, what projects have been affected?

(2) How much has been allocated to each project and what is the purpose of each one?

(3) From 30 June 1973 to 30 June 1976, what projects have received funding under the National Estate Programme?

(4) How much did each project receive and what was the purpose of each project?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) The honourable member's question requires the collation of some detailed figures. When these have been prepared, I shall make the information available to him.

### 2. IMPROVEMENTS TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN COOROORA ELECTORATE

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

(1) What building additions and improvements have been carried out in the last two years at Bli Bli, Coolum, Kenilworth, Montville and Yandina primary schools?

(2) What building additions and improvements are due for completion at the same schools by the commencement of the 1977 school year?

*Answers:—*

(1) The honourable member for Coorooora (Mr. Gordon Simpson) has taken a very keen interest in the welfare of the school-children in his electorate by his endeavours to improve their schools. At Bli Bli State School a modern two-storey teaching block and new toilets and septic system have been provided. A library room and a health services room have also been established. At Coolum State School extra teaching spaces have been provided and at Kenilworth State School a modern library building has been erected. Yandina State School has had the back veranda of the infants' room enclosed for an additional activities area.

(2) Portion of the Pomona State School is to be transferred to the Coolum State School this year and an extension to block B at the Yandina State School will also be erected. At Montville State School a veranda will also be enclosed for additional library accommodation.

Parents and citizens' associations of all these schools no doubt are thankful for Mr. Simpson's representations to me on their behalf.

### 3. PARENTS REMAINING IN SCHOOL-GROUNDS DURING TEACHERS' STRIKE

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

(1) Is it correct for a school principal to tell parents who bring their children to school that they are liable to prosecution if they remain on the schoolgrounds during a teachers' strike?

(2) At a school with over 130 pupils, where all teachers except one and one teacher aide are on strike, should not some parents be allowed to remain on the grounds to supervise those children who do attend?

*Answers:—*

(1) A principal who threatens parents with prosecution if they remain in schoolgrounds has exceeded his authority unless the parent or group of parents is causing wilful disturbance of school in terms of section 22 of the Education Act.

(2) While I appreciate that concerned parents would be eager to assist at a school during the absence of striking teachers, it is in the interests of the parents themselves that they do not accept responsibility. Departmental officers will ensure that the children who attend on the day of a strike are adequately supervised.

### 4. COMMONWEALTH GRANTS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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

What amounts from the recent Commonwealth grant of \$22.222 million are to be paid to the Gold Coast, Brisbane, Toowoomba, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Townsville, Rockhampton and Gladstone City Councils and the Albert Shire Council?

*Answer:—*

I have arranged for a letter to be sent to the honourable member, advising him of the information he seeks.

### 5. SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL CROSSINGS

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

(1) Is he aware that the Police Department in Victoria is to employ part-time people to supervise school crossings in busy areas?

(2) In the light of the present uncertainty of the teachers' legal rights in the matter, will he seriously consider instituting a similar system in Queensland?

*Answers:—*

(1) Information received by me indicates that in Victoria such persons are employed part time by municipal councils, not by the Police Department. The Police Department assists by conducting short training courses for traffic wardens.

(2) I suggest that this question be directed to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Transport, who administers the Traffic Act.

### 6. INDUSTRIAL STATUS OF QUEENSLAND TEACHERS' UNION

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

(1) Is the Queensland Teachers' Union currently in contempt of the Industrial Court?

(2) If so, what action can now be taken by the Government, as the employer who is being inconvenienced by the union?

(3) What effect would deregistration of the union have on (a) the members of the union and (b) negotiations between the employer (the Government) and the employees?

*Answers:—*

(1) I presume the honourable member is referring to the Industrial Commission and not the Industrial Court. The situation is that the Industrial Commission has issued a restraining order against the Queensland Teachers' Union, and the

union has appealed to the Industrial Court on the grounds that the order is erroneous in law, in excess of jurisdiction, and that the commission has wrongly exercised the discretion vested in it. This appeal has been listed before the Industrial Court for Monday, 27 September 1976.

(2) As the Public Service Board represents the Crown as an employer in matters before the Industrial Court and Industrial Commission, the honourable member should direct this question to the Honourable the Premier, who is responsible for the Public Service Board.

(3) Section 73 (3) of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act provides that upon cancellation of the registration of an industrial union, such union shall cease to enjoy the status, privileges, powers, rights and immunities of an industrial union under the Act. In the case of an industrial union that comprises employees of the Government, the consequences of deregistration can be serious indeed, particularly for the members of that union. Part VII of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, which deals specifically with Government employees, creates an employer-employee relationship between the permanent head of the department and those persons employed in the department who are members of an industrial union engaged in the same calling. The effect therefore of deregistration of the Teachers' Union would be to remove from teachers employed by the Department of Education the coverage and benefits granted by the Teachers Award—State. A consequence of this would be that there would be no legal obligation upon the Government to pay any award increases granted by the Industrial Commission under the Teachers Award—State. Deregistration also would mean that the Teachers' Union would be unable to recover any union dues owing to it by members of the union. The Teachers' Union also would not have any right of audience before the Industrial Commission.

I think the inability of a deregistered Teachers' Union to recover union dues owing to it would have serious consequences for the executive of the union because I understand the finances of the union are such that in so far as liquidity is concerned it is balanced on a knife-edge. The union itself has an equity of only about 33 per cent of its total assets, the remainder being in the hands of interests other than its members—an extremely invidious situation to be in, in the event of a crisis such as deregistration. The union last year had to meet bank interest in excess of \$130,000 to the Commonwealth Trading and Savings Banks in respect of secured borrowings of over \$1,000,000 from those banks. Any exodus of members as a result of deregistration must therefore create severe financial

problems for the officials of the union. Deregistration also would permit another industrial union to expand its constitution to cover teachers employed by the State Government or, alternatively, a completely new union to be formed in this sphere.

7. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT OF ELECTRICITY COMMISSION OFFICERS

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

Has his attention been drawn to a comment attributed to an Opposition member of this House indicating that in the new Electricity Bill the Government is to allow the senior officers of the proposed Electricity Commission more lenient conditions of employment than those pertaining to teachers and other public servants and, if so, will this be the case?

*Answer:—*

Yes. The comment is not accurate. The Electricity Bill provides for the automatic dismissal of a senior officer who is convicted of an indictable offence for which he is liable to be punished by imprisonment for a period of twelve months or more. There is an additional provision that the Governor in Council may remove any such officer for misconduct which in the opinion of the Governor in Council warrants this action.

Section 28 of the Public Service Act provides for the review of the case of each officer who is convicted of an indictable offence and for the imposition, at the discretion of the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Public Service Board, of one of the sanctions provided for therein. Therefore it is clear that the proposed provisions of the Electricity Bill which provide for automatic removal from office are more onerous than those applying to an officer who is subject to the Public Service Act.

8. IWASAKI-SANYO PROJECT

**Mr. Hartwig**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) As a recent Press statement on Mr. Iwasaki's proposed tourist complex at Yeppoon indicated that Mr. Iwasaki desired to build the largest Disneyland in the world at Yeppoon, can he give any further information on these alleged intentions?

(2) Has Cabinet received any more submissions from the Iwasaki-Sanyo group following the report on the public inquiry?

*Answers:—*

(1) No. Following the public inquiry in 1974, Mr. Iwasaki was requested to supply additional detailed information on the proposed project, which would be

then considered by Cabinet. To date this information has not been supplied, and until such information is received and properly analysed, no action can be taken.

(2) No.

#### 9. RAIL LINK WITH WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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

(1) In view of the noteworthy announcement made by him concerning the trans-continental railway, which it is suggested could link Queensland with Western Australia, what industrial growth would or could be foreshadowed as a result of the link?

(2) To what extent could it reduce unemployment and thus save the Commonwealth millions of dollars in dole payments?

(3) Would the line be seen as a defence link?

(4) How is it suggested that finance might be raised for the scheme?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) Sir Charles Court initially, and of more recent times Mr. Lang Hancock, have had lengthy discussions with me regarding the feasibility of a trans-continental railway. Mr. Hancock has spent considerable money and effort seeking to present the likely cost and route of such a line. His suggestion for Governments to consider would include a period-taxation concession to those associated with the project and certain mineral rights to be granted on either side of the line as an added incentive.

It is believed that if this could come about it would prove to be a major factor in the reduction of unemployment and obviously it would provide a tremendous opportunity to open up what are, at present, areas largely undeveloped.

It is known today that the natural resources of Australia—particularly uranium, coal and iron-ore—are of prime importance to the outside industrial world and a line such as this would be of prime defence value.

More importantly it would provide the means for an exchange of iron-ore and coal between Queensland and Western Australia and would lead ultimately to the establishment of steel mills in these two States.

It is envisaged that, if the project is made attractive, private enterprise will provide the required finance.

In my mind the construction of this line is inevitable. It is only a question of time.

#### 10. HOUSING COMMISSION CONTRACT, BLACKWATER

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

Was the Government's clumsy handling of a contract for six new Queensland Housing Commission houses at Blackwater, involving National Homes Pty. Ltd. and Leeson Constructions, due only to an administrative blunder or was it due to unusual pressure exerted by the influential relative of a director of one of the companies seeking the contract?

*Answer:—*

The member's vindictive attack on the integrity of myself and others, his failure to check facts and his use of innuendo all point to his lack of even an elementary knowledge of ethics.

I will give him the facts. I will demonstrate to him that it was because of rigid adherence to the ethics of tendering that this situation arose.

Tender documents called for prices on Housing Commission designs but, as is common, allowed tenderers to submit a price on their own designs.

These particular documents allowed for alternative designs from tenderers who submitted prices on commission designs. This practice varies; in some cases tenders on commission designs are not a pre-condition to tendering on own design.

A straightforward human mistake was made. The technicality that National Homes Pty. Ltd. had omitted to tender on commission designs was overlooked, and a comparison of price was made between the tenders of National Homes Pty. Ltd., Leeson Constructions and the other competitive tenderer.

This showed, after bringing variations between designs to a common level, that Leeson tendered for six houses in 29 weeks at \$103,990 allowing for estimated rise and fall on labour. National Homes tendered on six equivalent houses at \$104,029 on a firm price in 16 weeks. The price advantage of \$39 to Leeson Constructions could have been offset by rise and fall and would have been more than offset by 13 weeks' earlier completion. Revenue to the commission in that 13 weeks could possibly be as much as \$3,000. In addition, six families would have been housed several weeks earlier, and I am always conscious of unhoused people, a group the member seems to forget in his haste to attack and slander me and the Government.

Executive authority was obtained to accept the better tender from National Homes Pty. Ltd. The purely technical error was then detected, and the commission, despite the embarrassment to itself, recommended a change. I accepted the

absolute necessity to stay with the ethics of tendering and the oversight was rectified.

The member's arithmetic must be of the same low standard as his ethics or he would realise that it costs the Government more to uphold the code of tendering and that the company he slanders lost the contract.

I challenge the member to have the courage of his convictions and to ask his question outside the cloak of privilege. I suspect that the director of the company he slanders would accommodate him before the appropriate court.

11. AID TO BUILDING INDUSTRY

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the "buy now pay later" plan of the N.S.W. Government to assist the building industry?

(2) Has the Queensland Government considered such a scheme not only as a means of assisting the building industry but also as a way to overcome the acute shortage of houses?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) I am aware of a deferred payments scheme on public works as distinct from housing and that an approach has been made for something similar on housing, so far with no decision. I am having it examined. The honourable member may not be aware—because he is not aware of very much of the real world—that such a scheme operated in Queensland housing in 1974-75 and was the only thing that saved many contractors, as well as persons seeking housing, from the disaster which would have occurred when the Whitlam Government backed down on its promises of finance.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I ask question No. 12, Mr. Speaker. Now I will get a sensible answer.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will not be here long enough to get an answer if he does not behave himself.

12. VEHICLE-EMISSION CONTROL

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

(1) What enforcement powers has the Department of Main Roads with regard to Australian Design Rule 27A for vehicle-emission control?

(2) Is it a fact that, after registration, the Department of Main Roads has no power to stop a person from modifying a vehicle fitted with emission control so that the emission control becomes virtually useless?

(3) What action does he propose to take to remedy this situation?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Main Roads Department has no enforcement powers regarding Australian Design Rules except that the Main Roads Commissioner can refuse to register or renew, and can cancel, the registration of a vehicle that does not comply with the Traffic Regulations.

(2) The Main Roads Department has no power to stop a vehicle from being modified, but if detected a vehicle not complying with Australian Design Rules can have registration refused or cancelled. It should be noted that tests for design rule 27A require the use of very complicated equipment and a long period of testing.

(3) As the administration of the Traffic Act does not come within my ministerial responsibility, I suggest the question be directed to the appropriate Minister.

13. THREAT TO NORTH QUEENSLAND  
TIMBER INDUSTRY

**Mr. M. D. Hooper**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service—

(1) With reference to my question to the Minister for Works and Housing concerning the North Queensland timber industry, is he aware that the New South Wales Government specifies that only timber produced in that State may be used in the construction of houses built for Government departments in New South Wales?

(2) Will he act in a similar manner by directing that only Queensland timbers be used in the construction of houses built in this State for the Housing Commission and other Government departments, thus allowing North Queensland sawmillers to compete with the cheaper, imported softwoods?

*Answers:—*

(1) No. Information available to me is that no such policy presently applies in New South Wales.

(2) The honourable member for Townsville West presumably is aware that it is already Government policy, and has been so since 1958, that timber imported from outside Australia is not to be used on projects under the control of Government departments unless there are special requirements which can only be met by the use of such imported timbers.

Application of similar restrictions to timber produced elsewhere in Australia is considered to be both undesirable and largely impracticable, bearing in mind the interstate trade which exists in Queensland and also that hardwood from northern New South Wales constitutes a large part of the supply to the housing market in South-east Queensland.

14. STATEMENT BY ALDERMAN  
SHEILA KEEFFE ON PALM ISLAND

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

(1) Is he aware of the scandalous statements recently made by Alderman Sheila Keffe, as detailed in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" on 21 September, to the effect that the Palm Island Aboriginal Settlement was an island without hope and that the island has a long and chequered history of repression?

(2) As she claimed in her irresponsible statement that the water supply was inadequate, there was insufficient sewerage, no bitumen roads, transport services to and from the island were unsatisfactory and malnutrition was rife among the people, can he refute the inflammatory statements and inform the House of the expenditure incurred and works undertaken in the last five years to improve the quality of life for residents on Palm Island?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) I have seen Alderman Sheila Keffe's statement and there is no doubt that her knowledge is as outmoded and as outdated as the particular political affiliations she follows as well as her pseudo-Aboriginal advisers. Her allegations were totally rejected by the Palm Island Aboriginal Community Council Chairman, Mr. Jacob Baira, Jnr., and I feel that he adequately dispelled any public reservations engendered by her irresponsible statements.

I fully endorse the invitation by the Palm Island chairman to the Townsville City Council to go to Palm Island and see for themselves the responsible attitude adopted by the people there and the spirit of progressiveness which pervades the island.

Activities developed over the past five years in consultation with the community council include:

	\$
Modern primary school ..	264,000
Kindergarten .. ..	74,000
Library .. .. .	21,000
Retail store/butcher shop complex .. .. .	135,000
Maternal & child welfare clinic .. .. .	75,000
New bakery .. .. .	65,000
Housing .. .. .	1,100,000
Aged persons complex ..	200,000
Industrial training areas ..	60,000
New jetty & swing basin ..	300,000
Improved water supply and sewerage (expenditure to date) .. .. .	1,952,000
	\$4,246,000

I am sure these adequately answer the allegations.

In addition, social welfare staff, educationists and medical services are provided and availed of by the residents. Palm Island residents now enjoy a pattern of living determined by their Aboriginal community council. As a result of the responsible attitude adopted by the council, I have observed the most enjoyable pattern of living by Palm Island citizens who are accepting responsibilities of citizenship as well as enjoying all of the rights and privileges of their fellow Queensland citizens.

15. KANGAROO TAGS

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

(1) Is the type of tag at present required to be inserted in all kangaroo skins taken for sale approved on an Australia-wide basis or approved on an individual State basis only?

(2) Who are the suppliers of the present approved tags being used by shooters in Queensland?

(3) What is the actual cost of each tag from the suppliers?

Answers:—

(1) The type of tags used in the States' kangaroo management programmes is a matter for the individual States. Queensland chose a plastic tag similar to that used by New South Wales because the manufacturer of the New South Wales tags was the only source of tags available to Queensland. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is now endeavouring to locate a Queensland manufacturer who can supply suitable tags.

(2) Plant Protection Products, Bombala Street, Dudley, Newcastle, 2290.

(3) Approximately three cents each.

16. INCREASE IN PAY-ROLL TAX TO  
SUBSIDISE APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES

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

(1) Will the State Government follow the suggestion by the Commonwealth Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations that the States increase pay-roll tax by 0.5 per cent in order to finance subsidies to apprenticeship schemes?

(2) As part of the new federalism, will the State Government finance a part or whole of Commonwealth-funded apprenticeship-training schemes in the future?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) The honourable member appears to be unaware that a close examination of the Commonwealth proposal to



fund apprenticeship schemes by the imposition of additional pay-roll tax revealed many flaws in it and a recent meeting of Commonwealth and State Ministers rejected it. The honourable member also appears to be unaware of the substantial financial contribution that Queensland already makes to apprenticeship through my department and the Department of Education. Further embryonic Commonwealth proposals are now being considered but it is far too early to assess, let alone publicly comment upon, the merits of these further proposals.

17. ABORIGINAL HOUSING, ROCKHAMPTON

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

With reference to his statement in "The Morning Bulletin" of 8 September wherein he refuted the claim by the Mayor of Rockhampton regarding house purchases at prices in excess of \$50,000 for Aboriginal tenants, how many houses were purchased in Rockhampton in the last twelve months, what was the amount paid for each house and where are the locations?

*Answer:—*

No houses in Rockhampton have been purchased by my Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement during the past 12 months.

18. INDUSTRIAL ACTION BY PROFESSIONAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Yewdale**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

With reference to his answer to my question on 1 April whereby he made a specific statement relative to the finalisation of an investigation into the hours of duty for members of the Queensland Professional Officers' Association, that the Professional Officers' Association and the State Service Union had been advised that the report in question would be completed by 30 June 1976 and the Professional Officers' Association had accordingly withdrawn its ban, why has the Professional Officers' Association seen fit to advise its members through "The Courier-Mail" that the work bans are to be reintroduced as of 17 September, which is approximately three months later than the promised completion of the report?

*Answer:—*

While every effort was made to complete the report to which the honourable member refers within the time specified, it has proved impossible to do so.

I am informed by the Public Service Board that a submission will be made to Cabinet within the next two weeks. The

association was informed of this intention but nevertheless reintroduced its work bans.

I should say to the honourable member that I am well aware of his interest in and activity with the Trades and Labor Council and the way he works with it to foment strikes, bans and this sort of thing, which is not compatible with his position as a member of this House. We know all about his activities and watch them very closely.

19. BUS CONCESSIONS FOR PENSIONERS

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

Is it proposed to extend bus concessions for pensioners to all pensioners on all bus lines and, if so, when and under what conditions?

*Answer:—*

The honourable member would be aware of existing bus concessions for pensioners and he should also be aware that where financial considerations are involved, budgetary considerations preclude prior disclosure of provision which might be made for an extension of schemes involving public expenditure.

Apart from this, of course, any change would require an amendment to legislation and, here again, it is not my province to disclose in advance matters of Government policy involving amending legislation.

20. PSYCHIATRIC PRE-SENTENCE REPORTS

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

(1) What statute law or section of the Criminal Code justifies a judge in requesting a report from a psychiatrist or psychologist before imposing a sentence on a criminal convicted of a serious crime, as is frequently done by some members of the judiciary?

(2) If there is no such provision, does not the request by the judge indicate that he is relegating his duties to persons who have not been appointed to exercise them?

(3) What safeguards exist at law to prevent dangerous criminals from being turned loose on the community following a recommendation by some doctor that such should be done, as was the case of a potential killer turned loose by the Supreme Court justice in North Queensland some time ago when the people were fortuitously saved by the zeal and common sense of the Honourable John Herbert, who had the dangerous criminal re-examined, when it was found that he was a homicidal maniac and was then committed to prison, where he should have gone in the first place?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) Section 650 of the Criminal Code empowers a court before passing sentence to receive such evidence as it thinks fit in order to inform itself as to the proper sentence to be passed. Section 6 of the Offenders Probation and Parole Act 1959-1974 requires the Chief Probation Officer at the instance of a court to prepare and submit to the court such reports upon and information with respect to any convicted person as the court requires.

Such reports may include any psychiatric or other assessments of the convicted person. The purpose of the reports and any other examination is to see that the proper sentence is passed. In every area which involves human judgment errors may occur, and the best safeguard is expert assessment of the person concerned by those qualified to do so. In the final analysis a judge can only act as he thinks fit having regard to such information as he can obtain. If the honourable member will furnish more specific information on the identity of the person referred to in the last part of his question, I shall be in a better position to make a comment thereon.

#### 21. LESBIANISM AT JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

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

(1) In view of the report in "The Courier-Mail" of 22 September concerning lesbianism at the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education, has he seen the orientation magazine issued by the students' union at James Cook University this year, wherein an article written by a female academic extolled the pleasures and satisfaction of lesbianism?

(2) Has he been informed that a proposal to establish a Chair of Lesbianism at James Cook University is at present being earnestly considered by the ruling body of that establishment and, if so, is it proposed to install the writer of the articles in the orientation magazine as head of the faculty or course and what is her name?

(3) Would the large amount of money involved in setting up this course and maintaining it be better spent in the establishment of the medical school at James Cook?

*Answers:—*

(1) No. I have not seen the magazine referred to.

(2) No.

(3) See answer to (2).

#### 22. FINANCES OF UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND UNION

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

(1) With reference to my question of 21 September concerning the finances of the University of Queensland Union, is the present union overdraft of \$550,000 to be further increased and will a special meeting of the union council be held on 23 September to approve a further increase in the overdraft?

(2) Is the proposed increase in the student service fee to \$96 next year needed to meet the payments due on this huge and increasing overdraft and anticipated budget deficits this year?

(3) If this obvious financial incompetence continues and the union is unable to meet its overdraft payments, who will be responsible for meeting the default?

*Answers:—*

(1) No. I am informed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland (Sir Zelman Cowen) that the union's present overdraft limit is \$515,000 not \$550,000. The union is presently operating within that agreed limit. There is no proposal before the union council meeting to be held on Thursday, 23 September, proposing any further increase in the current overdraft arrangements.

(2) No. The student service fee approved by the senate for 1977 is \$96 per year but of that sum only \$70 represents the fee attributable to the University of Queensland Union. The balance represents fees attributable to the University Sports and Physical Recreation Association. The union's submission for an increase in student service charges in 1977 was directed in part at restoring its income position eroded by inflation, to initiating a programme of physical maintenance of the union's buildings, to undertaking some capital improvement of student catering facilities, and to improving the union's general financial position, in view of the increased level of overdraft repayments due to commence in 1979, and not in relation to anticipated deficits in the current year's budget. A recent review of the union's current expenditure trends indicated the possibility of an increase in the anticipated deficit for 1976, and a number of steps have now been taken to control costs and restrict expenditure.

(3) The University of Queensland Union is an unincorporated association, and it is solely responsible for financial commitments entered into in its name.

## 23. POISON "1080"

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

(1) Which regulations apply to the sale of the poison "1080"?

(2) Is every wholesale and retail sale of the poison recorded in a register?

(3) Does any Government department have to be notified when and where aerial baiting occurs?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) The Poisons Regulations of 1973 apply to the sale of "1080". Such regulations are controlled by the Department of Health. The regulations require that the written authority of the Director of Health and Medical Services be obtained for the purchase of the poison. Such sales to authorised persons are required under the regulations to be recorded.

(3) When a landholder desires to bait his land, my department arranges for licensed operators to impregnate the bait material. The landholder is required to indemnify the Crown, to post warning notices and to notify adjoining property owners of his intention. The need does not arise to notify other departments if the landholder chooses to bait by aerial means.

## 24. Q.A.T.B. FINANCES

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

(1) Is he aware that certain Government departments and private enterprises will deduct one fixed amount only from wages for contributions to the Q.A.T.B. and that subscriptions to the Q.A.T.B. vary from centre to centre, for example, Cloncurry \$10 yearly over all, Mt. Isa \$13 and Julia Creek \$20, and that Medibank and other private health funds in certain tables are contributing \$15 for a married person and \$7.50 for a single person, thus indicating certain anomalies such as in Mt. Isa where the centre will have an overpayment of \$2 for a married person but \$5.50 underpayment for a single person?

(2) What happens to the excess or shortfall in subscriptions and payments for each centre?

(3) Does this mean that all Q.A.T.B. centres are going to have the same subscriptions and, if not, who is responsible for collecting or refunding the differences in payments and subscriptions?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am informed that the State Council of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade receives deductions made from the pays of persons employed in

State Government departments as contributions to individual Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade committees, and remits the amounts as received to the respective committees. In all cases, apart from Railway Department employees, the authority to deduct is for the amount fixed by the local committee. In the case of the Railway Department, however, a single rate of deduction is negotiated between the State Council and the Railway Department, and this may be above or below the rate applicable to normal contributors of the various committees. If any committees consider the rate inadequate, they are not obliged to be involved in the scheme, but on the other hand in some cases the payments would be higher than the normal contributions. The rate is negotiated from time to time.

I am not in a position to comment on the deductions made from employees of private industry, as this would be a matter for agreement between the employer, the subscribers and the individual Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade committee.

Medibank private table 3 provides for the refund to a limit of \$15 for married persons and \$8 for single persons to persons who have paid a contribution to an ambulance committee. Other organisations have similar schemes.

(2) All payments received by State Council are transmitted without deduction to the committees through which the authorities to deduct had been transmitted in the first place.

(3) The rate of contribution is fixed by each individual Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade committee. A weekly or fortnightly subscription is not necessarily equivalent to an annual subscription. There is no requirement to collect or refund any differences under the present arrangements.

## 25. MEDIBANK REFUND OF Q.A.T.B. TRANSPORT FEE

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

(1) When a medical case has to be transported by the Q.A.T.B. to another hospital for further medical attention, will the cost of transport be refunded by Medibank?

(2) What portion of the cost of transport will be refunded to the patient in relation to the cost of transport paid by him or her to the Q.A.T.B.?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) The honourable member would be aware that, as a general principle, persons who are contributors to an ambulance committee are not charged for transport by

that ambulance committee. However, subject to the rules of the individual committees, charges are made in certain circumstances on non-contributors and I am informed that these charges are not refundable under the Medibank scheme. I am also advised that Medibank Private Table 3 and some private organisations make provision for the refund of contributions paid to Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade committees.

#### 26. MEDIBANK REFUND FOR IMMUNISATION CLINICS

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

Where a local authority conducts immunisation clinics at its own cost, will a refund of the cost of the service be made to the authority by Medibank?

*Answer:—*

I am advised that the cost incurred by a local authority in the course of carrying out a mass immunisation campaign is not refundable by Medibank. The honourable member will realise, of course, that these determinations are made by the Commonwealth Government and not by the State Government.

#### 27. HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSES, GLADSTONE

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

(1) As there is a long list of applications for Housing Commission houses in Gladstone, are there plans for the building of more commission houses?

(2) How many houses are to be built in the near future and when will building be commenced?

(3) Will the houses be available for all applicants considered as tenants?

(4) Will they be available for guaranteed rental?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) I can't agree with the honourable member that wait-lists of Gladstone applicants are very long compared to those of other provincial cities; nevertheless, plans are in hand to provide more Housing Commission houses in Gladstone for general purposes. They will be available for letting to qualified persons who meet the means test requirements of the 1973-74 Housing Agreement.

#### 28. CALEBU PTY. LTD.

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

(1) How many complaints have been received by his department in relation to the sale of 581 acre interests in a 520 acre property 30 km from Cooktown by a real estate group called Calebu Pty. Ltd.?

(2) As the N.S.W. Corporate Affairs Commission has said that 210 people were sold acre lots in an area where the Cook Shire Council said the minimum subdivision allowable would be 25 acres, what action has been taken to protect Queenslanders from this corporate criminal activity in land development?

(3) Who are the directors of Calebu Pty. Ltd. and what are their current addresses?

(4) Have any charges been laid against any director of Calebu Pty. Ltd. by his department?

(5) Have any of the directors or their representatives any involvement in other land developments in Queensland?

*Answers:—*

(1) One.

(2) The honourable member may not be aware that the situation involved in the sale by Calebu Pty. Ltd. with respect to a parcel of land described as being all that land in the County of Banks, Parish Hann, Sub. Div. 2 of portion 109; Sub. Div. 3 and 2a of portion 120 of land contained in Certificate of Title N28278-N28280-N28281 Vol. 237 Fol. 238-240-241 is that the company was selling shares as tenants in common, each share being one undivided 520th interest in the land described above.

From information held by the Queensland Justice Department and the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs there is no evidence to suggest that the company was attempting to sell "581 acre interests" in a 520 acre property or, if this is a misprint in the question, that the company was attempting to sell 5 or one acre "interests" or subdivisional allotments of any particular area in this property.

The introduction of legislation to prohibit sales of undivided shares in land under certain circumstances is presently under examination.

(3) The New South Wales Corporate Affairs Commission advises that John William Paterson, Dima Tymchenko and Nina Tymchenko were the Directors of Calebu Pty. Ltd., which is now in liquidation.

The residential address for each of the abovenamed is given as 19 Brisbane Street, Bondi Junction. This address has not changed except for John William Paterson, whose whereabouts are unknown.

(4) No. However, the New South Wales Corporate Affairs Commission advises that charges of conspiracy to cheat and defraud have been laid against Dima Tymchenko by that office. A warrant of arrest is out for John William Paterson, whereabouts unknown, on the same charge as a co-conspirator. No charges have been

laid against Nina Tymchenko by the Corporate Affairs Commission in New South Wales.

(5) This information is not known.

29. ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER COMMISSION

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

(1) With reference to an article in "The Courier-Mail" of 2 August in which it was stated that the Queensland Government would establish an Aboriginal and Islander Commission, what action has been taken to establish such a commission?

(2) Will he give details of (a) the composition of this commission as it relates to Aboriginal representation and (b) the commission's functions?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) The proposal to establish an Aboriginal and Islander Commission is being developed in consultation with my Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Councils. When finality is reached the Government will make an appropriate announcement.

30. AUSTRALIAN ASSISTANCE PLAN

**Mr. Wright**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) In view of the Fraser Government's proposal to scrap the Australian Assistance Plan, what contribution is the Queensland Government prepared to make to ensure that the positive characteristics of this scheme are not lost to the community?

(2) Is he prepared to pressurise the Commonwealth Government into continuing this scheme at least in part?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) I would refer the honourable member to an answer I gave to his colleague the member for Port Curtis on Tuesday last when he inquired regarding the continuation of finance for the operation of the Gladstone Area Social Development Board.

A final determination on the future of the Australian Assistance Plan in Queensland has not been made. The matter has been the subject of correspondence to the Commonwealth Government and, until a number of items are clarified, it will not be possible to make any final determination in relation to this matter.

31. REQUIREMENT OF TEACHERS TO JOIN UNION

**Mrs. Kyburz**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

In view of the decision taken at a recent joint-party meeting that the Education Department would no longer write a threatening letter to newly employed teachers insisting that they join a union within one month, when will the practice of sending such letters cease?

*Answer:—*

The honourable member's question is not consistent with the resolution passed on 8 September, as supplied to me by the secretary of the joint Government parties. The honourable member will recall that I reported on the matter to a subsequent meeting indicating that the ramifications of the resolution were being examined.

32. TREATMENT OF MIGRAINE, ROYAL BRISBANE HOSPITAL

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

Does the pain-relief centre at the Royal Brisbane Hospital make any provision for the treatment of migraine sufferers?

*Answer:—*

The pain-relief centre at the Royal Brisbane Hospital does not provide treatment for migraine sufferers specifically but treatment for these patients is available in other clinics at the hospital.

33. GAREEMA HOSTEL FOR DESERTED WIVES

**Mrs. Kyburz**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport—

(1) Is the Gareema hostel for deserted wives in Brisbane still functioning under the auspices of the Save the Children Fund?

(2) Is this project financially assisted by the Queensland Government and, if so, to what extent?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am informed that the hostel known as Gareema is operated by the Evening Group of the Save the Children Fund.

(2) The group was assisted financially by my department to the extent of \$2,000 for the financial year ended 30 June 1975 and \$4,000 for the financial year ended 30 June 1976.

## 34. SPORTS AREA, LOGANHOLME STATE SCHOOL

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

(1) Is he aware that the Loganholme State Primary School is still waiting for filling and earthworks to be carried out on the sports area?

(2) When is it planned to complete this work?

(3) Will he make time available to inspect the grounds with me?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes, but expenditure of some magnitude is involved in carrying out the work.

(2) The matter will be reviewed early in 1977 in the light of funds then available after providing essential additional classroom accommodation throughout the State.

(3) Yes, we could come to some mutually convenient arrangement in this regard, particularly in view of the honourable member's keen interest in the development of the school.

## 35. PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE, GROVELY STATE SCHOOL

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

Is his department considering the provision of pre-school facilities for the expanding Grovely, Keperra and Ferny Grove areas and, if not, what action has been taken, particularly with regard to the establishment of a pre-school centre associated with the Grovely State School?

*Answer:—*

Yes. My department is aware of the need for pre-school facilities in the Grovely, Keperra and Ferny Grove areas. A new single unit is about to open at Ferny Grove while tenders for a three-unit centre at Grovely have already been called by the Department of Works.

## 36. STUDENT ROAD SAFETY FILM

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

With regard to the production of a student road-safety film, which was foreshadowed in answers to my questions on 9 April 1975 and 10 March 1976, what progress has been made with the production and/or distribution of the film?

*Answer:—*

The film to which the honourable member refers is chiefly concerned with safety on buses. Filming at Brisbane suburban locations has been completed, and editing is now being carried out. It is expected

that the film will be released late in November. Upon release, multiple copies of the film will be placed in the departmental film library for use by schools.

## 37. LEAVE TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES TO ATTEND LOCAL AUTHORITY MEETINGS

**Mr. Jones**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

Are any State public servants, teachers or Government employees in Queensland who are aldermen or shire councillors granted leave in order to attend meetings of local authorities and, if so, what are the circumstances?

*Answer:—*

The question of granting leave to public servants to attend meetings of local authorities was considered by Cabinet in February 1976. The approved arrangements are that time off to enable officers to attend to council business is not granted except in respect of the meeting held in accordance with section 14 (1) of the Local Government Acts, which is the statutory meeting required to be held after the conclusion of the triennial elections.

## 38. CROSS-RIVER RAIL LINK AND URBAN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

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

(1) What sum has the Commonwealth Government paid to date for (a) the cross-river rail link (Merivale Street) bridge, (b) the additional railway trackage between Roma Street and Northgate and (c) the electrification of the railway between Darra and Ferny Grove?

(2) What sum has the Queensland Government contributed?

(3) What is the estimated date of completion in each case?

(4) What is the detailed composition of the cuts in the Commonwealth Transport Department's allocations to Queensland for urban public transport, and what effect will the Commonwealth decision have on the projects?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) To date the Commonwealth Government has provided funds for the approved urban public transport projects mentioned in the question as follows:—

	\$
1. Brisbane cross-river rail link . . . . .	5,351,828
2. Additional trackage (Roma Street to Northgate) . . . . .	1,413,333
3. Electrification (Ferny Grove to Darra) . . . . .	1,829,244
Total . . . . .	8,594,405

The State Government has so far contributed, as its share of the works, \$2,675,914 towards the bridge, \$914,662 for electrification Ferry Grove to Darra, and \$978,417 on additional trackage—a total of \$4,568,993. It is anticipated that the cross-river rail bridge will be open to rail traffic by mid-1978. Works on additional trackage between Roma Street and Northgate will continue for some time, as electrification on that line beyond Mayne has been deferred to concentrate our resources on the Ferny Grove to Darra sections.

The Federal Government decided, in view of the current economic situation, not to approve new projects in 1975-76 or 1976-77. Consequently, the State is adjusting its urban public transport programme within a framework of annual allocations.

Queensland has had the foresight to make submissions to the Commonwealth for funds to cover project cost escalations. It is anticipated that this money will be available, enabling the programme to continue at an acceptable pace. If this is not the case, the State Government is committed to continue with the electrification of the metropolitan area from its own resources.

39. ALIENS, TITLE TO FREEHOLD LAND

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

Under what circumstances and conditions may an alien in Australia, or a person in a foreign country, acquire a fee simple title to freehold land in Queensland?

*Answer:—*

As from the date of commencement of The Aliens Act of 1965, namely 27 April 1965, there has been no special restriction on an alien residing in Australia or in a foreign country acquiring a fee simple or leasehold title to land in Queensland. Such Act provides that an alien may take, acquire, hold and dispose of any property in all respects as if he were an Australian citizen.

The Government has appointed a joint committee of senior officers of the Departments of Justice and Lands to meet and consider the best and simplest method by which overseas ownership of land in Queensland, particularly by large overseas interests, could be identified. I am informed that a report by such committee is being compiled and should be presented in the near future.

The honourable member is no doubt aware that the Commonwealth Government exercises certain functions and control in respect of some aspects of foreign investment in Australia by virtue of its

exchange control, its Banking (Foreign Exchange) Regulations and its policies relating to such matters.

40. COMET RIVER BRIDGE

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

Has he any further information on the Comet River Bridge?

*Answer:—*

I have no further information regarding the Comet River Bridge except to say that the previous assurances regarding the design and programming of works for a start in 1977 still stand.

41. GAZETAL OF TOWN OF WILLOWS

**Mr. Lester**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Survey and Valuation—

Are measures being taken to gazette the town of Willows, so that the townspeople will be better able to present a case for the supply of electricity?

*Answer:—*

The question of giving this sapphire mining area the name of The Willows was referred to the Place Names Board about three weeks ago. The matter is still under consideration by that board.

The associated question of reserving a town site for The Willows is outside the responsibility of the Place Names Board and was referred by that board to the Department of Mines. This is because any proposed town area would have to be excised from a mineral field.

I suggest that any further questions on this aspect of the matter and also on the separate question of the circumstances in which an electricity subsidy will be granted to the residents of townships should be referred to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Mines and Energy.

42. RAIL FREIGHTS

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

Will he try not to increase rail freights in the next Budget in view of the immense difficulties confronting country people, who do so much to contribute to the welfare of this State?

*Answer:—*

Yes. As is typical, the honourable member is assiduous in looking after the interests of his electorate.

## 43. POLICE FORCE RULING ON BEARDS

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

(1) In view of the great traditions that are associated with the growth and fashion of beards in this Parliament and the community generally, what are the restrictions pertaining to the Police Force on the wearing of beards, which would appear to apply to no other section of Crown employees or public servants?

(2) Why do these restrictions apply?

(3) In line with changed trends in dress allowable for policewomen, is it a general instruction contained in the Queensland Policemen's Manual?

(4) Would he give consideration to seeing suitable changes in relation to the matter of beards, so that police could have similar rules applying to them as to other Crown employees?

*Answers:—*

(1) I have no definite knowledge that the restrictions applying to the wearing of beards by members of the Police Force do not apply to other Crown employees or public servants. I do know that there are certain restrictions on members of the Armed Services (who are, after all, Crown employees) wearing beards; but whether or not those restrictions are similar to the restrictions applying to members of the Police Force, I am unable to state.

(2) Members of the Police Force, like members of the Armed Forces, are disciplined bodies of men and they are required to meet standards perhaps higher than those of other sections of the community, on the aspects of physical appearance and moral standards.

(3) The instructions are contained in the Queensland Policeman's Manual on issue to each and every member of the Queensland Police Force. Requirements in relation to appearance are well known to members of the public and aspiring members of the Police Force on joining must submit to the rules of discipline and standards prescribed.

(4) The matter might be reviewed in the future, but it is unlikely that any changes will be made to the present standards.

## 44. COLOUR-VISION DEFECTS OF DRIVERS

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

(1) Is he aware of reported claims made at a recent national meeting of eye specialists that some people with a colour-vision defect were being allowed now to drive taxis, buses and heavy vehicles?

(2) Do any restrictions apply to professional drivers and their ability to be such, dependent upon colour-vision defects?

(3) Will he give consideration to changing the size or shape of traffic lights so that affected drivers are able to read signs independently of their colour, as new systems have been introduced successfully overseas?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes, but I am unable to accept the implied inference that there is any safety problem involved with people having a colour-vision defect being permitted to drive taxis, buses and heavy vehicles.

As a matter of fact, the Committee on Driver Improvement of the Australian Transport Advisory Council, in its Report on Policy and Procedures for the Promotion of Driver Improvement and Road Safety through Licensing and Enforcement, had this to say:

“Colour Perception. Defective colour vision should not be a bar to obtaining either a public passenger vehicle driver's license or a private motor vehicle driver's license.”

The report went on to say—and this no doubt is a subject for consideration of other authorities—that “. . . it should be the practice, where practicable, to use the word ‘STOP’ in conjunction with the appropriate red light” as a means of assisting colour-blind drivers.

As recently as July this year, I received correspondence from the secretary of the Australian College of Ophthalmologists wherein they gave me a copy of the visual standards for motor vehicle drivers promulgated by the College of Ophthalmologists in 1972, which were recently reviewed and are the current standards of the college. In this report it is stated—

“Colour Vision. The standard now proposed differs significantly from our previous recommendations. Because it is known that about eight per cent of males have some defect of colour vision, previous recommendations were that all drivers should have colour vision tests. It is now accepted that there is little evidence that the common red-green colour blindness causes impairment of driving ability. True achromatism is rare and the majority of cases are accompanied by grossly defective vision, and will be rejected on a visual acuity basis. It is now recommended that colour vision tests be required only for Class 1 drivers. In addition, traffic lights should be so constructed to always minimise any risk due to defective colour vision.”

Class 1 drivers are drivers of large public passenger vehicles, buses, motor coaches, etc., and drivers of large articulated vehicles (semi-trailers) where the colour-vision requirement is simply an ability to identify red, green and amber lights.



(2) See answer to question (1).

(3) This will be a matter for consideration by my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads.

45. COPIES OF BUSINESS PAPERS AND NOTICES OF QUESTIONS FOR PUBLIC GALLERY

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

Will he give further consideration to making available to school-children in the gallery of Parliament House copies of Notices of Questions and Orders of the Day, in order to facilitate the educational advantage to school-children of their visit to Parliament House?

*Answer:—*

In response to a similar question last year, certain arrangements were made for the supply of parliamentary papers to visitors in the public gallery. Any variation of these arrangements would be a matter for Mr. Speaker.

46. A.N.L. INTRASTATE TRADING

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

(1) Is he aware that in recent months there has been a further curtailment of shipping services by A.N.L. to North Queensland and that this is causing serious concern to all organisations connected with shipping in North Queensland, including harbour boards, commercial houses and waterfront unions?

(2) What action is he now prepared to take to enable intrastate trading between Queensland ports as one way in which shipping services to the North can be improved?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) The operations of Australian National Line shipping services to North Queensland come entirely within the ambit of responsibility of the Commonwealth Government and I am not aware of any recent curtailment of such activities. If this has occurred, then the honourable member should address his representations to the Commonwealth Minister for Transport.

So far as the question of intrastate trading is concerned, the position is that discussions are still proceeding with the Commonwealth and certain information is awaited from the Commonwealth Department of Transport so that further consideration can be given to the possibility of such trading being carried out per medium of the Australian National Line.

47. BAGASSE PULP AND PAPER PROJECT

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

(1) Further to my previous questions regarding the establishment in Queensland of a pulp and paper plant using bagasse from the sugar industry, is he aware that a British firm has recently invested U.S. \$50 million in such a plant in Paraguay, South America?

(2) What is the present situation with the Queensland proposal and what is the Grace organisation's intention in this matter?

(3) What other international organisations have been approached by his department regarding the sponsorship of the bagasse pulp and paper project in Queensland and what has been the result of these approaches?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) My Department of Commercial and Industrial Development continues to use its best endeavours to further the establishment of a bagasse paper pulp plant in this State. It is of course aware of the developments which have occurred in this field elsewhere.

As the honourable member will recall from answers which I have given previously on the same subject, negotiations have taken place between my department and W. R. Grace & Co. of New York over a considerable period. Whilst in the United States recently I conferred with senior executives of W. R. Grace & Co. and confirmed the company's continuing interest in the Queensland project.

The present state of the world pulp market, more particularly in Japan, has however caused the company, not surprisingly, to reassess the economic and marketing aspects of the proposal.

We can do no more at this stage than await the results of this further appraisal.

48. DISPOSAL OF USED MERCURY BATTERIES

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

(1) Is he aware that the increasing sales of electronic watches and clocks has meant higher sales of mercury batteries?

(2) As it has been found in other countries that the disposal of used mercury batteries has become a problem in that they can become a dangerous and highly toxic polluting agent, has any consideration been given in Queensland to the introduction of legislation to control the collection and disposal of used mercury batteries?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) Batteries are of a mercury or silver/cadmium type and many of the mercury ones are for the smaller pieces of equipment—for example, hearing aids. I am advised that their disposal, if performed in the usual way, does not present a hazard.

#### 49. QUEENSLAND TEACHERS' DISPUTE

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

(1) Is he aware of the crushing rejection of the strike action of the Queensland Teachers' Union Executive by a 55 to 1 vote at a southside Brisbane teachers' meeting on 21 September, notwithstanding the personal involvement of Mr. Costello in the debate preceding the vote?

(2) Will he commend Mr. Lyle Schuntner, whose courageous dissociation from Mr. Costello and his cronies earlier this week gave the lead to these responsible teachers to launch their fight against the disastrous and undemocratic tactics of the union executive?

(3) Will he ensure that Queensland Teachers' Union members, such as Mr. Schuntner and those who overwhelmingly voted on 21 September for a return to sanity and concern for the public interest, are given all encouragement and assistance by this Government?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am not aware of the vote referred to by the honourable member, but I congratulate the teachers of the union branch concerned for their clear-sighted adherence to professional standards.

(2) I do commend Mr. Lyle Schuntner for having the courage of his convictions, but I deplore the necessity for a man of integrity to be forced to resign before he can speak freely on such important issues.

(3) Support will be given to teachers who refuse to follow Mr. Costello's foolish policies; but, because the union has ruthlessly enforced its undemocratic rules, accurate information regarding the results of ballots and the teachers concerned has been difficult to obtain.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### FIREARMS LEGISLATION

**Mr. BURNS:** I ask the Minister for Police: With reference to the tragedy in Brisbane yesterday, when will the Government fulfil promises made as far back as 1968 by the Premier, and repeated on numerous occasions by the Minister's predecessor, to review the laws governing firearms in this State? Can we expect legislation this session to tighten the laws governing the sale of firearms?

**Mr. NEWBERRY:** I have made two statements on the radio this morning on this matter and I should like to inform the honourable member that I will be looking closely at this Bill just as I did, as the honourable member knows, with the Port of Brisbane Authority Bill. I cannot say at the moment when I will be bringing it forward.

#### AUSTRALIAN SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY

**Mr. BURNS:** I ask the Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs: With regard to the Ministerial Statement made this morning in relation to the shipbuilding industry, what representations has the Minister made to the Liberal Minister for Defence to have the new Attack class patrol boats built by N.Q.E.A. in Cairns? What representations has he made to his Federal Liberal-National Country Party colleagues in relation to the I.A.C. report that he mentioned and their decision to have A.N.L. ships built in Japan? If the Minister has made any representations, what steps have been taken as a result of them?

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** With regard to the latter part of the question, I thought I made it quite clear that the deliberate actions of the former Minister for Transport, Mr. Jones—

**Mr. Burns:** Tell us what you have done. Don't start talking about the past. Talk of today.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

#### TEACHERS' UNION STRIKE TACTICS

**Mr. HALES:** I ask the Premier:

(1) Is he aware that at least five branches of the Queensland Teachers' Union have now passed censure motions on the union president, Mr. Costello, and his executive over the teachers' strike?

(2) Is he aware that these branches include Mr. Costello's own branch at Inala?

(3) Is he aware that several branches have demanded a State-wide ballot but that the union has refused to hold one because it knows it would be defeated?

(4) Is he aware that the executive has demanded that one of its members be present at every branch meeting, as a form of intimidation?

(5) Does he also know that teachers who want to vote against strikes are told to abstain on penalty of being fined by the union so that the final ballot then gives the appearance of a unanimous vote?

(6) Is the Premier aware of claims by the Queensland Teachers' Union that if the Board of Teacher Education finds the four dismissed teachers qualified and fit to teach, the Government must re-employ them?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Yes, I am aware of this, just as I was aware of the fact that the honourable member was going to ask the question, so I am ready for it.

I am aware that a number of branches of the Queensland Teachers' Union have not only refused to take part in Mr. Costello's strike but have censured the union executive. The executive is using its power to gag branches opposing its demands and to drag the teachers down from a profession to just another Trades Hall toady.

**Mr. Alison:** He should resign.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Yes, of course he should. He will probably be forced to resign ultimately.

For the information of the House these are the branches which have passed censure motions and this is how they voted:

South West Branch 41 to 12;

Inala Branch, 51 to 1;

The Redcliffe Branch carried the motion overwhelmingly;

Nerang Branch, 34 to 12.

The most revealing aspect of the matter is that the Inala Branch is Mr. Costello's own branch. The honourable member for Archerfield had better keep on the right side too, or he will be in trouble.

Several branches have demanded a State-wide ballot on the matter but the executive refuses to hold one because it knows it would lose by a huge margin.

Another aspect of the matter is the switch of tactics by the union—the fourth so far in this dispute—to try to make the Board of Teacher Education the alternative tribunal to the Public Service Board. For the information of honourable members—the Board of Teacher Education is concerned with the registration of teachers. It deals with qualifications and fitness to teach. However, the board is not an arbiter of employment, and no amount of dodging by the Teachers' Union executive will make it so. The Public Service Board rules on who will and who will not be employed after he has pleaded guilty to an indictable offence. Again I tell the Teachers' Union and its new-found friends in the Trades Hall and their servants opposite that the Queensland Government will not compromise on drugs in schools even if honourable members opposite will do so.

STATEMENT BY MR. J. HODGES, FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PETRIE

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I draw the attention of the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads to a statement made in the House of Representatives on Tuesday, 21 September, by the Federal member for Petrie, Mr. J. Hodges, that the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads has been bleating about a reduction in sewerage funds. I ask the Minister would he care to comment on Mr. Hodges' statement that State

Governments must be honest with their electors and not use the Commonwealth Government as a whipping-boy to cover up their lack of honesty? Could the Minister advise what was the cause of Mr. Hodges' outburst?

**Mr. HINZE:** I wish to refer to the reported statement by the Federal member for Petrie, Mr. J. Hodges, who is not to be confused with the Honourable Minister for Tourism, who is known to everybody in this House. It would be a good thing indeed for Australia if some of these knowledgeable people served a term or two in local government, and even possibly in State Government, before going down to Canberra to tell Australia how the State Governments and local authorities should spend their money. In the national capital Mr. Hodges said—

“The Queensland Minister for Local Government and Main Roads, Mr. Hinze, has been bleating about a reduction in sewerage funds. It is true that expenditure under the national sewerage program has been reduced. In Queensland the figure has dropped from \$14m to \$1.3m—a reduction of \$12.7m. But I want to point out that a good portion of the money that has gone to local authorities has been repayable at the bond rate of interest. What Mr. Hinze has omitted to tell the people is that the Grants Commission's allocation of funds to the States has increased by 75 per cent from \$80m to \$140m and that it is all untied money and all non-repayable money. Queensland's share has increased from \$13.8 to \$24.2m—a net gain of \$10.4m—none of which is to be repaid and none of which is directed to any specific purpose”.

The truth of the matter is simply this: the following table sets out lucidly the position of the proposed revenue-sharing grants allocated to Queensland in 1975-76:

TYPE OF GRANT	\$ MILLION 1975-76	\$ MILLION 1976-77
Tax Revenue Share .. ..	..	24.2
Commonwealth Grants Commission .. ..	13.80	..
Sewerage Backlog .. ..	13.20	1.0
Area Improvement .. ..	2.96	..
National Estate .. ..	.75	..
	30.71	25.2

As can be seen, Queensland will receive \$5,500,000 less in 1976-77 than we received in 1975-76 for grants to local bodies. Of the allocations for National Estate and Area Improvement Programmes both for 1974-75 and 1975-76, amounts of \$261,445 and \$718,938 remained unexpended at 30 June 1976. It is expected that these amounts will be reallocated in 1976-77 to enable the projects already approved to be completed. After offsetting these amounts from 1975-76 to 1976-77, there still remains a reduction in grants of \$4,500,000.

Mr. Hodges went on to say—

“The State governments must be honest with their electors and inform them of the priority given to projects and not use the Commonwealth Government as a whipping-boy to cover up for their lack of honesty. It is easy to determine one's priorities and then, when political pressure is applied as to why this project or that project is not being proceeded with, to claim that the Commonwealth Government will not provide adequate funds for it to be done. The day of reckoning has arrived for the States.”

Let honourable members get this into their heads. We are being told by some of our friends in Canberra, who have been tutored by third generation bureaucrats, that we have to pull up our socks. He continued—

“They must tell their electors the truth and accept any odium that flows from their doing so. On the one hand the States are claiming that they are not receiving sufficient funds from the Commonwealth and on the other hand some are abolishing or contemplating the abolition of certain State taxes. I am not going to debate—”

this is the one that stunned them, of course, because of the ability of Queensland to completely—

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

**Mr. HINZE:** I will give Hodges another serve next week.

## POLICE (PHOTOGRAPHS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. T. G. NEWBERY** (Mirani—Minister for Police) (12.13 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Police (Photographs) Act of 1966 in certain particulars.”

Representations have been made to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and me by the Queensland Law Society Incorporated to have the Police (Photographs) Act amended so that police photographs may be supplied for use in any bona fide proceedings commenced or contemplated in any court or tribunal.

The present legislation has the effect of restricting the supply of a photograph to a person who may require such to answer a charge of an offence or who may require a photograph for the purposes of a proceeding commenced in any court or tribunal. The Act, as it presently stands, requires that police photographs must have been made by, or on behalf of, a member of the Police Force in the execution of his duty and must

have been exhibited by, or on behalf of, the Crown or a member of the Police Force in the execution of his duty in a proceeding in any court or tribunal.

The present Act also provides that photographs can only be released for use in further proceedings after those proceedings have actually been commenced. This has the effect of preventing the release of a photograph which could be useful in determining if the commencement of further proceedings would be advisable or pointless.

Honourable members may be aware that provision exists in the Justices Act (section 154) for the supply to a person of depositions and documentary exhibits, other than photographs, tendered in proceedings before justices. In many cases the photographic evidence is most important in considering further litigation, but under the present legislation it cannot be supplied at the same time as the depositions and other documentary exhibits are supplied. The major purpose of the Bill now before the Committee will be to overcome this situation and, in so doing, it will also correct a possible deficiency in the Justices Act.

It seeks to widen the circumstances under which photographs can be obtained after being produced at a court hearing while ensuring that the photographs are made available only to people with a legitimate interest and for the purposes prescribed in the Bill.

The Bill makes provision for the supply of copies of a photograph exhibited in any court or tribunal by or on behalf of the Crown or a member of the Police Force on the payment of a fee fixed by the Commissioner of Police.

The amendments have been drafted after consultation with the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and include provisions to cover the representations submitted by the Queensland Law Society Incorporated.

The amendments are considered to be in the best interests of justice and should result in considerable time and cost savings, particularly for people contemplating the commencement of an action.

I commend the motion to the Committee.

**Mr. MELLOY** (Nudgee) (12.18 p.m.): At this stage the Opposition is not very clear on the objects of the Bill. I think the same can be said of the Minister; he did not appear to be quite sure of what he was talking about.

Generally speaking, the Acts governing the administration of the Police Force in Queensland are to a large extent antiquated. In the interests of law and order, it is about time that they were revised and overhauled.

As to the Act that is being amended by the Bill—recently in North Queensland a man was arrested on a charge of vagrancy, fingerprinted and photographed, and brought before the court, where he was found not

guilty. In a case such as that no record of his fingerprints and no photograph should be retained; but apparently his photograph was retained. In a later case involving him—I think he took action against another person for assault at the police station—counsel for the defence produced photographs of him taken on his arrest on the charge of vagrancy. As I say, those photographs should have been destroyed. He applied to have them destroyed and was told by the police that only a copy held at the police station could be destroyed as the other copies had been sent to the police authorities in Brisbane and Sydney. We cannot continue to administer the Police Force under such Acts. Not only this Act, but also any other Act associated with police administration needs the once-over.

As I said, I am not clear on what the Minister said. Because he got the pages of his speech mixed up we could hardly be expected to know what he meant. We will have to look closely at the provisions of the Bill when it comes before us.

At this stage the Opposition will not commit itself either way on the Bill. We will look at it closely to see what is being done and to ensure that it will benefit the people who may become victims of maladministration in the Police Force and who then are denied the right to have destroyed records that could be detrimental to them, particularly when they have been found not guilty.

I shall leave my comments at that because we want to examine the Bill and discuss it further at a later stage.

**Mr. LAMONT** (South Brisbane) (12.21 p.m.): It is with great pleasure that I rise to support the introduction of this Bill. Honourable members, and the Minister too, are well aware that I spent six years in a Police Force, as an inspector of police in fact, in another country. I am keenly interested in the standards of police performance. Having worked in a police force I know that decent people respect and support the police. Governments, too, must respect and support the police and what they stand for. For this support and respect, society has a right to expect certain things in return—a guarantee of certain standards, in fact.

When people see a police uniform they should feel reassured. They should not feel it necessary to shrink away, slow down, or alter their course of behaviour. They should not feel at all threatened by the uniform; it should be a uniform that reassures members of society.

When I think of police photography, which this Bill deals with, I automatically think in terms of evidence because police photography has a great deal to do with evidence. In eliciting evidence police are well aware that, at that stage, they are dealing basically

with innocent people. All accused people in our society are regarded as innocent until proven guilty.

**Mr. Houston:** Unless you are a member of the Labor Party.

**Mr. LAMONT:** That is the honourable member's view. I do not want to be diverted by red herrings. I intend to speak strictly to the Bill.

As you know, Mr. Hewitt, accused people are considered innocent until proven guilty. Therefore, theoretically, police are always dealing with innocent people. Accordingly certain rules of evidence have to be abided by. Unless police meet with resistance in carrying out their duties they should always respect the basic human dignity and rights of arrested suspects. Now, if police meet with resistance, I maintain, and I am sure you will support me, Mr. Hewitt, that they should use the minimum force necessary to effect their purpose of sustaining law and order. The minimum force necessary to sustain law and order should be the golden rule of the police code of behaviour.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member should understand that the provisions of this Bill are not wide enough to allow a full debate on the police. The debate must be related to police photography.

**Mr. LAMONT:** I agree, Mr. Hewitt. I submit that if a police photographer who wanted to photograph a suspect met with resistance he would use only the minimum force necessary to submit the suspect to photography.

Law and order rely very heavily on the police. It is not only the way police control others that is relevant but also the way they conduct themselves. This is very relevant to the question of law and order.

I have referred to the law of evidence, which is more closely related to photography. The law of evidence is very strict. It has been developed very carefully. Its purpose is to protect the basic rights of every individual. It is obvious from the reaction of society when there is any suggestion that the law of evidence is not being strictly observed and the conduct of those seeking evidence does not appear to comply with the expected code of behaviour that it is manifestly repugnant to the average person that people involved in this sort of activity do not follow the basic observance of the rights of individuals.

I am concerned that the police are not sold short. Any alleged or implied slur on police should always be met with resistance—resistance by Governments and resistance by those who support the police.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable gentleman is moving away from the provisions of the Bill before the Committee.

**Mr. LAMONT:** I will come back to the Bill, then, Mr. Hewitt, and I say that the nature of the resistance to any suggested slur on the police is related to the Bill in this way, Mr. Hewitt: the best resistance is truth and justice. These are the strongest weapons anyone can use against enemies within our society. Truth and justice, of course, are supported very much by the people who are affected by this Bill, because photography as evidence illuminates any issue that it is connected with.

**Mr. Aikens** interjected.

**Mr. LAMONT:** I would suggest to the honourable member for Townsville South that illumination is the best way to support the police, not the use of the paint brush; photography by all means—a bit of light on the subject, not the paint brush.

We have come a long way in Western civilisation and what separates us from barbarism, the slave society or the feudal system is not, as the member for Townsville South may be suggesting, the development of photography, which relates to this Bill, but rather the recognition that all individuals have certain rights in the face of the authority of society, and that the meanest member of our society has those rights. Police, in eliciting evidence when they are pursuing a case—whether it be by photography or any other means—should always remember that the meanest member of society has a right to certain basic justice. They must be meticulous, as an arm of justice, to ensure that justice is served and not denied.

It is not the subject of police attention but rather the object of police attention which is the important issue at all times. And the object of police attention is to defend the principles of the liberal democratic society in which we live. As I say, even the meanest member of society is entitled to that. Whether police are dealing with people who opt for other life-styles or whether they are dealing with Aborigines, or women or any other minority group, they should treat them all equally. I reiterate that it is not the subject of an investigation but the object of an investigation that is of primary concern and the object is the defence of the standards, the rights of individuals and the principles of our liberal democratic society. When we get that thoroughly into our heads, we will have the faith in the Police Force that we must have if we are to support it without reservation or fear.

**Mr. CASEY (Mackay)** (12.28 a.m.): Having just listened to the second lecture in the first course of liberalism and law and order, I would now like to make some comments on the Bill. From the Minister's introductory comments, the Bill seems to me to be a very sound one indeed, particularly as it relates to the section of the Act applying to the availability of photographs of matters in which the police are involved. I would like

to see that principle extended further so that it encompasses other information required as evidence.

Last week I asked a question of the Minister on this very subject. I directed it particularly to traffic accidents. I was very concerned at the answer I was then given, and no doubt the Minister, too, was concerned. Photographs and other information relating to accidents are available to persons who require them, as the Minister said in his introductory remarks, on the payment of a fee. However, I broadened the scope of the question by asking him if photographs and other information would be available where State Government vehicles were involved. The answer was "Yes." However, in reply to the part of my question relating to accidents involving police vehicles, the Minister said, "No." His excuse was protection of the insurer, because the disclosure of the information would negate the insurance policy held by the Police Department.

I point out that the insurer used by Government departments is exactly the same as that used by the Police Department—the State Government Insurance Office—and whether a person is involved in an accident with a Government vehicle or with a police vehicle, he or his solicitor should be able to use the same method of approach to obtain information from the police station and to look at the photographs and other evidence as he is entitled to, and as the Minister said he could if a Government vehicle is involved.

Unfortunately this indicates only one thing in the public eye—one rule for the police and another rule for the public. This proposal today is a start in clarifying the situation a little; it brings things back to level. So that in such circumstances, whether the offender is a policeman or a member of the public, he is entitled to the same rights in obtaining evidence from the police station to proceed with a case. I believe that the old system was completely wrong.

This matter was brought to my attention by a constituent of mine who was involved in a traffic accident with a police vehicle in Townsville. The information and evidence that he required in order to proceed against the policeman's insurer—the S.G.I.O.—was not made available to him through solicitors in Townsville. As a result of my inquiry through the Minister's office and a follow-up question in Parliament to discover the technical reasons behind it, I learned that this type of information was just not being made available at all. It is completely wrong and unjust. Certainly it is not good for police public relations in the community.

I hope that the provision being introduced by the Minister will be extended to all other information. It is hardly fair that the Police (Photographs) Act will now permit a person involved in an accident with a police vehicle to go to a police station and, on payment of a fee, obtain photographs of the accident if,

on the other hand, he cannot obtain all the other information that he requires, such as the names of the owner, the driver, the passengers, any pedestrians involved and any witnesses. All of that information should now be made available in such circumstances. After all, we must accept that in some cases policemen are not the best drivers in the world. The Minister would be aware of accidents in which they have been involved.

Last year I was approached by a woman who had suffered a serious whiplash injury when a police vehicle ran into the back of her car. The police driver was completely at fault. She had the greatest difficulty in trying to get the matter sorted out so that she could receive compensation for both her injury and the damage to her motor vehicle.

The clearing up of this particular point is a very good move; I go along with it wholeheartedly and suggest that the Minister consider extending this provision so that other evidence concerning motor vehicle accidents in which members of the Police Force are involved will be made available at police stations.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (12.34 p.m.): I have a few questions to ask on certain matters. I hope the Minister will elaborate on them and elucidate them in his reply. First of all I think he told us that this proposal comes before the Committee following a recommendation from the Law Reform Commission. Let me say quite frankly and without reservation that anything that comes forward from the Law Reform Commission immediately evokes my deep distrust and suspicion. Experience has taught me that the only people whom the Law Reform Commission is concerned about are criminals and the barristers and lawyers who represent them. I have yet to learn that the Law Reform Commission has ever been concerned with the rights of the ordinary, average, decent citizen who becomes the victim of a criminal or suffers the consequences of a criminal act.

I understood the Minister to say—and I hope he will correct me if I misunderstood him—that the only photographs that can be produced in court as evidence are those taken by police officers or by people commissioned by police officers to take them. If that is so, I want to know if it will apply to all photographs submitted, even those submitted by the defence. Usually they are produced by an oleaginous barrister who is defending a particularly bad type of criminal.

I can remember not so long ago a man being charged in the Northern Supreme Court with a very serious offence against a young girl. Criminals of that type, of course, get very special treatment from the Supreme Court. The defending barrister in that case produced a photograph of the accused with his wife and three young children and then went on to extol his virtues as a husband and father. This criminal did not have any

children at all; he borrowed them to have the photograph taken. He was like the member of the A.L.P. who, as I have said before in this Chamber, borrowed three of his neighbour's children and had his photograph taken with them to parade himself during his first election campaign as a family man.

Will that sort of thing be allowed? Will defending barristers and solicitors be allowed to produce any photographs in court? I know that the police must take their own photographs or have them taken by reputable people. Does that rule apply to defending counsel? Can they produce any photograph at all and say, "This photograph buttresses the case that I am making for the accused"? It is not so long ago (you may remember it, Mr. Hewitt, because you are a man of most retentive memory) that a man was charged with the murder of an Afghan in North-west Queensland. Believe it or not, the photograph of the body produced in court by the defending counsel was a photograph of a Chinese! He was photographed in the position in which the deceased was found and that photograph was produced in an attempt to get the killer of the Afghan off the hook. Is that sort of thing going to continue?

In the light of the various representations and recommendations made by the Law Reform Commission, I marvel that very many police remain in the job. Today's "Telegraph" presents a case in point. This may be a slight digression, Mr. Hewitt, but I think it is germane to the subject under discussion. A front-page article in the "Telegraph" refers to this "lovely" man who built model aeroplanes—and slaughtered two young women and wounded others in Fortitude Valley yesterday. Would the same blurb be published by someone who knew him to be a monster, a killer and a despicable creature? I am not saying that that is what he is; but, if that were the position, would that be published on the front page of a newspaper? If this article is not contempt of court, I do not know what is. I do not know as much about this subject as you, Mr. Hewitt, because you have a much better knowledge of the law than I have, but if that is not blatant contempt of court, I do not know what contempt of court is.

I want to know from the Minister whether the ban or limitation on the use of photographs applies to photostat copies of documents such as affidavits and birth certificates. I know that false photographs of birth certificates have been produced in courts and accepted as evidence by judges and counsel. I want to know how far this restriction goes. I may be old fashioned and, as the late Nugget Jesson called me, a "clinic." I may be a cynic, but when I am dealing with legislation in this Assembly I think only from the viewpoint of the decent, clean, responsible citizen. I want to ensure as far as I can that any legislation passing through this Chamber gives the ordinary, decent citizen a fair crack of the whip. I want to

ensure that it does not confine a fair crack of the whip to the criminal element and those who batten, fatten, grow wealthy and gain knightships as the result of their representation of criminals.

I should like greater elaboration on the Bill from the Minister. Will it apply to all photographs submitted in court as evidence? I have no doubt that, when the case arising from yesterday's tragedy is heard, photographs will be produced of this poor man making model aeroplanes. But will photographs be submitted of him when doing other things that he probably used to do? That is what I want cleared up. I want the same square go for all who go to court. I do not want the law to be loaded in favour of criminals and those who make money out of them. If this Bill goes anywhere towards that end, I will be quite happy to give it my qualified and dignified support.

**Mr. TENNI** (Barron River) (12.40 p.m.): I rise to support the Bill and I congratulate the Minister for introducing it. This Bill will allow photographs to be supplied for use in proceedings commenced or contemplated in any court or tribunal. This virtually means that a person answering a charge may obtain a photograph to be produced in any proceedings. I wonder if photographs of the event which took place in North Queensland two or three weeks ago are available. Perhaps in his reply the Minister could indicate whether photographs were taken of those events, particularly as we saw a certain television programme deliberately rubbish the Police Force, especially the police in my electorate and in other electorates in North Queensland.

I feel that in cases of accident, murder, mine disasters and similar cases photographs are very important. Photographs should be made available to persons who are required to appear in cases following such events.

**Mr. Aikens:** Were any photographs taken in the case of the lout who ran down and killed that policeman in the North and got off with a lousy five years?

**Mr. TENNI:** I think photographs were taken in that case. I still believe it was scandalous that that person was sentenced to only five years' imprisonment; he should have been sentenced to life imprisonment. I think he should have been put in front of a four-wheel-drive vehicle and run over, because the policeman he murdered on the road was a champion of the Far North and was respected by all. I think it is a disgusting state of affairs when a hoodlum like that is sentenced to a lousy five years' imprisonment.

**Mr. Aikens:** Kneipp let him off with five years.

**Mr. TENNI:** That's right, and that is not the first time that Mr. Justice Kneipp has done that. I sometimes wonder why a policeman performs his duties in the way that he

does when a man who deliberately murders an officer carrying out his duty is sentenced to a lousy five years' imprisonment. This is the sort of thing that concerns me, and certainly concerns the honourable member for Townsville South. I think that, with the easier availability of photographs, this state of affairs will not be allowed to continue indefinitely.

Another thing which worries me is that in areas such as mine we find police stations that are so small that sometimes the toilet in the back yard is bigger than the work area. I wonder where we are going to put all these cameras and other photographic equipment. I know that the Minister will liaise with his colleague the Minister for Works and Housing on this matter, particularly as he intends visiting some of the police stations in my electorate over the next couple of weeks. After his visit, perhaps better accommodation will be provided for the men who uphold the law in this State. They need decent filing systems for photographs and ample storage areas for their cameras and photograph equipment so that they can be looked after. These men need a decent area in which to work. I consider that these amendments are in the main in the best interests of justice and will bring a tremendous saving in costs to the people of this State.

**Hon. T. G. NEWBERY** (Mirani—Minister for Police) (12.44 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable members for Nudgee, South Brisbane, Townsville South, Mackay and Barron River for their contributions to the debate. I have taken note of their queries and I can assure them that I will give a full and comprehensive reply during the debate on the second reading.

Motion (Mr. Newbery) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

### SAWMILLS LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### INITIATION

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Sawmills Licensing Act 1936-1974 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.



## INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (12.48 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Sawmills Licensing Act 1936-1974 in certain particulars.”

In introducing this Bill I would remind honourable members that the Sawmills Licensing Act was assented to in 1936. The purpose of the Act was to provide legislative authority to exercise some control over sawmilling capacity in relation to available log supplies. In the 40 years since it was enacted, the Sawmills Licensing Act has been instrumental in giving a considerable measure of stability to the industry which it was designed to assist.

There is nothing complex about the provisions of this proposed Bill. Its purpose is simply to make statutory provision to increase, by doubling, the maximum penalties for all offences against the Sawmills Licensing Act to bring them into line with present-day money values. No minimum penalties have been proposed and no new principle is contained in the amendment.

With the exception of two penalties prescribed for minor offences, the current level of fines has applied since 1965. Legislation enacted that year to amend the Sawmills Licensing Act for the first time since its inception 29 years earlier, included provision to increase the fines for major offences and to prescribe further penalties for which no statutory provision then existed. The general penalty of £50 or its equivalent of \$100, and the fine of a like sum for failure to produce on demand to a forest officer a sawmill licence or a certificate of exemption were not increased in 1965. These two fines have remained unaltered for 40 years. There is therefore a strong case to raise the existing levels of fines for all offences against this Act as it is 11 years since there was a revision.

Honourable members will appreciate that in times of rapid inflation, such as those which we have been experiencing in recent years, it is necessary to look realistically at the fines and penalties which may be invoked by the courts and to revise when necessary to make them more appropriate to today's circumstances.

I would now like to deal briefly with the provisions of this Sawmills Licensing Act Amendment Bill. The existing provisions specify maximum penalties of £1,000 in the case of a company and £250 in any other case for a person found guilty of erecting and operating a sawmill without a licence. In addition, a daily penalty not exceeding £250 in the case of a company and £25 in any other case may be imposed for a continuing offence. Under this Bill, these penalties will double to their decimal currency

equivalents of \$4,000, \$1,000, \$1,000 and \$100 respectively. It is felt that these new levels of fines will highlight to magistrates the importance of this offence.

Summary proceedings instituted in recent years against offenders who have been charged with operating unlicensed sawmills in contravention of section 3 of the Sawmills Licensing Act have resulted in very low penalties being imposed by the courts. Fines handed down have been of the order of \$50 to \$75, which equate roughly with the combined application and renewal fees which the applicant for a sawmill licence with an average capacity would be required to pay under normal circumstances. It is essential that the penalties for this type of offence be sufficiently high to act as an effective deterrent to the would-be offender.

The proposed Bill seeks to amend section 10 by increasing the maximum fines for offences involving the utilisation of a sawmill on an unauthorised site or the operation of a sawmill in excess of its maximum productive capacity. Penalties under this section will rise to \$2,000 for an offence by a company and to \$400 in any other case. The daily penalties which may be imposed for continuing to utilise a sawmill on an unauthorised site after notice has been given of the offence, or after a conviction or order by a court, will be \$400 in the case of a company and \$100 in any other case.

Section 15 of the Act will be amended by increasing the maximum fines for a breach of the restrictions applying to operation of an exempted sawmill. Penalties under this section will be \$2,000 and a daily penalty of \$400 in respect of an offence by a company, and \$400 with a daily penalty of \$80 in any other case. Provision has also been included to increase to \$200 the maximum fine for the following offences:—

Operating a sawmill contrary to the terms and conditions attached to the sawmill's licence;

Failure to produce on demand to a forest officer a sawmill licence or a certificate of exemption;

Failure to furnish prescribed sawmill returns;

Utilising an exempted sawmill contrary to the terms and conditions attached to the certificate; and

Failure to furnish required information or furnishing false or misleading information.

The Bill also provides to increase the “general penalty” to \$200 for offences against provisions where no other penalty is provided and raises to \$400 the maximum penalty which may be prescribed for offences against the regulations.

I think I have covered all the aspects of this legislation which need to be explained. The increases proposed are considered justified in the light of today's money values and I consider the maximum limits adequate to

achieve their purpose of acting as effective deterrents. It is emphasised, of course, that these are all maximum penalties. The actual penalties imposed, naturally, would still be at the discretion of the courts, having due regard to the circumstances of each particular case. Nevertheless, the proposed lift in the existing fines will allow the courts scope to impose harsher penalties than is now possible for the more serious offences.

I commend the Bill for favourable consideration.

**Mr. JENSEN (Bundaberg)** (12.54 p.m.): The amendments outlined by the Minister provide mainly for an increase in penalties. The Minister has given as the main reason for the increase the present rate of inflation. I do not know that penalties should be increased merely because of inflation. Penalties are imposed for the purpose of punishing offenders and of deterring people from committing offences, in this instance from operating unlicensed sawmills.

The Minister has said that some of the fines have not been altered for 40 years. It seems strange that they are being altered now. I do not know whether this is because there is some black-marketing in the timber industry. I do know, however, that the importation of timber has forced many sawmills to close down. Unless there is black-marketing in timber or unauthorised milling to beat the increased prices, I do not see why we should be increasing the fines. The Minister said—

“There is therefore a strong case to raise the existing levels of fines for all offences against this Act as it is 11 years since there has been a revision.”

It is surprising that 11 years should elapse before we increase fines to keep them abreast of inflation. At a later stage the Minister said, “. . . new levels of fines will highlight to magistrates the importance of this offence.” We know the importance of the offence, but when the Minister does not set a minimum fine it is apparent that he does not attach much importance to it. The Minister told us that fines handed down by magistrates have been of the order of \$50 to \$75, which is roughly equivalent to the cost of renewing a licence. That is what made him realise that he had to do something drastic such as doubling the penalties. But he has not fixed a minimum penalty. If this offence is so important, why not make the minimum penalty half the maximum fine?

The maximum fine to be imposed on a sawmill operating in excess of its maximum productive capacity is to be increased. Apparently the objective is the maintenance of safety in mills. I see no reason to impose a fine on this basis unless the breach of safety regulations could result in accidents involving mill workers. I cannot understand a fine being imposed unless some danger arises in operating a mill beyond its safe capacity.

At times fines must be increased, but are there enough inspectors to police the Act? It is no good doubling fines without good reason, or if the necessary inspectors are not available.

Much concern has been expressed in the industry about retrenchments in both hardwood and softwood sawmills. In this context I repeat that the Minister, throughout his introductory speech, referred only to increased penalties. The best method of control is constant supervision rather than penalties. I do not know if the present supervision is adequate. It is all very well to place greater penalties and higher fines in the Statute Book, but it is another thing to enforce them. How vigilantly is the Act being policed?

It is surprising that the Minister should outline increased penalties without giving any specific reason other than keeping pace with inflation. I do not think we should increase penalties on that basis alone. I am concerned about the sawmilling and plywood industries in Queensland. Two big plywood mills in Brisbane have closed down. Bretts, which was the largest, was one of them. The plywood mills got into trouble after the lowering of import tariffs, which is of concern to most of our industries. We are pricing ourselves out of both domestic and overseas markets through higher wages and lower tariffs. The only way to save the sawmilling industry is to increase tariffs.

Throughout Queensland there is much concern in this industry. Many employees have been sacked from the two big mills in Maryborough. The conservationists want to move in on Fraser Island, make it a national park and prevent the cutting of timber. If we listened to the conservationists, we would not cut any timber. They do not want chipwood factories, and they do not want timber to be cut here and there. Sawmilling has been a sound industry in Queensland but, like many other industries such as the dairy industry, it is collapsing.

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

**Mr. JENSEN:** Before the luncheon recess I was speaking about the concern of sawmills in Queensland. I think the Minister answered a question this morning about the Queensland Housing Commission. If I heard him correctly, he said that Queensland timbers are used in all Housing Commission homes. I do not know if I heard it correctly or not, but I know that there is concern in the community. This Government advocates “Buy Queensland Made”. I have been asked in my electorate whether the Queensland Housing Commission and the Works Department stipulate Queensland-made goods in all their contracts. I would like to be assured of that. It is of interest to many people whether the Government is using cheap imported timbers.

**Mr. Miller:** You are entitled to know that, too.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Of course I am. The Minister may answer that later on. As we advocate "Buy Queensland Made", we should ensure that Queensland timbers are used in our housing.

I have here a few photostat copies of newspaper cuttings. One article is headed "Imports close plywood plant". These are imports from overseas countries. I know that there is concern in the plywood industry in North Queensland. There is concern in my own area about sawmilling. That is inevitable when cheap imports are being brought in. However, I do not say that we have to ban all imports. The countries from which we are importing cheap goods are buying from us. There has to be reciprocal trade.

We are starting to price ourselves out of the export market—in most cases in manufacturing. We are nearly pricing ourselves out of the primary industry and mining markets. If we do not soon wake up, in the next five or 10 years this country will be in a serious plight. It is heading for disaster now, and it is about time people realised that. If the price of sugar drops below £stg100 per tonne, that industry will be in serious trouble, especially if the Japanese once again place restrictions on imports. However, I will not get onto that. I will not mention all the other industries that are in a serious plight. I want to confine my remarks to the sawmilling industry, which is in serious difficulties today. I have already said that the beef industry is in serious trouble. And so is the dairy industry. The sugar industry, too, could also descend to that stage.

**Mr. Tenni:** What about the tobacco industry?

**Mr. JENSEN:** The tobacco industry is doing all right at the moment, but the Governments are trying to cripple it. They have stopped smoking on buses now.

**Mr. Frawley:** And it should be stopped, too.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Chairman is not smoking, but he is smouldering a little about relevance.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I am sorry, Mr. Hewitt. I am not going to talk about the tobacco industry, but it has produced a lot of revenue for the Government; let us not forget that. Taxes would be double if it were not for the tobacco sales and beer sales.

I was talking about the imports of plywood and other timbers. New Zealand can export timber to this country cheaper than we can buy the local product. That country is entitled to export some of its timber to this country. We have reciprocal trade with New Zealand. We are losing our manufacturing markets there because Japan is undercutting us in every field. I do not want to deal at this stage with how seriously this country's industries will be affected in

the next five to 10 years, but I do say that the timber industry needs a little protection. We know that when tariffs were lowered half of our furniture factories closed down. That industry found itself in serious difficulties when furniture could be imported cheaper than we could buy the timber, let alone make the furniture out of it. This is going on and according to the newspapers "Plywood men face the sack." I have a cutting here which is headed, "Imports close plywood plant." The article says that the "70 remaining workers" will be dismissed at Bretts. In all of these cuttings there is only one good point—a \$2,000,000 softwood mill is to be opened in Caboolture. At least my faith is restored somewhat when I see that a new mill is being opened somewhere.

In Bundaberg, Petersen Brothers have built a modern sawmill, but it has had to close its country sawmills. As the smaller sawmills were uneconomic, two or three of them were closed down. This is happening because of our wage structure. The latest fail-safe system has been installed, and as a result, fewer employees and fewer overseers are required because everything is controlled electrically by button. The number of workers employed in these new sawmills has been reduced considerably.

Although the penalties are increased by this legislation, it does not do anything for the sawmilling industry, which in Australia is in a serious position. Honourable members from the northern areas should tell us about how the plywood industry there has been undercut.

**Mr. Jones:** A lot of them have gone bust.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I believe that. According to one of these cuttings, Bretts, which was one of the biggest mills in Queensland, has closed down its plywood factory. The people in the North are suffering in the same way.

It is our job to look into the industry generally. If we price ourselves out of business, it is our fault. If that happens, in five or 10 years' time, people will realise that we do not live on the production of refrigerators and stoves. This country will price itself out of the markets. That is what is happening in this industry. I do not want to start a political harangue in this Parliament, but somebody has to do it sooner or later.

**Mr. Jones:** The sawmilling industry has a very higher worker or labour content.

**Mr. JENSEN:** It has, but the labour content has been cut to pieces in the newer sawmills because they have installed fail-safe systems. Mechanisation in the sawmilling industry is as great as in many other industries and as a result the labour content has been cut.

I imagine that the honourable member for Isis will tell us shortly how many men have been paid off in the Maryborough sawmills. He should know.

**Mr. Powell:** It is not in my electorate.

**Mr. JENSEN:** He should know something about it. I am concerned about the number of people who, I hear, have been paid off at the two mills in Maryborough owing to the import of timber. Although those mills are doing quite well at the moment, they are concerned about their future.

The price of timber has risen as much as that of any other commodity. Over the past few years it has increased out of all proportion. I do not know the reason and I should like the Minister to tell me whether it is the result of increased wages or outside influences. Timber today is overpriced considerably.

**Mr. Jones:** A big factor is high unemployment in those areas.

**Mr. JENSEN:** There is high unemployment right throughout Queensland. Plywood factories are closing down and people in the North are very concerned about the industry. I am concerned about the state of the industry in my own area and in the Wide Bay area.

The Minister should look at the situation and see if he can do something about the tariff. We do not want full protection, but there should be some protection. We cannot afford to say that we will not accept imports from other countries, but some of the imports should be stopped if they are affecting employment.

**Mr. POWELL (Isis) (2.24 p.m.):** I support the Minister in the introduction of this measure. I have a few comments to make on the industry in general.

I note with interest that the honourable member for Bundaberg shows concern for the people in the Wide Bay area who have been put off as a result of changes in the sawmilling industry. I am very pleased that he is concerned about them and I hope the members of the party to which he currently belongs will be similarly concerned. It seems that some of them are not so worried. The honourable member blamed the wage structure in this country for the retrenching of staff by sawmills and probably he is quite correct.

*Pinus radiata* and oregon pine are being imported from New Zealand and these imports are placing a great strain on our own sawmillers, especially those in the central and northern parts of Queensland. This timber can be imported and sold in Queensland cheaper than local timbers because of the wage structure in Australia, including Queensland.

It is interesting to note that, while the Bill increases penalties on sawmillers under the licensing system, timber yards can import timber from New Zealand and resell it without being required to have licences. The sawmiller, who is in the business of obtaining the raw material and supplying it as a finished product, has to pay a licence fee

and is penalised if he does not comply with the regulations. That is, of course, perfectly reasonable, but I am wondering whether the Government should not be looking very carefully at timber yards. I understand that those in Brisbane are importing a great quantity of timber and are undercutting our own sawmillers in sending it all over the State. There are two large sawmills in Bundaberg, two large ones in Maryborough and a few small ones in Isis and surrounding areas and they are having extreme difficulty in maintaining their work-forces in the face of competition from imported timber.

The Forestry Department is to be commended on its stewardship of the State's forests. The honourable member for Bundaberg spoke about Fraser Island and he castigated conservationists because they are concerned about timber on that island. He should know that in its attitude to forests on Fraser Island and in the Isis and Wide Bay areas, the Forestry Department is probably one of the greatest conservationists in the State. It is maintaining forests that will be of use in the future. While there are some problems in obtaining adequate supplies of timber at the present time, that situation will be relieved in the future. Large plantations of *Pinus elliottii* and *Pinus caribaea* that have been planted and are now growing in the area between the Elliott River and Tin Can Bay should stand the State in good stead in the future.

I think it is a shame that many small millers are being forced out of business. Again, the reason for this is the present wage structure. Where there were six, seven or even nine reasonably small but viable mills employing men in small country towns away from the major areas of population, there are now none. The only surviving mills are the large ones in Bundaberg and Maryborough, with smaller ones at Hervey Bay and Brooweena. It is a great pity to see this trend. If it continues because timber is imported, the Government must look at the situation. In the first place it must look after local industries and in the second place it must look after consumers. Perhaps it is not possible to have it both ways. I hope that the Minister, in his second-reading speech at least, will spend some time on this subject.

The problem is to obtain timber at an economic price for the construction of houses. If we have to import timber to do that, of course we have to do it, but in so doing we must recognise that we are damaging the Australian industry, particularly the Queensland industry.

I understand that the Department of Forestry has areas from which different mills can buy timber. The mills in the Bundaberg area have a defined forestry area from which they can get timber, the mills in the Maryborough area similarly, and so on. One complaint that has been made to me is that the mills in the Bundaberg area in particular have too small a quota from the Forestry Department, and perhaps this

should be closely looked at. The area to which their quota applies is one from which it is almost impossible to get good timber, and when the mills in the area have requested permission to cut timber from another area this permission has been refused, yet I understand the Maryborough mills have been able to cut timber outside their area, which is most convenient. For example, one sawmill in Bundaberg has a quota of 6 000 cu m whereas the mills in the Mundubbera-Monto area have a quota of 8 000 cu m. If that difference in the quota is designed to sustain the mills in the Mundubbera-Monto area, I would be quite in favour of it, but if it is for some other reason, I would like to know what it is, because surely the mills in Bundaberg close to the consumer should have an adequate opportunity to compete. I understand that these quotas are applied mainly to Forestry Department timber rather than to timber obtained from other sources.

Another complaint has been made to me about the quality of timber that the Forestry Department is offering to the mills. I am told that it is very poor. The timber that is offered today would have been regarded as rubbish and bulldozed out of the way a few years ago. This probably gets back to the stewardship of the Forestry Department. It has to try to use up what it can to clear the forests. It is leaving the best trees behind as seed trees, which is surely a commendable attitude, but it is causing problems for the mills which depend upon the Forestry Department for hardwood supplies. If the mills cannot get an adequate supply of decent hardwood logs, surely the price of timber will rise again and surely this will encourage the further importation of timber. There is a strong possibility that in his reply the Minister will tell me that this action is being taken so that in 10 or 15 years time our forests do not end up in the depleted state in which we have seen so many forests in the past; but I would like to be assured that that is so and that some mills are not arbitrarily being given bad timber or rubbish timber, to coin a phrase, while mills in other areas are able to get good logs.

The competition in the saw-milling industry today is extremely keen, partly because some operators are more efficient than others but also because of the importation of timber. While we are importing such large quantities of timber from New Zealand and other countries surely we must look carefully at our own industry and at the way in which we are using the forests.

I am interested to note that the auction system of selling forestry timber has been abandoned in favour of a quota system. I believe this is commendable, but I would hope that in levying the quotas the Forestry Department takes into account the way in which the timber is milled, the people who are milling it and the efficiency of the milling operation. As my colleague from Bundaberg said, a new mill has been built in

Bundaberg by Petersen Bros. Pty Ltd. It is very modern and gets the utmost out of every log. Hyne and Son Pty. Ltd. in Maryborough have a very modern mill which also treats just about every part of the tree. I do not think they have a use for the leaves yet, but no doubt they will find one if they keep working on it. Another two mills which spring to mind are Burnett Sawmill Industries and Wilson Hart and Company Ltd. in Maryborough. They are also quite efficient mills. Probably the smaller mills are being closed down because the bigger ones are able to do work more efficiently.

The honourable member for Bundaberg had some harsh words to say about the doubling of penalties. He suggested that we should be employing more inspectors rather than doubling penalties but I could not possibly agree with that proposal.

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** He is putting the cart before the horse.

**Mr. POWELL:** I think so. I don't think we want inspectors wandering around the forests all the time to make sure that people have their licences straight. If we do not double the penalties provided in many of the State's laws, people will just thumb their noses at the legislation. Laws are enacted to make people do certain things, and penalties are provided to be imposed on those who break those laws. If inadequate penalties are provided, people will break the law because it pays them to. That is quite evident in the fishing industry and some other industries. It is important that we double the penalties by this Bill.

**Mr. Jensen:** The penalties have not been increased for 40 years. They should be increased 10 times, because inflation is up 10 times. What is being done is ridiculous.

**Mr. POWELL:** If the penalties have not been increased for 40 years, that is all the more reason why they should now be increased. If the honourable member thinks they should be increased 10 times, well, that is his argument. The Minister has suggested doubling them, and that is fair enough.

The honourable member said that there should be a minimum penalty. I could not possibly agree with that. Surely we should be imposing maximum penalties so that the magistrate who presides over a court, a man trained in the law, can decide on the appropriate penalty after taking into consideration the merits and ramifications of each case.

I think I have covered most of the ground I wish to. I hope that the Minister will look seriously at the effect the importation of timber is having on sawmills. The wage structure poses a serious problem, but we also have problems with importation, quotas and the other things I have mentioned.

**Mr. MOORE** (Windsor) (2.38 p.m.): I realise that this Bill to amend the Sawmills Licensing Act is merely machinery legislation to double penalties, but I take the opportunity to say a few words on philosophical grounds. The original Act was introduced in 1936 by the Labor Government. It is a piece of legislation that we should have tossed out when we took over the reins of Government. But like the Fraser Government this State Government maintains, amends and makes worse whatever Labor introduced.

What I do not like is this constant control by way of licensing in respect of every single act a person wishes to perform. If a saw-bench is anchored down with posts in the ground, it has to be licensed. The same does not apply to a mobile saw-bench. A person may use a mobile saw to cut sleepers or timber for his own use, and even though there is the risk of slicing his leg off, no licence is required. If a farmer wishes to put half a dozen posts in the ground and set up a saw-bench with a few rollers so that logs can be rolled onto the bench to be milled for his own purposes, he is not allowed to do it without first obtaining a licence. And even if he has a licence, he cannot sell the timber. Today more and more timber used for fence posts is put through the saw. In my day we used a maul and wedges after picking out a good tree. From the grain of the bark it would be fairly obvious whether the tree would provide straight-grained timber that would readily split into posts. It would be a gut-busting job to cut fence posts out of a lot of the timber that remains nowadays on properties. Star-shaped steel fence posts are used to a great extent. They are not put as close together as timber posts in days gone by, and droppers and that type of thing are used. However, if a farmer decides to cut timber for fence posts, he can mill the curly grained piece of timber and also the section with a few branches in it, which ordinarily could not be split in a lifetime. He is able to use as much as one-third more of the tree.

If a farmer wishes to sell some sawn fence posts to his neighbour, he is not able to do so unless he has a licence. There is something wrong with a Government that tells a man who has some initiative, enterprise or get-up-and-go that he cannot do what he wishes to do. We say to such a man, "No, you can't cut your stringy-bark or box into scantlings and sell them. You can get a permit to do it on your own property for your own use, but you cannot put any of that timber on the market." There is something wrong with that, particularly as timber prices these days are exorbitant. A man can carry home on his back \$100 worth of pine. People are being prevented from doing their own thing.

I realise that myself, and the Minister alone is not to blame for this. All my colleagues, both in the Ministry and on the back-benches,

are equally responsible. It is time that someone did more than merely talk about the philosophy of free enterprise that we claim to be ours. It is time that someone was allowed to do whatever he decides to do without having to hold a licence.

It can be said that the department has been reasonably generous in the imposition of penalties. No doubt it closes its eyes to the operations of many illegal saw-benches and sawmills. Furthermore, it grants exemptions. Of course, an exemption can be obtained only by someone who is in the know and has a friend in court. Poor old John Citizen who buys a saw and spindle and decides to erect his own saw-bench is in trouble if an inspector comes along. He has no friend in court and therefore cannot be given an exemption.

I am informed that the royalties paid on slash pine vary from \$2 per 100 super ft. to \$7 per 100 super ft., depending on the use to which the timber will be put. Timber that is used for pulping attracts the royalty of \$2, whereas a 25 or 27-year-old millable log of high grade slash pine attracts the higher royalty. Slash pine is a knotty pine, quite unlike Queensland hoop and bunya pine. Timber is no longer sold by mills at so much per hundred superficial ft.; it is now sold at so much per hundred metres lineal and perhaps by cubic metres.

It is obvious that something is wrong when the price of pine ranges from \$37 to \$40 a hundred and the royalty is only \$7 a hundred. The disparity in price is even more obvious with pine than with hardwood, which gives a cut of about 60 per cent as against 80 per cent for pine. The heart of the pine tree is cut—it is all millable timber—whereas a certain amount of pipe, heart and doziness is common in hardwood, which does not cut nearly as well.

If we are to do anything about lowering the price of pine and putting more timber on the market, property owners with a stand of timber who are prepared to cut it and put it through a mill should be allowed to do so. But the millers will not handle it. They say that the logs are unsuitable, that there are not enough of them, that the size is wrong, or that the quality is poor. When timber can be put to good use, there is no reason in the wide world why someone should not establish a mill on his property to mill the timber and put it on the market.

I am not sure that we should be doubling penalties. I believe that the United Nations Charter, of which we are a signatory, confers a right of freedom to work. It is a disgrace when freedom to work is limited by penalties.

**Mr. JONES** (Cairns) (2.48 p.m.): I was prompted to interject when the honourable member for Bundaberg was speaking to point out that not only some but many North Queensland sawmills had gone bust because of the generous tariff rates on imported plywoods, particularly those coming from Japan

and Taiwan. I have a very close knowledge of the problems that confronted the timber industry in the years after tariffs were lowered. I am well acquainted with the actions of the North Queensland Sawmillers' Association and the many trips made by its representatives to Canberra in an effort to convince Governments that the industry was essential in Far North Queensland.

I brought to the attention of the honourable member for Bundaberg the fact that the sawmilling industry has a high labour content; it could be called a labour-intensive industry. In my electorate the industry employed quite a number of people. When timber mills were closed there and elsewhere in Far North Queensland, the unemployment rate became high, with many workers in the area registered for employment on the Tableland and adjacent areas where logging and milling was carried on. Many people who were involved in those operations have left the areas, although many remain in the towns. At the same time, many towns were sorely affected when the local timber industry closed down. I can recall that at that time the word went out that sawmills had to modernise and amalgamate to solve their problems. If the mills did not follow that advice, if was said, they would go to the wall. So it was a case of, "Get big, or get out." That is exactly what happened. Some of the small mills were run on a family basis. They did not have the capital available to them; nor was any provision made by Governments for modernisation or amalgamation. So they had no alternative; they had to close down.

Section 5 of the Act gives the Conservator of Forests the power to issue licences. It is in that way that the amount of forest cut for commercial use is controlled. I draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the 15th meeting of the Australian Forestry Council, constituted by the Ministers responsible for forestry activities in the States and territories of Australia, was held on 10 September 1976. The council noted the increasing costs of obtaining supplies of forest products from overseas. Reference to the Year Book reveals the extent of the rise over the years.

There is a lack of reforestation in a number of our country areas. That is something that has been sadly overlooked in Australia. Australians—and particularly Queenslanders—should be highly efficient in forestry activities. However, if Queensland and Australia are to maintain their efficiency and ensure a long-term capability to supply their own forest products, it is essential that maintenance in stands of native forests be continued. We should continue to open up new areas for reforestation. In the last financial year the department received funds for this type of forestry maintenance work from the R.E.D. Scheme and from the Aboriginal advancement and the Commonwealth unemployment relief projects.

For 1976-77 the Liberal-National Country Party administration in Canberra has reduced the funds in those areas. In 1975-76 the

Labor Government appropriated \$135,000,000 for employment projects of this type. The Fraser Government has allocated a mere \$350,000, at a time when unemployment in country areas is very high indeed.

A factor that has been overlooked by many honourable members is the reverberation of the effects of policies of that sort into the country areas. State forests, timber reserves and national parks throughout our vast State will be neglected as a result of such miserable appropriations. For the interest of the Committee, I propose to list the areas where reserves exist and to quote the unemployment figures for those areas as at the end of August 1976. In the Brisbane area there were 10,414 registered unemployed males. In Gympie there were 371.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I fail to see the significance of unemployment to a sawmilling Bill.

**Mr. JONES:** With your indulgence, Mr. Hewitt, I submit that the problems confronting the sawmilling industry can be related to the unemployment figures I am placing before the Committee. As sawmilling licences are withdrawn, so will the unemployment figures increase. I want those figures recorded so that, when the ramifications of this Bill are felt at a later stage, comparisons can be made. The figures for unemployed males are—

Brisbane area	10,414
Gympie	371
Maryborough	531
Rockhampton	621
Bundaberg	473
Ingham	81
Atherton	536
Warwick	501.

In some of those areas approximately 70 unemployed are looking for each job that is available. If the Forestry Department could continue its maintenance projects at their old levels, unemployment would not be so high in those country areas.

Furthermore, the position could improve as former farmlands become available. The Rural Reconstruction Programme, particularly on the Atherton Tableland, is affecting quite a number of properties. The land should be acquired and utilised as softwood plantation. If the Government undertook that project with expedition, it would improve the economy of the country areas I have mentioned, harness our economic resources and hold jobs for people in country areas.

The Minister referred to the need to increase penalties. He referred also to the low fines being imposed in summary proceedings instituted for contraventions of section 3 of the Sawmills Licensing Act. It is well known that increasing the penalties has very little deterrent effect. The Minister said that the increase was necessary because of

inflation. I suppose that was the determining factor in the Minister's decision to increase penalties to desirable levels. If so, that is all right, but I do wonder why no minimum penalty is prescribed.

**Mr. AHERN:** No way in the world!

**Mr. JONES:** The honourable member can debate this matter if that is his wish. I do not think that increasing penalties is an effective way of controlling undesirable activities, whether they be offences against society, criminal offences or offences under the Sawmills Licensing Act.

I should like to see more licences granted and more activity in the timber industry in the Far North rather than constriction of activity. I hope that the Minister will take note of my submission on the need for reforestation and the use of land that is becoming available through the contraction of other primary industries. I hope that this type of scheme will be embarked upon to provide employment for those people in Far North Queensland, particularly on the Atherton Tableland and in the Cairns area, who have an ardent desire to work but can find none mainly because of the retraction of sawmilling licences and the amalgamation of sawmills in areas contiguous to the rainforests in the Far North.

**Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (2.59 p.m.):** In rising to speak to the Bill, I first of all congratulate the Minister on his recent administrative action to overcome a problem that has been bugging the industry for some considerable time. It received wide acclaim in the timber industry. The Minister certainly has the thanks of the members of the Timber Board. He has decided to provide non-competitive allocations to various sawmills throughout the State. All sawmills will then have allocations computed on stumpage rates as assessed by the Forestry Department and those allocations will attach to the mills. Sawmills now have a worth-while asset at their disposal and a real future for which they can plan. This is an excellent way of going about things and I again commend the Minister for his action. Sawmill operators in my area have asked me to convey to the Minister their sincere thanks for what he has done.

In the past the large mills were constantly at the throats of the small mills, and there were many ridiculous situations. If a block near a sawmill was coming up for auction and it was logical for it to be allotted to that mill, the big fellows from areas around Brisbane would go there and make bids that were so high that the local miller could not get near them. Timber was transported many miles to one mill while timber near that mill was taken to another mill miles away. The whole operation was inefficient. The action now taken has cost the Government money in terms of royalty payments forgone, but the timber industry is now much more united. It is more profitable than it was previously

and, as the result of the Minister's action, its future is assured. I think this is the most meaningful step taken in this portfolio in recent times. The timber industry now has a very real future.

Now that this basic problem has been solved, it is time to solve some others that face the industry. Considerable concern is being felt by operators in my area over the importation of oregon pine, mainly from New Zealand. Other members have also referred to this matter. I understand that in New Zealand a block of oregon pine of 160 miles square was blown down in a storm and that that timber has been cut up and is being placed on the world market at whatever prices can be obtained for it. I really think that the Customs Department should take a careful look at some of the timber that is coming in. I understand that some has been rejected recently on a quality basis but some that has been landed is marginal in quality and should not have been allowed in. It is causing considerable difficulty for local sawmillers, who have other problems as well as this type of competition.

They accept that they have to meet competition from local products. Trusses are being used in the frames of many houses and an increasing number of house frames are being constructed completely of metal. Sawmillers accept this competition; but when oregon pine of questionable quality is imported at what amounts to dump prices, it is just too much.

Until recently the industry in my area was in lots of trouble. However, I am hopeful that it will see its chance to get out of the trough that it was in and take advantage of the future that the Minister has now offered it by the long-term planning of his department. The industry is one that the Government must move to assist wherever it can. It is an industry that is truly decentralised. Many towns throughout Queensland have sawmills and they generate much local employment. It is an industry that, with proper planning, can operate in perpetuity, and that is the type of industry the State needs.

Sawmilling provides very real employment opportunities in country towns. In recent times it has made a considerable move towards rationalisation and improvement in terms of new investment in sawmills. This is to be commended and I think it warrants giving the industry a chance to survive in the future and thus provide a very real and continuing contribution to the State's economy. I know the Minister wants to see the employment provided at the moment continued in the future, and I congratulate him on his efforts to that end.

I have only one other point I want to make. The honourable member for Cairns said that he could not see why minimum fines were not set under the Act. In case he has not woken up to the fact, no legislation which has come before this Assembly recently has contained minimum fines, and



that will be the case from now on if I have anything to do with it because an insistence on minimum fines except in very rare circumstances produces great inequities in the administration of law and the administration of justice.

If this Legislature wants the courts to increase penalties imposed on offenders under any Act, it can do so by increasing the maximum fine. That indicates to the magistrates who are administering the law that the Legislature wants the fines to be substantially increased; that it is not happy with the level of fines that are being imposed. But setting a minimum fine ties the hands of magistrates and in the case of a technical breach of the law the magistrate cannot then impose a peppercorn fine or a small fine and, say, admonish the offender. He has to choose between imposing the minimum fine or letting the person go scot-free. He might opt for the latter, and often does. Magistrates have indicated their displeasure with minimum fines, and if one looks at the situation from their point of view, one can see their point that they must have a discretion in these matters. The circumstances of a particular case might indicate that such a discretion should be exercised. I will oppose, except in one or two very rare instances, any attempt to impose minimum fines. They are certainly not appropriate in the sawmilling industry. I support the measure before the Committee and again congratulate the Minister on his administration of the Act.

**Mr. CORY** (Warwick) (3.8 p.m.): I take this opportunity to bring up a couple of matters, one being particularly relevant to the Bill, the other relating more to the sawmilling industry as a whole. I wish to stress first the capital investment and the manpower required in the sawmilling industry. These factors have to be taken into account when amendments to the Act are being considered to ensure the availability of timber at all times.

The quota system for sawmills that has been developed is good in principle. However, a system is only as good as its application to the industry itself. We have to ensure that local industry is given the opportunity to compete with imported timber, and it is very important that local industries have adequate quotas to enable them to remain viable and strong. The very thing we do not want is a continuation of the closing down of sawmills, in effect creating what might eventually be a monopoly in the industry. That situation is a long way off at this stage, but there is a tendency to create larger and larger operations and the smaller fellow is finding it more and more difficult to keep going. The economic stresses of today cause many of the problems; but, under this Act and the Forestry Act, we must ensure that the quota system is correctly administered and that both the small operator and the larger operator are catered for adequately.

Only by maintaining competition will we be able to maintain the quality of the article available to the housing and building industries. For that reason greater emphasis has to be placed on reforestation throughout the State. We must make sure that there is a continuing supply of timber to the milling industry. A lot has been said about imports; but unless we do something about providing timber for our own industry, we will find ourselves in a very weak position. Much has been done and a lot of timber from reforestation areas is being used. However, reforestation is not being carried out fast enough to cope with the increasing demand of the milling and building industries. With so many suitable areas in the State, every effort should be made to use them so that we can be as self-sufficient as possible with suitable timbers.

Although most reforestation will be done with softwoods, regardless of how those softwoods can now be treated and used in a broader and broader spectrum in the building industry, there is still a demand for hardwoods, which are becoming more and more scarce in their natural state. Because hardwoods are such slow growers, we must consider extending reforestation into the hardwood field. Although it may not be necessary to do as much reforestation work with hardwoods as we are doing with softwoods, it must be remembered that by the time a hardwood reforestation programme provides commercial stands we will probably be in very great need of hardwoods for specific purposes. I am very pleased with what the Forestry Department has done in my area, but I am stressing that I believe we should be moving more quickly in this direction, and further developing reforestation programmes to ensure the State's future requirements.

I wish now to deal with the penalties being provided. First, I refer to the setting up of a fixed saw operating with timber over a bench. In the case of the genuine miller—the man who is milling timber commercially in the context that we have in mind—I do not think that there can be any objection to the increase in penalties, taking into account today's inflation. However, we should look at the grey areas that appear to be caught in the net of the Act.

I have in mind particularly the deteriorating quality of timber. Obviously the most practicable way of using timber of low quality is to put it to the saw. In the old days both the posts and rails of post-and-rail fences were split. Today there is not much rail work other than for yards, but still many rails are used. To make use of timber of the quality now available, the saw is the only practicable answer. It is far safer, more sensible and generally more practicable to saw much of this timber over a fixed saw-bench.

I referred earlier to the reduction in quantity of our timber and spoke about reforestation. By using the saw, much better use can

be made of an individual tree. An extra length can be obtained from many trees; tops that otherwise would be discarded can be used. I should not like to think that the application of the Bill will be so broad as to prevent the practical and sensible use of much of the inferior timber that is now available. I think all honourable members would know of people who have set up saw-benches so that they can use inferior timber for their own purposes and also make it available to other persons. They are, of course, denied the right to do that. Provided the provisions of this measure are applied in a sensible manner, I have no objection to the increase in penalties.

**Mrs. KIPPIN** (Mourilyan) (3.16 p.m.): As a North Queensland member, I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for the interest he has taken in the problems that recently confronted the timber industry in North Queensland.

All of us knew that this year timber royalties were to be increased. The northern timber people felt that such an increase would place their industry at a serious disadvantage and, with that thought in mind, they made strong representations to the Minister on the subject. I thank the Minister for not forgetting that North Queensland is a long way away from Southern Queensland and that the industry in North Queensland faces particular problems. His meeting with the industry leaders in North Queensland did a great deal to further the understanding between himself, his department and the industry.

The timber industry in North Queensland ran into trouble with an increase in royalties following an increase in rail freights last year. The department has, however, managed to sort out the situation with the result that royalties increased by an average of only 5 per cent instead of the expected 40 per cent.

The stumpage rates had to be revised because a lot of northern producers are far removed from their key markets and are affected greatly by rail freights. Any increase in costs will place the timber industry of North Queensland in jeopardy. A number of towns, particularly Ravenshoe, are vulnerable and would be adversely affected by a tightening of the economy in the timber industry.

Further assistance was given by the Minister by way of introducing non-competitive sales. This step arose from a request made to him by the industry, and once again the Minister showed that he had a very close understanding of his portfolio by acceding to the request. The introduction of non-competitive sales means that, if a sawmill is sold, the timber rights held by that mill can be sold with it. This enhances the prospects of sale, because potential buyers know that they will have ready access to timber and that their operations will not be interfered with.

A couple of anomalies do cause me concern. The first is the use of imported timbers in Queensland. I urge the Minister and his colleague the Minister for Works and Housing to take a very close look at the possibility of using Queensland timbers in all State Government contracts.

**Mr. Jensen:** They said they do.

**Mrs. KIPPIN:** I know they do, but I think they should take a closer look at it. I have received several complaints that, as the result of differentials in rail freights, South Queensland timber is imported into North Queensland. This needs looking at. If southern timber can be brought to North Queensland more cheaply than northern timber can be taken to Southern Queensland, the situation calls for investigation. At the moment New Guinea timber is available by the boatload on the Queensland market. It is creating quite a problem. The New Guinea borer has been detected in buildings in Cairns. It is a significant threat to the timber industry. It can leave holes in timber from one-half to three-quarters of an inch in diameter. We could well do without it in Far North Queensland.

I ask the Minister to ensure that his department keeps a close watch on fungal diseases in the timber industry in North Queensland.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** If we were to mate the New Guinea borer with the North Queensland borer we could get a hybrid that might not be able to breed.

**Mrs. KIPPIN:** That could be far worse. Surely the honourable member knows what hybrid vigour is all about.

The fungal disease of phytophthora, in particular, has spread as far as the Ingham district. The forestry officers in Atherton are keeping a very close watch on it in Far North Queensland. When this disease gets into forests, very little can be done. It seems that Forestry Department officers can only watch it, isolate the forest and keep it out of production until the disease clears itself or we find a method to control it.

I thank the Minister for his interest in the North Queensland timber industry and I am sure that the industry supports me in that.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (3.22 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg and all other honourable members who have taken part in the debate. All speakers indicated general support of the Bill.

While nobody likes to inflict increased penalties on offenders it is unfortunately a fact of life that we need penalties for people who break the law. While the Bill seeks only to bring the penalties up to date, the honourable member for Bundaberg said that they were being increased only to keep pace with

inflation. I do not think that comment was altogether fair. I see no other way to achieve what is desired, and I feel sure that the honourable member does not, either.

Quite a number of speakers dealt with matters outside the Bill. That is fair enough because the ramifications of the forestry industry are such that it is necessary to look at some of the measures Governments have to take from time to time to deal with problems they have to face.

A few references were made to the desirability of minimum fines. The honourable member for Landsborough gave the perfect answer to that. Government members believe that we should give magistrates a little more elasticity in imposing fines. When we set a high maximum fine we indicate that we view an offence seriously and we hope that gives a lead to the magistrate to act in line with our reasoning. If we specify a minimum fine we reduce the magistrate's ability to act in a proper and judicial way.

**Mr. Jensen** interjected.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** They are well versed in law and they should be able to work it out.

**Mr. Jensen:** With a maximum fine of \$1,000 they impose fines of only \$50.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I again make the point that we must give magistrates room to manoeuvre. They are skilled in these matters and I believe that the decision to abolish minimum fines is correct. The honourable member for Bundaberg spoke also about the capacity of sawmills. I say to him that the whole of the industry is based on licences, capacity and sustainable yield. Mills must work up to a capacity, but that is not necessarily governed by the mill's capacity. It is based on the timber that has been bought. The capacity of the mill comes into it, too; but, through the timber that has been bought, it is known what timber is going out. The policy of the Forestry Department is based on sustainable yield. We do not want to see State Forests diminished. If that happens, forestry is finished.

**Mr. Jensen:** Not only do you have to have a capacity that is economic; it is also the wages.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I know, but these mills are now in the situation where they buy timber in line with the capacity of the mill.

The subject of non-competitive sales has been spoken about a great deal. As I see it, that is one factor that gives the sawmiller today a lot of stability. The industry asked for the waiving of the old method of sales by auction. To a man the sawmilling industry favours our new policy of non-competitive sales. It means that a sawmill that has purchased Crown timber virtually has it for ever. It is tied with that sawmill on a sustainable-yield basis. Consequently, if people want to sell a sawmill, they sell the rights to the timber, too. In a sense, it is giving them what might be called added value.

That is necessary at a time when it is quite obvious that the supply of timber in South-east Queensland is running down. There is not a shadow of doubt about that. Over the years people on private property who have sold timber to sawmillers have tended to allow their country to be run down and used up. That is their decision. If they own freehold land, they have the right to do it—and they have done it. Consequently, the supply of timber in South-eastern Queensland is running down. We now have to look at how our Crown timber is standing up. We just cannot take up the slack. What it means is that mills will now be cutting less timber. That leads to another economic problem—whether it is possible to sustain the same number of people in the industry. I do not think it is.

Another problem is that today, owing to the economics of the situation, sawmills are inclined to grow bigger. That tends to cut out the small sawmiller. On purely economic grounds, I do not believe that there is any argument against that. That is what has been happening.

It has been said here today that conditions in the timber industry are not very good. As the honourable member for Mourilyan has just said, there is no doubt that the industry is going through troublesome times. Sales have fallen off considerably. A lot of sawmills are in trouble. Employees have had to be retrenched, which is unfortunate, owing to current economic conditions. It is not easy to correct some of these trends.

Quite a lot of members have spoken about timber coming into the country from overseas. This also is a problem. As the honourable member for Landsborough said, it could be said that New Zealand timber is coming here in almost dumping proportions. Last year they had tremendous storms over there and they have had to cut much of their timber. They are selling it here. Frankly, I think it has a lot to do with the fact that New Zealand's currency and wage structure are lower than ours. Timber can be exported to here and we cannot do anything about it.

**Mr. Jensen:** We do the same thing. We do the same thing with our beef.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The honourable member is quite right. I for one have never been a believer in closing the gate in any field of importation. If we want to get rid of our exports—and we are an exporting nation—we do not want to say to New Zealand, just because it suits us today, "You cannot send it in." In 12 months' time we might need it. Queensland is not self-supporting in timber production. We are a net importer.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** What about gidyea? Can't that be processed?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Unfortunately, it can only be used for fence posts.

The honourable member for Isis mentioned the attitude of conservationists to Fraser Island. In passing, I mention that this is a fairly neat operation. The Forestry Department can very accurately determine the sustainable yield of timber on Fraser Island and the department cuts it accordingly. Today it is almost the envy of conservationists, because it has hardly been touched.

**Mr. Jensen:** It has been like that for 100 years.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Yes, and in 100 years' time it will still be the same because it has been so well planned.

The honourable member for Windsor said that he does not like licences, licensing and restrictions. Unfortunately, this industry cannot be run without some type of licensing. We know what would happen if people were given an open go. That is the situation as I see it.

The honourable member for Cairns referred to the North Queensland sawmills and said that some of them have gone out of business. That is right. North Queensland has problems in the sawmilling industry that do not exist here. In the future it will face intense competition from New Guinea. In North Queensland, those in the industry work under pretty harsh conditions. We have to keep an eye on their industry to see that we can keep them in business.

The matter of royalty was referred to. This is something that we will have to look at. I am in an unenviable position in that it is virtually up to me to say how much royalty will be paid. Therefore I have to have behind me a very efficient Forestry Department with the correct figures. I pay tribute to the officers of that department. They go to no end of trouble to assess sustainable yield and all that type of thing. They take the trouble to talk to the people in the industry. Consequently, as Minister, my decision is much easier to make after looking at the facts that are set out for me. I go on record as saying that I have never heard a sawmiller question Forestry Department figures. The officers go to a good deal of trouble to do the job and their figures are accepted.

The honourable member for Cairns referred also to the softwoods agreement. I attended the recent Forestry Conference in Adelaide, to which he referred. The forestry agreement did end, but the Federal Government has seen fit to start it up again, although not on the scale I would like to see. I should like more money to be thrown into it. Improving our softwood industry is the only way that Queensland will cease to be a net importer. Over the past 30 years, the softwood industry in Queensland has proceeded apace. I am informed by my officers that by the year 2000 we might be able to meet our own requirements. It is vital that we aim at that goal.

This leads to another point raised by several honourable members—the timber coming from other States.

**Mr. Jensen** interjected.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The honourable member was referring to "Buy Queensland Made". I am informed that our department and the Department of Works and Housing look to supplies of timber coming from Australia, not from overseas. Wherever possible we exclude overseas timbers from our contracts.

**Mr. Jensen** interjected.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** There are several ways of handling that matter. If we step up our softwood production, that problem will not arise. We obtain a good deal of timber from New South Wales, and I am informed that it is necessary to do so to keep up with our housing demands. The argument I see in this matter is whether we are right in that policy when we could be giving freight concessions on the transportation of timber from North Queensland. I would very much like to hear a debate on that subject one of these days because, under this system, North Queensland is being virtually denied access to this market.

The honourable member for Cairns advocated the purchase of private land for forestry purposes. Queensland has vast areas of State Forest. We have plenty of areas of softwood production. As we are in this happy situation, there is no need to acquire privately owned land. Quite the opposite prevails in South Australia, where not one acre of land is available for plantation work unless it is bought. All of the areas suitable for plantation have been used up. Under the softwoods agreement, South Australia has to buy land before it can do anything. It is doing this quietly all of the time. In this State we are fortunate that we do not have to.

The honourable member for Warwick realises that the quota system is necessary but he expressed concern about monopolies coming into the scheme by the process of large millers buying small mills. I find that a hard point to answer. With the present degree of sophistication of sawmills, it is the large ones that are able to produce the best figures. When we realise that mills for the production of softwoods can cost \$2,000,000 today, we can readily see how sophisticated the industry is and the extent to which economics comes into it. It is a fact of life that the small mill cannot compete with the large mill. Anyone who attempts to depart from basic economics soon gets into trouble.

There is one other point that I should like to make. Hardwoods in South-east Queensland are becoming scarcer and scarcer, particularly on private land. On private land people can do what they like with timber and many have sold it and turned the land to agriculture. That is something that we

cannot stop but it will have a serious effect on the timber industry in due course. That is one of the reasons why I believe there will be some considerable alterations in the industry over the next 20 years.

**Mr. Jensen:** The Government could tell the bloke on private land to replant.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** He can do that if he likes. It is a question of economics. Certainly the Government is not going to buy land for that purpose.

Finally, I thank members for their contributions. This is only a small Bill and I am pleased that it was well received.

Motion (Mr. Tomkins) agreed to.  
Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### INITIATION

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Industrial Development Act 1963-1975 in certain particulars and to declare with respect to the validity and recovery of advances claimed to have been made under the authority of that Act and with respect to the enforcement of securities taken in relation to such advances and for related purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

#### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs) (3.39 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Industrial Development Act 1963-1975 in certain particulars and to declare with respect to the validity and recovery of advances claimed to have been made under the authority of that Act and with respect to the enforcement of securities taken in relation to such advances and for related purposes.”

The Bill which I propose to introduce is a relatively minor piece of legislation designed to validate certain actions which were taken with a view to expediting the advance of loan funds to small businesses affected by the disastrous January 1974 flooding.

It will be recalled that following the 1974 floods, an Industry and Small Business Flood Relief Scheme was introduced to assist

industry and small business to re-establish operations on a viable basis. This was the first time that this type of assistance had been given by the State Government as generally speaking problems of this nature are regarded as being normal business risks. The magnitude of the disaster, however, was such that unless the State Government had acted quickly and provided relief funds, many small businesses would have been forced to cease operations, with a consequent increase in the number of persons unemployed.

Following an approach to the Commonwealth Government, funds were provided to enable the scheme to be implemented, and I acknowledge the ready support of the Commonwealth Government.

**Mr. Houston:** The Labor Government, wasn't it?

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** Yes; I acknowledge that.

**Mr. Houston:** The first nice thing you have said about them for years.

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** It might be the last, too.

The scheme was restricted to sole owners, partnerships and private companies. Public companies did not qualify as their corporate structure placed them in a much better position to meet such eventualities. The emphasis was on small business. Assistance was provided by way of a loan up to a maximum of \$25,000 for any one applicant. The loans had a currency of three to five years with interest being charged at the low rate of 5 per cent per annum. This was done with the Federal Government's co-operation, and again I acknowledge it. Interest only was payable at the end of the first year. This was followed by equal half-yearly instalments for the remainder of the term of the loan. Advances were made for the purpose of repair and/or replacement of plant and equipment, repairs to buildings, replacement of stock losses and, to a lesser degree, maintenance of the liquidity of the operation. It will be appreciated that the liquidity of many small businesses was seriously impaired because of the lack of cash flow resulting from the interruption to trading due to the flooding.

In all, in excess of 590 applications were received. A total of 60 were rejected as being ineligible; 129 were withdrawn by the applicants prior to consideration; and 405 were approved, with 25 applications being withdrawn after approval. A total of \$4,114,665 was advanced to 380 business enterprises. A committee comprising representatives of various trade associations, etc., was established to assist the Industries Assistance Board in the examination and consideration of application received under the scheme.

Having regard to the desperate circumstances of many of the applicants, it was the Government's wish that the relief funds should be provided with an absolute minimum

of delay. This was imperative. Accordingly, it was decided that payment of the approved loan advances should not be delayed pending finalisation of the legal documentation, and the loans were advanced to the successful applicants on the completion of a covenant to execute securities to the Minister's requirements. Subsequent to the execution of the covenants and the release of funds to the borrowers, action was taken to arrange for the issue of Orders in Council approving, in schedule form, the advances already made. As honourable members will appreciate this action enabled the moneys to be advanced forthwith and assisted materially in the rehabilitation of the small businesses affected by the flooding.

The Solicitor-General, however, has advised that because the loans were advanced prior to the approval of the Governor in Council being obtained, as is the normal procedure under the Act, the loans could be regarded as invalid. Furthermore, the subsequent Orders in Council approving the financial assistance did not incorporate full details of the securities required to be taken in support of the loans. This factor also has caused doubts to be raised as to the validity of the loan advances. Accordingly, this Bill seeks to validate the actions taken at that time.

There is another matter covered by the Bill that also relates to the flood relief loans. Subsequent to the loans being approved, it became necessary in some instances to vary the terms and conditions upon which the loans were approved. This was done by Order in Council purporting to have retrospective effect back to the date of the original loans.

The Solicitor-General has advised that the powers presently contained in the Industrial Development Act provide for the Orders in Council to take effect as from the date of gazettal. In these circumstances, the opportunity is being taken to place beyond doubt the validity of the Orders in Council in question, and also to enable such orders to have retrospective effect in future where necessary.

I am sure that all honourable members will support the Bill. As I have indicated, the urgency of the situation did not permit the applications to be processed in the customary manner followed under the provisions of the Industrial Development Act in respect of normal applications for financial assistance. To have delayed the release of the funds would have negated the whole purpose of the flood relief scheme. The need was to get affected businesses back into operation at the earliest possible date.

In addition to the assistance granted following the 1974 floods, a similar scheme was instituted in February of this year to cover not only flooding but damage caused by cyclones "David" and "Alan". Twelve applications were received and 11 were approved, involving assistance totalling \$110,000. The prompt action taken by the department to assist those who suffered loss and distress

from these natural disasters will, I am sure, be applauded by honourable members. For this reason, I commend the Bill to the Committee.

**Mr. YEWDALE** (Rockhampton North) (3.47 p.m.): The Opposition naturally has no objection to the passage of the Bill. It has been clearly indicated that it is a machinery measure. I cannot really understand how this matter has been allowed to remain unresolved for so long, and it is obvious that on that ground there is room for criticism. The floods referred to by the Minister occurred in January 1974 and now, two years and eight months later, the Government is taking steps to validate its action.

In his introduction the Minister passed some favourable comment about the reaction of the Federal Government at the time of that disaster. It would be fair to suggest that at a later stage when Toowoomba was struck by a severe hailstorm there was a somewhat opposite reaction from the present Federal Government. The Prime Minister (Mr. Fraser) showed very little interest when it was reported that \$10,000,000 worth of damage had been done, mainly to homes of families in the area. Even the then State Treasurer made some caustic remarks in the media about the lack of interest of the Prime Minister and the Federal Government.

When talking about floods in Brisbane, one must look at the over-all subject of flood mitigation. I should like to touch on that briefly because it has some bearing on the Bill. Loans taken out by small businesses—about 380 of them—amounted to approximately \$4,100,000. I refer specifically to Brisbane because the floods at that time did considerable damage here. Apparently the total amount of money required for flood-mitigation work in Enoggera and Breakfast Creeks is \$4,704,000. If a greater amount of money were spent on flood mitigation in Brisbane, perhaps we could avoid some of the problems caused to householders and small businesses at times of major flooding.

**Mr. Houston:** The money still has to be paid back.

**Mr. YEWDALE:** That is right.

In 1975-76, \$2,100,000 was allocated for flood mitigation, but the allocation for 1976-77 has dropped to \$1,800,000. That means that \$300,000 less has been allocated for flood mitigation, which in real terms, allowing for inflation, is a 30 per cent reduction in flood-mitigation funds. As a result the Brisbane City Council will be forced to reduce the number of employees engaged on the design and engineering sides of flood-mitigation works. Those staff members who will be dismissed will probably not be able to find similar employment in private enterprise, because private enterprise does not engage in flood-mitigation works to any great extent. So at a time when there is already a

high level of unemployment, a reduction in funds allocated to flood-mitigation works will aggravate the problem. I reiterate that the sum of \$4,000,000 that is being made available by the Government for the relief of these people would be sufficient to cover only the cost of flood-mitigation work in Brisbane.

I do not wish to delay the Committee any longer. I conclude by repeating briefly the two major points that I made. The first is that the Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, and the Federal Government showed very little interest in the circumstances that existed in Toowoomba; the second is that, if the State Government had spent this money on flood-mitigation works, there would not have been any need to lend it.

The Opposition is, of course, aware of the need for this Bill and has no objection whatever to it.

**Mr. GIBBS (Albert)** (3.51 p.m.): I rise to support the Minister in his introduction of this measure, which will overcome a serious problem that has arisen. It was heartening to see that the Queensland Government, backed by the Federal Government of the day, had the initiative to combat and overcome many of the problems that arose from the 1974 floods. It gave much-needed assistance to small businesses, being those conducted by sole owners, partnerships and private companies. The emphasis was on "small" businesses. The Government's step is typical of its attitude towards support for private enterprise.

It is interesting to notice that the maximum loan was \$25,000 and that the loans were current for from three to five years with an interest rate of approximately 5 per cent.

I was not a member of Parliament at that time; nevertheless I congratulate the Minister and his department on the action to help small businesses in this way. Such assistance helped prevent an increase in the level of unemployment. At that time the people had enough to contend with in putting up with the Federal Government, without suffering damage from floods. It was, however, good to see that the Federal Government of the day supported the State Government to get people back onto their feet.

By keeping people in employment, the Federal Government obtains some return in taxation. Similarly the State Government receives a certain amount of money by way of pay-roll tax and indirect taxes.

Finally, I extend my congratulations to the Minister and his department on the action taken by them to introduce this measure. It has my whole-hearted support.

**Mr. MULLER (Fassifern)** (3.54 p.m.): I, too, rise to support the Minister. This Bill is a most desirable one. A total of 590 applications for assistance were received. This means that 590 persons were involved, and we must not forget that we are concerned with people.

It is desirable that such assistance be given to small businesses. Those engaged in big business generally have the capacity to get themselves out of trouble. Small businesses, however, are conducted by the triers, who cannot always get out of trouble, and they are the ones who must receive first consideration.

Forty-two per cent of the population of Queensland is engaged in small businesses. That figure gives some idea of the dimensions of the problem that could arise in times of severe flooding.

A few moments ago it was said that the money advanced might not have been needed had the amount that was used for this very special purpose been diverted into flood mitigation works. I should like to think that that statement was true but, in reflecting on the circumstances in 1974, I believe that, regardless of any flood mitigation scheme that has been proposed, there would have been no answer to the problem.

In the circumstances I commend the Minister. At times we are inclined to criticise the administration but on this occasion his department moved in quickly and met an immediate requirement.

**Mr. Houston:** And the Federal Government.

**Mr. MULLER:** Yes, that may be so.

**Mr. Houston** interjected.

**Mr. MULLER:** I am not taking credit from anybody who made a contribution.

In the final analysis, somebody in Queensland had to make a decision on how the money would be allocated. As a result, many people benefited substantially. In extreme cases loans of up to \$25,000 were advanced. People who were more fortunate required less money. These circumstances will crop up from time to time irrespective of flood mitigation schemes. I am convinced that, if we have a repeat of the 1974 conditions, many people will be looking urgently for similar money. Claims were assessed on the lack of funds available through normal channels. I believe that the lending institutions would have found that many of the people engaged in small businesses were not viable, but the department saw fit to advance money to assist them, believing that it was warranted. I am sure the assistance was appreciated.

It is not my intention to delay the Committee. I commend the Minister on introducing this validating legislation. I trust that it will not be necessary to make similar contributions in the future but, should it be necessary, any consideration that is merited will be given.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 3.59 p.m.