

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 14 OCTOBER 1976**

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issue of whether or not there should be more equitable representation in Division 1 of the Albert Shire.

Petition read and received.

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

#### 1. LOAN MONEYS FOR WATER RETICULATION TO MAGNETIC ISLAND

**Mr. Ahern** for **Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) What loan moneys have been approved for the Townsville City Council for water reticulation to Magnetic Island during the last six years?

(2) What contribution was provided by the Commonwealth Government?

*Answers:—*

(1) \$140,000. A further \$80,000 is tentatively provided in the current financial year. The State also pays subsidy at the rate of 33½ per cent on expenditure on this project. Major amounts of loan funds were raised by the council prior to 1970-71.

(2) I have no knowledge of any Commonwealth Government contribution.

## THURSDAY, 14 OCTOBER 1976

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

### PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

State and Regional Planning and Development, Public Works Organization and Environmental Control Act 1971-1974.

Ambulance Services Act 1967-1975.

Regulations under—

Ambulance Services Act 1967-1975.

Health Act 1937-1976.

The Physiotherapists Acts, 1964 to 1965.

Reports—

State Stores Board, for the year 1975-76.

Totalisator Administration Board of Queensland, for the year 1975-76.

### PETITION

DIVISION 1 REPRESENTATION, ALBERT SHIRE

**Mrs. KYBURZ** (Salisbury) presented a petition from 1,629 electors of the Shire of Albert praying that the Parliament of Queensland will cause a poll of all electors of the Shire of Albert to be taken on the

#### 2. JUVENILE CRIME

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

(1) What is he doing about the alarming rise in juvenile crime?

(2) As senior police officers have been reported as saying that a great deal of juvenile crime is due to lack of parental control and to family environment, what social work or family counselling facilities are currently available to alleviate rising juvenile crime and what plans has his department for the implementation of a sound crime preventative scheme to keep young children out of trouble?

*Answers:—*

(1) Every effort is being made by the Police Department to prevent offences and detect offenders—of all ages. If the honourable member will refer to the annual report of the Director of Children's Services, he will see that during the year ended 30 June 1976 there were 5,073 Children's Court appearances in Queensland, compared with 5,037 in the previous year.

(2) Whether young children become involved in crime and other anti-social behaviour depends largely on parents, who

control their environment, training and experience. Therefore, the primary responsibility for crime prevention rests within the community at large.

The Police Department is actively engaged in a programme directed towards locating juvenile offenders in an endeavour to redirect their energies into lawful pursuits. In addition, police officers conduct crime prevention lectures to school-children throughout the State, and the department is actively engaged in youth club work. Social workers and family-counselling facilities are not provided by the Police Department, but may be contacted through the various offices of the Department of Children's Services.

### 3. SEWERAGE PROJECTS

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

(1) What sewerage projects were undertaken with funds provided by the State or Commonwealth in the years 1973-74, 1974-75 and 1975-76?

(2) How much was provided to each project and local authority and from what fund was the money derived?

(3) What was the purpose of each project?

(4) What projects will be funded in 1976-77?

(5) What projects have been affected by the cuts in the recent Commonwealth and State Budgets and in what way?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) The sewerage projects referred to number over 360 and it would be a considerable task to identify expenditures on each project over a three-year period. If the honourable member desires this information for particular local authorities, I would be pleased to have the information extracted and supplied to him.

The total expenditure for each of these years was—

Local Authorities other than Brisbane	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
	\$ Million	\$ Million	\$ Million
Debenture Loans ..	13-224	18-186	15-334
State Loan and Subsidy ..	8-754	10-846	11-778
Commonwealth Loans and Grants .. .. .	1-300	7-678	9-790
	23-278	36-710	36-902
Brisbane— Commonwealth Loans and Grants .. ..	2-800	4-372	3-710
Totals .. .. .	26-078	41-082	40-612

Loans and subsidies obtained by Brisbane for sewerage are not separately identified, other than in the backlog programme.

(3) The purpose of each project was the disposal of sewage.

(4) In 1976-77 there will be 139 sewerage projects by 60 local authorities. Again it would be a considerable task to schedule these projects. Total funds available, including carry-over from 1975-76 allocations, are—

Debenture loans ..	\$30,723,000
State loan and sub- sidy .. . . .	\$23,619,000

New approvals included in the above are—

Debenture loans ..	\$23,000,000
State loan and sub- sidy .. . . .	\$16,000,000

Commonwealth funds (70 per cent and 30 per cent grant) expected to be available total \$1,000,000, which amount is proposed to be allocated to Brisbane City Council—and only because I am big-hearted.

(5) There have been no cuts in the State allocations for sewerage in 1976-77, as the figures given will show. The Commonwealth allocation has been reduced from \$13,500,000 in 1975-76 to \$1,000,000 in 1976-77. Of the 20 local authorities that shared in Commonwealth funds in 1975-76, only Brisbane City Council will benefit this year. I am not prepared to speculate as to the projects that might have proceeded, or might have proceeded at an increased rate, if more Commonwealth funds had been made available. However, I do understand the seriousness of the position with the increasing cost factor, and the urgent need for more sewerage works, as I have previously made clear in this Chamber and elsewhere. I have raised the matter with the Minister for Environment, Housing, and Community Development (Mr. Newman) and the Minister assisting the Treasurer (Mr. Eric Robinson). I will be having a further discussion with Mr. Robinson on this subject tomorrow.

### 4. AIR POLLUTION FALL-OUT FIGURES, DARRA, OXLEY, EAGLE FARM AND PINKENBA

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

What were the daily average fall-out figures at gauges at Bradford Street, Darra; Killarney Avenue, Darra; Kingsford Smith Drive, Eagle Farm; Eagle Farm Road, Pinkenba, and Irwin Terrace, Oxley, for the months of July, August and September?

Answer:—

The insoluble fall-out in milligrams per sq m per day at the locations referred to by the honourable member was—

—	July, 1976	Aug., 1976	Sept., 1976
Bradford Street, Darra ..	385	450	97
Killarney Avenue, Darra	714	1 971	240
Kingsford Smith Drive, Eagle Farm .. ..	205	113	171
Eagle Farm Road, Pinkenba .. ..	143	172	115
Irwin Terrace, Oxley ..	213	356	..

September 1976 results for Irwin Terrace, Oxley, are not yet available. The abnormally high result in Killarney Avenue, Darra, in August 1976 resulted from a temporary plant malfunction, which deposited dust in the immediate vicinity of the sampling station.

5. MASS RADIOGRAPHY

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

(1) Is mass radiography that is used essentially for early detection of tuberculosis to be phased out?

(2) Would it not be more beneficial to the public to continue with the scheme, even though the disease is on the decline?

(3) Following the compulsory X-ray check, are numerous persons found to be suffering with heart conditions and lung cancer?

Answers:—

(1) Yes, it is expected that the mass X-ray campaign as it is being conducted at present will be completed by 30 June 1977. It will be replaced by a selective survey of populations at risk. Included in these are those persons found to have positive tuberculin skin tests performed during the last survey.

(2) At the moment it is necessary to take approximately 6,000 to 8,000 X-rays to pick up one case of tuberculosis, and this is proving a very costly procedure. I am advised that the modified scheme will be just as effective in case-finding and more economical.

(3) It is true that heart conditions and lung cancer have been detected during the mass X-ray campaign. An examination has shown that cancer cases detected during the X-ray campaign have fared no better than those diagnosed by other means. With adequate school health facilities checking on congenital heart disease and with better facilities in provincial city hospitals, no advantage would be gained

by continuing the compulsory X-ray campaign for these conditions alone. I would point out that the Commonwealth Government has advised that the Commonwealth-State Tuberculosis Agreement under which the X-ray campaign is presently funded will terminate as at 31 December 1976.

6. RIGHT OF PATIENT TO REJECT ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATOR

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

(1) Does a patient have the right to refuse to be attached to an artificial respirator, if the doctor deems it necessary, without risking being discharged for refusing that particular treatment?

(2) Does a person have the right to refuse to allow a member of his immediate family to be attached to an artificial respirator, without the patient risking being discharged for the refusal of that particular treatment?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) In normal circumstances a medical practitioner would not instigate any treatment or procedure without the consent of the patient or a member of his family. In an emergency, the doctor is obliged to instigate necessary treatment. In the case of a patient needing an artificial respirator, that patient would be so ill I feel sure that no doctor would discharge him.

7. INCREASED LOCAL AUTHORITY RATES, BINGIL BAY AND MISSION BEACH

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the monstrous increases in rates recently levied by the Johnstone Shire Council on property owners at Bingil Bay and Mission Beach, for example, whereas an owner of a vacant site of 1 rood 34 perches, fronted by a dirt road, paid \$76 as annual rates for 1975-76, he has to pay \$514 for this year?

(2) Is he further aware that the Johnstone Shire Council is telling the residents that the fault lies with this Government because of recent increases in unimproved values by the Valuer-General's Department?

(3) In order to counteract the irresponsible statements in this respect by the Johnstone Shire Council, will he indicate to

that council how it can adjust its rate in the dollar on the land-owners at Bingil Bay and Mission Beach so that only a fair increase in rates is charged?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am aware of substantial rate increases in the seaside townships in the Johnstone Shire.

(2) I am not aware of what the Johnstone Shire Council is telling its rate-payers, but I am aware that the rate increases in the seaside townships are due basically to large increases in valuation, which in turn are attributable to the high prices paid for land in those localities. The valuations are as determined by the Valuer-General in accordance with the Valuation of Land Act, and would have been subject to rights of objection and appeal.

(3) There is no power in the Local Government Act for a local authority to levy a lower general rate in the dollar in the townships referred to than is levied in other towns in the shire. There is a power to levy a lower general rate on rural lands only. Also, as the period of time for framing and adopting budgets and fixing of rates for 1976-77 has expired, there is no way in which the budget or rates can be altered this year.

I want to say to the honourable member for Mourilyan that I am very, very worried about the Johnstone Shire. It has about seven or eight different benefited areas, and if that is not a hotch-potch, I have never seen one. I am certainly going to take the necessary steps to overcome the problem.

#### 8. MR. A. J. CREEDY AND DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

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

(1) When was Mr. Creedy appointed to his position, at what salary and for what term?

(2) How many others were then on his staff?

(3) How many are now on his staff?

(4) What salary does Mr. Creedy now receive, including allowances?

(5) What was the total cost of Mr. Creedy and his department in the first complete year of operation?

(6) What was the total cost for the last complete year?

(7) For the last 12 months for which figures are readily available, how much money was granted, by or through Mr.

Creedy's department, to all organisations in (a) areas north of the Tropic of Capricorn and (b) areas south of the Tropic of Capricorn?

*Answers:—*

(1) Mr. Creedy was appointed on 14 October 1968. At the time of his appointment, his rate of salary was \$337.90 per fortnight. His terms of appointment were: a probation period of 12 months, and subsequent appointment under the Public Service Act.

(2) At the time of Mr. Creedy's commencement of duty, one staff member, (a clerk-typist) was employed in his office. In the same financial year, a second staff member (a clerk) was appointed to the office.

(3) At present there are six staff members employed in the Cultural Activities Office.

(4) Mr. Creedy's present rate of salary is \$953.60 per fortnight. No other remuneration is payable to him.

(5) In the financial year 1969-70, the total expenditure for salaries, equipment, and incidentals of the Cultural Activities Office was \$24,075.

(6) In the financial year 1975-76, the total expenditure for salaries, equipment, and incidentals of the Cultural Activities Office was \$92,100.

(7) Statistical returns of cultural activities grants are not normally compiled in the geographical order requested. However, action will be taken to extract relevant data and to forward them to the honourable member as soon as possible.

#### 9. CONSIDERATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIMINALS

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

With regard to his answer to my question on 23 September concerning the tender solicitude expressed and applied by judges in the interests of convicted criminals, before sentence is passed, will he give the House some indication of any obligation imposed on judges, either by law or custom, to express and apply the same measure of tender solicitude for the victims of criminals and the relatives of those victims?

*Answer:—*

In the answer to the question asked by the honourable member on 23 September 1976, an objective statement of the law was given. The sentencing of a convicted person involves consideration of a number

of factors, some of which are relevant to the victim and some to the offender. The object of criminal law is justice not vengeance.

There is provision in the Criminal Code for the court, on the application of the victim, to order the offender to pay compensation for physical injury suffered by the victim by virtue of the offence.

#### 10. SUBSIDY FOR DECEPTION BAY BUS SERVICE

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

(1) Is he aware that the township of Deception Bay is in danger of losing a very important bus service because the service has been losing money constantly?

(2) What assistance by way of subsidy is available to enable the people of Deception Bay to retain this valuable service?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) I am advised by the Commissioner for Transport that until recently a service was provided for the township of Deception Bay by Kangaroo Lines of Caboolture, as part of its other operations from Bribie Island. However, the licence for the Bribie Island service was sold to another operator, who provides a feeder service from Deception Bay to connect with the through service from Bribie Island to Brisbane, which follows the new highway, bypassing Deception Bay township. This latter operator also still provides a shoppers' service from Deception Bay to Redcliffe under a separate permit.

In addition there is a service authorised between Deception Bay and Redcliffe and operated by Redcliffe-Brisbane Motor Services, connecting with their through service to Brisbane.

Apart from these services, Kangaroo Lines still provide services between Caboolture, Deception Bay and Redcliffe under another licence, catering basically for school-children and a weekly shoppers' service.

The Commissioner for Transport has advised me that the particular part of the Bribie Island to Brisbane service operated by one proprietor, Mr. C. B. Skennar, is under examination as he has applied to surrender his permit, which authorises his service from Deception Bay to connect with the Bribie Island to Brisbane service.

I am also advised that an application has been made by Redcliffe-Brisbane Motor Services to delete other than school services from Deception Bay to Redcliffe and the service to Rothwell's Memorial connecting with their through services to

Brisbane. No decisions have yet been made, as these applications are still under investigation. When the investigations are completed, the matters will be referred to the Metropolitan Transit Authority for its consideration.

The proprietors providing the Deception Bay services are in fact eligible to apply for assistance under the Urban Passenger Service Proprietors Assistance Act as the services come within the meaning of an "urban passenger service" under that Act.

#### 11. POLICE MISUSE OF FIELD INTERROGATION REPORTS

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

(1) Do police still use field interrogation reports?

(2) Is he aware that on 8 October at 8.30 p.m. in Redcliffe Parade, Redcliffe, seven youths walking along the street were stopped by police and five were compelled to answer questions which were written on field interrogation reports?

(3) Does he not consider that compelling people to answer all the questions on these reports is an invasion of privacy and reeks of Gestapo tactics?

(4) Are people required by law to answer all the questions or to give merely their names and addresses?

(5) Is he also aware that if people refuse to answer these questions they are told by police that they will be charged with obstruction of an officer in the course of his duty?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) No. It is usual, however, for police to speak to groups of youths congregating or walking in public places. This is a crime prevention and detection technique adopted by law enforcement agencies throughout the world. Similar action taken on the night of 12 October 1976 resulted in three youths being found in possession of a large amount of stolen property which had not at that time been reported stolen. Arising from the possession of this property, the three youths have been charged with breaking and entering offences.

(3) Persons are asked to answer questions and are not compelled as suggested. Such questioning cannot be regarded as an invasion of privacy or reeking of Gestapo tactics.

(4) See answer to (3).

(5) No. If the honourable member has evidence to support this claim I ask him to supply it.

12. RESEARCH INTO POTENTIAL OF QUEENSLAND TOURIST INDUSTRY

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

(1) Did the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau commission a comprehensive research project to determine the attitude of various demographic groups towards Queensland as a holiday State and, if so, what are the details of the research carried out, the results of the research and the cost of the project?

(2) Was the research project carried out by consultants and, if so, who were they and how much did it cost?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes. Psychological research was carried out to determine attitudes towards Queensland as a holiday destination and the results of that research, which produced a comprehensive document, were related to the advertising campaign of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau.

(2) The study was carried out by Consensus Research Pty. Ltd. and the cost was \$15,000, which also included a post-test of the advertising campaign.

13. REGISTRATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES, CAIRNS

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

(1) Have new instructions recently been issued concerning the local payment of motor vehicle registration fees at the Cairns Court House, and under what circumstances are these fees being refused?

(2) Are transfers now required to be forwarded direct to the Main Roads Department, Brisbane, by post from Cairns, by district residents and, if so, from what date did this new provision apply and were the changes widely advertised?

(3) In view of the inconvenience and delay experienced, when will fees be received, new plates and windscreen labels issued and all transactions completed from an issuing centre at the new Main Roads Department building recently opened by the Minister in Abbott Street, Cairns?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) As from 24 September 1976 a new simplified motor vehicle fee system was introduced throughout Queensland.

All clerk of the court offices were advised early in September by the Justice Department of the new requirements.

Included in the procedures was the requirement that where documentation was not complete and correct, the papers should be sent to head office for check against computer records. Instead of forwarding these transactions through the clerk of the court office, reply-paid envelopes were provided to the clerk of the court. This course was adopted to reduce the work-load at clerk of the court offices and to provide a quicker service. Also, it is in preparation for the opening of regional offices, such as Cairns, which will not be on-line to the computer. In these centres, for instance, an application for transfer not accompanied by a current certificate of registration will in some circumstances have to be referred to Brisbane for verification of ownership before processing. With the improved private mail service, processing will be quicker than in double-handling through a country office.

It was expected that a registration branch office would be opened in Cairns in January 1977. However, due to protracted, but essential, industrial negotiations still in progress, the scheduled opening may be deferred at least a month.

14. SITES FOR HIGH SCHOOLS AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS WEST AND SOUTH OF BEENLEIGH

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

(1) Is he aware of the rapid growth in population to the west and south of Beenleigh?

(2) What forward plans are in hand to have suitable land set aside for high schools and primary schools in these areas?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) Yes. Because of the detailed knowledge that the honourable member has of his electorate, he has been able to keep me fully informed on population growth in the Beenleigh district. Negotiations have been commenced with a view to the acquisition of land for one State high school and three State primary schools to meet the future educational needs of the area.

15. DISCHARGE OF UNTREATED EFFLUENT BY SUGAR MILLS

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

(1) How many sugar mills have been licensed under the Clean Waters Act to run untreated mill effluent into streams, and which mills are they?

(2) Which of these mills are taking action to provide effluent treatment to enable them to comply with the provisions of the Clean Waters Act and, of those which are not, how long have they been allowed before they must comply?

(3) How many sugar mills that have not applied for a permit to do so are running untreated effluent into streams, and which mills are they?

(4) Which of these mills have been inspected by officers of the Water Quality Council and why have they not been prosecuted for failure to apply for a permit in accordance with the Act?

(5) What action is being taken to make mills comply with the Act?

*Answers:—*

(1) No sugar mills have been licensed to discharge untreated wastes to streams. All the mills which have been licensed to discharge wastes into streams have been required to provide treatment, which they are in the process of providing. Several of the mills have chosen to dispose of their wastes on land, which at present does not require a licence under the Clean Waters Act 1971-1976.

(2) Recent inspections have disclosed only two unlicensed sugar mills discharging wastes to waters. Those mills are the North Eton Co-operative Sugar Milling Association Ltd. and the Marian Mill Co-operative Society Ltd.

(3) See answer to (1).

(4 and 5) North Eton Mill was inspected by an officer of the Water Quality Council on 17 September and 1 October 1976. This mill does not have a licence because it proposed to dispose of its wastes on land. Marian Mill was inspected by an officer of the Water Quality Council on 8 July and 15 September 1976. This mill held a licence until 30 June 1976, but was late in lodging an application for its renewal and the licence expired. Because an application for a licence for this mill has been lodged and is under consideration by the Water Quality Council, the present discharge is not in breach of the Clean Waters Act. The question of the appropriate action to be taken in respect of these two companies will be decided following consideration by the Water Quality Council of reports on the inspections referred to.

16. BOARD OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDIES DELAY IN VERIFYING STUDENTS' RESULTS

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

Is he aware that the Board of Secondary School Studies has not yet verified the results of the first semester for 1976 Senior

students and that, as a result of this, those schools which have done the correct thing in not releasing the results to students until they have been verified by the board are finding that their students are being disadvantaged in so far as provisional employment prospects are concerned? What has been the delay and will he take action to rectify this situation?

*Answer:—*

I am aware that formal notification of approval of ratings proposed by schools for the Senior certificate was mailed to schools on 7 October 1976. Exceptions to this are cases where the students assessments are being further examined by the chief moderator.

It should be noted that the responsibility of the Board of Secondary School Studies is to issue Senior certificates to students who have completed grade 12 studies. It issues these certificates by 19 December each year. Consequently, Queensland students receive their formal statements of results three weeks earlier than their counterparts in any other State of the Commonwealth.

Notifying schools of approvals of proposed distributions of ratings each semester is another matter. The board has a responsibility to ensure that the standards of assessment for the Senior certificate maintain its credibility. Chief moderators, in carrying out their duties, devote a great deal of care and consideration to each school's proposal in order to ensure fairness to all. They make themselves available for frequent and sometimes protracted consultations with school principals.

The care taken in this respect should be seen as a desirable safeguard for the individual student. Because all schools receive advice of approval distributions of ratings at the same time, no student is disadvantaged.

Where information is required for employment before completion of grade 12, the most appropriate information can be provided by the school.

17. CONSERVATION OF THE BLACK PALM TREE

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

In relation to a tree known as the black palm (Norbanyi Normanbyi) which is confined to the tropical jungles of North Queensland, particularly the Cedar Bay area, and which is a comparatively rare tree used primarily for making spears, batons and walking sticks, is he aware of



the concern being expressed in Far North Queensland about the wanton and indiscriminate destruction of these beautiful trees by squatters in the rainforests and will he give an assurance that the officers of his National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Forestry Department will do what they can to conserve the black palm?

*Answer:—*

I am aware that concern has been expressed at the alleged destruction of black palms (Norbanyi Normanbyi) by squatters in north Queensland rainforests.

Black palm is a relatively uncommon tree of the northern rainforest. However, it does occur over a fairly large area, including the basins of the Daintree, Bloomfield and Amman Rivers. Though the squatters may have used some of these trees for building construction and other purposes, their impact on the availability of the species would be minor.

Much of the land on which black palm occurs is gazetted as national park, State forest or timber reserve and it also occurs on some offshore islands. These are isolated areas, and patrols by officers of the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Department of Forestry are infrequent. My officers will take all steps possible to limit the destruction of black palm, more especially on national parks and areas proposed for national park reservation.

I thank the honourable member for his genuine interest in the black palm and I can assure him that all steps possible will be taken to preserve this rare tree, which is ideal for making spears, batons and walking sticks.

#### 18. PLANS FOR PRE-SCHOOL AND STATE SCHOOL AT MILLBANK

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

(1) Has his department any plans for a pre-school at Millbank in the Bundaberg city area?

(2) What forward planning is there for the building of a new primary school in this area on the land which has been reserved for the past five years?

*Answers:—*

(1) Provision for pre-school facilities has been made on the Millbank primary school site. However, at this stage no detailed planning for these facilities has been undertaken. The present needs of the pre-school

children living at Millbank are served by the Bundaberg West and Norville State Pre-school Centres.

(2) Provision has been made in future planning for a new primary school at Millbank in the next five-year period.

#### 19. CREDIT UNIONS

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

(1) With reference to the recent Victorian decision to introduce a \$10,000,000 compulsory reserve fund for credit unions in that State, what is the number of credit unions registered in Queensland under the Co-operative and Other Societies Act?

(2) What are their total assets?

(3) How many subscribers are in credit unions?

(4) How much have subscribers in these unions?

(5) Will the Government introduce a compulsory fund along the lines of the Victorian scheme as a safeguard for subscribers' funds?

*Answers:—*

The answers to (1) to (4) are compiled from statutory returns lodged with the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs up to 30 June 1976.

(1) 85.

(2) \$75,696,928.

(3) 95,925.

(4) \$60,068,081.

(5) A draft uniform Bill is being prepared in Queensland in conjunction with other States in Australia. The inclusion of a contingency-type fund in this draft is a matter of policy yet to be resolved between State representatives. It might be noted, however, that the Queensland Credit Union League Limited, of which the majority of credit unions are members, operates a savings protection fund with a current balance of \$892,000.

In addition, the Co-operative and Other Societies Act 1967-1974 prescribes that a society (which includes a credit union) shall transfer five per centum of the surplus arising in any year from the business of the society to a capital reserve fund.

#### 20. INSURANCE AGAINST NATURAL DISASTERS

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

(1) What discussions has the Government had with the Commonwealth Government concerning a proposal for the Commonwealth Government to back insurance against natural disasters?

(2) Is the Commonwealth Government considering introducing a scheme whereby the companies involved could make a pool arrangement with Commonwealth-backing for natural disasters caused by cyclones, floods, earthquakes and other causes involving expensive payouts?

(3) What is the number of insurance companies in Queensland offering insurance against natural disasters?

(4) What have been the claims against these insurance companies for natural disasters in Queensland over the last 10 years?

(5) What have been the increases in premiums over those last 10 years for natural disaster insurance?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Government has submitted ideas about natural disaster insurance to the Commonwealth and has offered to liaise with its working party on the subject.

(2) No specified details are known. The Commonwealth working party's report has not been made available to the Queensland Government.

(3 to 5) The information sought is not available. Queensland no longer licenses general insurers in this area and premium rates are not subject to governmental control.

## 21. DRIVING LICENCE FEES

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

As the Leader of the Opposition has claimed that licence fees will increase by 29 per cent in Queensland this year, what are the fees paid for a driving licence in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia?

*Answer:—*

There will be no increase in driving licence fees in Queensland this year and I thank the honourable member for Ipswich West for drawing attention to the fact that the Queensland charge remains well below those in the States which have Governments of the same political persuasion as the Leader of the Opposition. This is only one of many examples which show that Queensland charges still compare very favourably with those of other States.

The drivers' licence fee for a five-year period in Queensland is \$5; in New South Wales it is \$50 for the same period; and

in South Australia it is \$30. Even if the driving fee of \$5 payable in Queensland as part of the annual registration charges for a vehicle is taken into account, a Queensland driver would need to be the sole owner of a vehicle before he would pay the same aggregate charge as a driver in South Australia and he would still pay considerably less than in New South Wales. Many licensed drivers do not, of course, own their own vehicle.

## 22. LIBRARY FACILITIES, LEICHHARDT AND TIVOLI STATE SCHOOLS

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

(1) Has any consideration been given by the Government to building a free-standing library at Leichhardt State School?

(2) Has any provision been made for the establishment of a library facility at the Tivoli State School?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes. It is anticipated that tenders will be invited for the work later in the year as the result of the honourable member's personal and persistent representations.

(2) Yes. Approval is expected at an early date for the construction of a new double teaching area and the conversion of some existing accommodation to a library and staff room.

## 23. TRAFFIC FIGURES FOR ROADS IN COOROORA ELECTORATE

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

(1) What are the latest figures for vehicles using the Bruce Highway between Cooroy and Eumundi, Nambour and Woombye, Tanawha and the Caloundra turn-off, Caloundra turn-off and Bribie Island turn-off, and the Bribie turn-off and Burpengary, stating the period and date of recording and percentage increase each year?

(2) What are the vehicle figures for the Brooloo-Kenilworth road, the Cooroy-Tewantin road, the Yandina-Dunethin Rock road, the Yandina-Cooloola road, the Yandina-Coolooloo road and the Eumundi-Noosaville road, stating the date and the period of recording?

Answers:—

(1) Bruce Highway	
Cooroy-Eumundi . . . . .	3,181
Nambour-Woombye . . . . .	3,177
Tanawha-Caloundra (at Maroochy turn-off) . . . . .	4,888
Caloundra-Bribie Island . . . . .	7,864
Bribie Island-Burpengary . . . . .	9,663
(2) Other Roads	
Brooloo-Kenilworth . . . . .	225
Cooroy-Tewantin . . . . .	1,361
Yandina-Dunethin Rock . . . . .	727
Yandina-Cooloola . . . . .	estimate
Yandina-Cooloolo . . . . .	198
Yandina-Coolum . . . . .	estimate
Eumundi-Noosaville . . . . .	372
Eumundi-Noosaville . . . . .	520

All figures are annual average daily volumes for 1975-76.

Growth on the Bruce Highway is about 8 per cent per annum. On other roads the percentage is very variable and is not a reliable indicator.

#### 24. INDUSTRIAL ESTATE FOR COOROORA ELECTORATE

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

Because of my concern at the high level of unemployment in my electorate, I ask when a Government industrial estate will be opened in the electorate of Cooroora?

Answer:—

The Department of Commercial and Industrial Development has acquired an area of approximately 64 hectares close to Yandina Railway Station for development as a Crown industrial estate. Messrs. Gary, Smallcombe and Associates, consulting engineers, Maroochydore, have been commissioned to prepare detailed plans and specifications covering the initial developmental works. These comprise road-works, drainage, water and sewerage reticulation. Commencement of development of the estate has been tentatively programmed for 1977-78 subject to the availability of funds.

In addition, an area of approximately 20 hectares situated off the Eumundi Road, Noosaville, was acquired by the department in 1975 for future industrial estate purposes.

I would add that with a view to increasing employment opportunities the Government provides a wide range of incentives to encourage the establishment and/or

expansion of industry, particularly in decentralised areas of the State. The provision of fully serviced industrial estates is one such incentive.

The honourable member will appreciate that local community organisations, including local authorities, have an equal responsibility with the Government to assist in the attraction of industry to their respective areas.

#### 25. ACCIDENTS ON BRUCE HIGHWAY BETWEEN BRISBANE AND COOROY

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

What accidents have taken place on the Bruce Highway between Brisbane and Cooroy in the years from 1970 to 1975?

Answer:—

This information is not readily available. To extract it would entail pulling out all accident files for these years. The cost involved would not be warranted.

#### 26. UPGRADING OF OLD CLEVELAND ROAD

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

(1) What plans has the Main Roads Department for the upgrading of Old Cleveland Road between Carina and Capalaba?

(2) When will improvements to the carriageway of Old Cleveland Road be made?

Answers:—

(1) Plans have been completed for a four-lane divided road from Carina to Scrub Road. Design is partly completed from Scrub Road to Belmont Road. Planning layouts have been prepared from Belmont Road to Capalaba for detailed design.

(2) Work is expected to commence late this financial year and the rate of progress will depend on the level of Commonwealth funding in the next Act to operate from 1 July 1977.

#### 27. LEGISLATION TO PRESERVE NATIONAL ESTATE

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

(1) Has the State Government recognised the urgency of the need for legislative protection of our National Estate?

(2) When will preservation legislation be introduced to bring us into line with other States?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) A deal of legislation has already been enacted by this Parliament dealing with this matter; for example, the Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act of 1967, the Fauna Conservation Act 1974 and the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975.

28. VITAMIN C IN DRIED AND CANNED FRUITS

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

(1) With reference to an article in the "Sunday Sun" of 19 September, which said that the Queensland Health Education Council is in the can with food processors because the council claims there is no vitamin C in canned fruit, does the Queensland Health Education Council produce leaflets informing the public that dried and canned fruits contain no vitamin C?

(2) Is this true or is it incorrect as claimed by the managing director of the Northgate cannery and the chief food technologist for Edgells?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am advised that the Queensland Health Education Council produced a pamphlet which stated "Dried fruits and canned fruits contain no Vitamin C." I am further advised that the council is revising the pamphlet.

(2) No individual should rely solely on dried and canned fruits as a source of vitamin C.

29. USE OF ALCOHOL BY SCHOOL-CHILDREN

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

(1) Is he aware of reports of an alarming incidence of drinking amongst school-children?

(2) Have any surveys been conducted into the use of alcohol by school-children?

(3) Is there any evidence to show that alcohol is in widespread use or abuse in our schools?

(4) What measures has his department taken to protect young children from this drug?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am aware of reports, which give cause for concern.

(2) Yes. A major study was conducted by the research branch of my department. The purpose of this study was—

(a) To investigate grade and sex differences in alcohol and drug use, in student attitudes and in the knowledge of alcohol and drugs.

(b) To ascertain the effectiveness of drug and alcohol education programmes given to high school students in Queensland in 1974.

(c) To investigate the relation of personal and social background variables to the use of alcohol and drugs.

The results are the subject of three separate reports. The first report was released in July 1975 and the third in March 1976. The second report, which deals with the effectiveness of drug and alcohol programmes, is in the final stages of preparation.

(3) There is evidence of quite widespread use of alcohol by school-age children. This ranges from a declared use by 31.2 per cent of grade 6 children through to 83.3 per cent by grade 12 students. Careful distinction should be made between use of alcohol by school-age children and use and abuse of alcohol in schools. There is no evidence of use or abuse of alcohol by children while at school.

Another factor of crucial importance in the interpretation of these results concerns the way data were obtained. The data were obtained by students reporting on their current use. No attempt was made to verify this self-reported data. It is possible therefore that these results are inflated owing to a tendency for respondents to feel that it is acceptable to declare usage irrespective of whether or not this actually occurs. A report of an investigation in New South Wales reveals somewhat similar usage patterns.

(4) Teachers are required to deal with the subject of the use and abuse of alcohol as part of the health syllabus of the primary and secondary school. To assist teachers, advisory teachers in alcohol education have been appointed and are operating throughout the State. My advice is that Queensland is a leader in this regard.

30. ARMED HOLD-UPS

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

(1) What were the numbers of armed hold-ups in each of the last five years and where and when did they occur?

(2) How many deaths or serious injuries resulted from these armed hold-ups?

(3) Are any records kept of the psychological problems experienced by persons as a result of armed hold-ups?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) Statistics of the kind sought are not kept by the Police Department and are not readily available without a great deal of research. I do not propose directing that that research be undertaken.

(3) Records of this nature are not kept by the Police Department.

31. HELICOPTERS FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES DURING THE WET SEASON IN NORTH QUEENSLAND

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

(1) As the wet season is imminent, will helicopters be used in the Barron River electorate for urgent medical cases when the roads are flooded and no other suitable means of transport is available?

(2) Will his department cover the cost of this urgent medical transport?

(3) Will this also apply in the Cook electorate, where the rail ambulance used to operate covering Chillagoe, Ootann, Almaden, Lappa, Petford and Dimbulah?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) Where a person requires further medical treatment at a public hospital which it not available at his local hospital, the Queensland Department of Health will meet the cost of his transportation for such treatment; subject to a means test. Normally this would be by rail, or by bus if there is no suitable rail service, but where urgency or the patient's medical condition requires it, transportation would be by air. The form of transportation provided is on the recommendation of the medical superintendent of the local hospital, subject to the approval of the Director-General of Health and Medical Services and is determined by the circumstances of the case.

The department does not assume the responsibility for transporting persons to the point where they first seek medical advice.

32. BUS CONCESSIONS FOR PENSIONERS, MOSSMAN-CAIRNS

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

As a private bus is the only means of transport for pensioners travelling from the Mossman Shire to Cairns, will he make

available on this private bus similar concessions to those which pensioners in urban areas have?

*Answer:—*

The Urban Passenger Service Proprietors Assistance Act does not authorise me to provide concessions to pensioners travelling between Mossman and Cairns, which is not an urban service within the meaning of this Act. Accordingly, there could be no payment of a subsidy as compensation for fare revenue lost by the proprietor concerned if such concessions were given.

Nevertheless, many proprietors of similar services do give concessions to pensioners. If the private bus operator concerned decides to do likewise, this would be approved.

33. PAYMENT FOR VALUATION OF HOME FOR DEATH DUTIES BY SURVIVING PENSIONER SPOUSE

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

When a pensioner husband or wife dies and there is joint-ownership of the home, is the spouse forced to pay the fees of a valuer to value the home for death duties?

*Answer:—*

The honourable member is no doubt aware that the Queensland Government leads Australia in death duty reform and that death duties between husband and wife were abolished during the latter half of last year. As a consequence of that action, the Queensland Commissioner of Stamp Duties no longer requires a property valuation to be lodged where the whole estate passes to the widow or widower, as the case may be.

If, however, there are assets in the estate passing to other relatives or strangers in blood, it is necessary to determine the rate of duty payable by those other beneficiaries and a valuation of all assets, including the matrimonial home, is required.

The valuation fee is presumably an administration cost which would be paid by the executor and deducted from the share of the residuary beneficiary, whoever that might be. If the widow is the residuary beneficiary, then she would be worse off by the amount of the valuation fee. If someone else is the residuary beneficiary, then the widow would not have to bear the cost of the valuation, either directly or indirectly.

All these problems will be solved in so far as the State of Queensland is concerned when death duties are abolished on 1 January 1977. The problem will still be there in respect of Federal estate duties and the Federal Commissioner of Taxation, over whose requirements the Queensland Parliament has no control.

34. REGIONAL PASTORAL CO. AND  
MR. HARRY LONDY

**Mr. K. J. Hooper**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) With reference to the Press release in "The Courier-Mail" of 28 September in which he welcomed the announcement of a \$35,000,000 housing and commercial project by Regional Pastoral Co., has his attention been drawn to an answer by the Attorney-General on 29 September in which he said that there is no record of the company in Queensland and that the Corporate Affairs Office had to contact the New South Wales Corporate Affairs Office by telephone for details?

(2) What inquiries had he initiated on this company, not known in Queensland, before he issued his Press statement?

(3) What inquiries were made to ascertain the bona fides of the managing director, Mr. Harry Londy, who is the same person who was involved in previous dubious real estate ventures in this State, and were the inquiries more extensive than those he made into the background of Mr. Wiley Fancher?

(4) Can he give an assurance that traders, subcontractors and suppliers called upon to supply goods and services on credit to this low paid-up capital company will be paid and not experience massive losses as have occurred in previous companies operated by Mr. Harry Londy?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) From time to time people do come to Queensland to establish and operate land development projects. However, all such activities must, from their outset, conform absolutely with this State's statutory and other requirements in this regard. I am certain the State authorities concerned will exercise the closest scrutiny over the activities of this and all similar

developments so that the relevant laws of Queensland are observed in their entirety. Naturally, if it should come to the notice of the honourable member that there is anything underhand or illegal in this development proposal and he can produce evidence to that effect, then the onus is on him to draw such matters to the attention of the proper authorities.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** I did that yesterday. You were caught with your pants down.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I have a copy of the letter he wrote to Mr. Burns. It is very interesting and long.

35. LOAN TO MR. PETER MARKOVICH BY  
FINANCE & COMMERCE CO-OPERATIVE  
SOCIETY LTD.

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

(1) Was Peter Markovich granted a loan by Finance & Commerce Co-operative Society Ltd., is he a son-in-law of a director of Finance & Commerce whose appointment commenced on 9 January 1975 and, if so, what is the name of the director?

(2) On what date was the loan given to Peter Markovich and on what date did he become a member of Finance & Commerce?

(3) Is the director concerned also a director or shareholder of Coonoona Pty. Ltd., Nursing Centres of Australia (Mermaid Beach) Pty. Ltd., Investment Centres of Australia Ltd. and Nursing Centres of Australia Ltd., all of whom obtained massive loans from Great Australian Permanent Building Society, United Savings Permanent Building Society and Finance & Commerce Co-operative Society Ltd.?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) The information sought is not required to be lodged in the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs and is, therefore, not available. If the honourable member has information which would necessitate the investigation of this co-operative society, he should convey the information to the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, and stop playing politics.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You are still protecting crooks, Bill.

**Mr. KNOX:** Why doesn't the honourable member put the information in the hands of the people who can do the investigation? He is saying he has it and we are saying he should produce it.

36. ISSUE OF LICENCES TO TIN-DREDGING COMPANIES IN NORTH QUEENSLAND FOR DREDGE PONDS

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

Will he ensure that no licences are issued under the Clean Waters Act to tin-dredging companies in North Queensland until adequate steps have been taken to ensure that the mining companies comply with adequate provisions for the storage and drying of dredge-pond slimes and for the location and damming of dredge ponds in a manner that will prevent the escape of sludge into streams and until adequate consideration has been given by the Water Quality Council to the report on a study carried out by the Townsville university into the use of flocculents on dredge-pond fluids?

*Answer:—*

It is not an easy task to devise practicable control measures which will permit the dredging operations to continue and, at the same time, prevent any escape of sludge to streams. One solution would be to close down the dredging operation, but this would put some 200 men out of work.

It is necessary therefore to seek a compromise solution which will permit dredging to continue with a reduction in the pollution of streams. The Water Quality Council is seeking such a compromise and the honourable member may be assured that the matters raised in his question will be taken into account in preparing conditions for any licences that might be granted under The Clean Waters Act 1971-1976. I may add that the Water Quality Council has invited the Hinchinbrook Shire Council to suggest conditions which might be acceptable to that council.

37. PEOPLE LIVING IN VESSELS ON QUEENSLAND WATER-WAYS

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

(1) With reference to the new provision in the Harbour Corporation By-laws,

approved recently by Executive Council, that relate to the granting of permits for people wishing to live on vessels in certain water-ways, how many people are currently living in how many vessels in Queensland water-ways?

(2) What is the number of complaints received by his department regarding the noise and pollution from this floating population?

(3) What are the areas where permits will be granted and what are the prohibited areas?

*Answers:—*

(1) No census has been taken of people living on board boats in Queensland and the information sought by the honourable member is not available.

(2) Complaints have mostly come from local authorities and residents in the Gold Coast and near North Coast areas. I am not able to give the honourable member an exact number as many of the complaints are telephoned and are not recorded.

Frequent complaints are received by my Department of Harbours and Marine during Christmas holiday periods, particularly from residents who live along the Nerang River.

(3) Prohibited areas are canals within the meaning of "The Canals Act 1958 to 1960"; Caboolture River; Pumicestone Channel and all water-ways connected thereto; Lake Currumundi; Bullock Creek; Hays Inlet; Eprapah Creek; Moogurrapum Creek; Nerang River upstream of the Gold Coast bridge, and creeks and watercourses connected with the Nerang River; Tallebudgera Creek; Currumbin Creek; Coombabah Creek; that the part of the Coomera River adjoining the area of the City of Gold Coast; and Paradise Point boat harbour.

At the present time the only area in which a permit will be required to live on board a vessel is the Broadwater at Southport. The part of the Broadwater which is a boat harbour managed and controlled by the Harbours Corporation is excluded from the provisions of the by-laws, as these boat harbours are controlled under separate by-law.

38. UPGRADING OF ROADS FOR USE BY BULK-MILK TRUCKS, PORT CURTIS ELECTORATE

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

(1) Will money be made available for the upgrading of roads in the Port Curtis electorate over which bulk-milk trucks will travel and, if so, what areas will be granted funds?

(2) When will funds be made available?

(3) Will funds be sufficient to construct all-weather roads to ensure a service to dairymen?

**Mr. HINZE**: I did have discussions with the chairman of directors and members of the Board of the Port Curtis Co-operative Dairy Association and members of the respective councils when they indicated to me that they were concerned because they had been told that they had to go on to bulk-milk supply. I now read the prepared answers.

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes, funds will be made available to Miriam Vale Shire, Livingstone, Calliope and Fitzroy Shires.

(2) I have sent letters to the local authorities concerned in the last week, advising them of the allocations for this year and tentative amounts for the next two financial years.

(3) It will provide for significant improvement to the existing roads and ensure a reasonable service to the dairymen.

39. CO-ORDINATOR-GENERAL

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

(1) When is the present Co-ordinator-General, Sir Charles Barton, to retire from the position?

(2) What is the salary of the Co-ordinator-General?

(3) How long has Sir Charles held the position and what was the procedure involved for his appointment?

(4) If a new Co-ordinator-General is appointed in the New Year, will it be a prerequisite for the new appointee to

have a degree in civil engineering or any other special qualifications?

(5) If a new Co-ordinator-General is to be appointed, what criteria of selection are to be used for the appointment?

(6) How many positions in the State Government service carry a higher salary than the Co-ordinator-General and what are the positions and the respective salaries?

(7) What are the classifications and salaries of (a) the Commissioner of Main Roads, (b) the Deputy Commissioner of Main Roads, (c) the Under Secretary, Premier's Department, (d) the Deputy Co-ordinator-General and (e) the Regional Co-ordinator Southern, Co-ordinator-General's Department?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 3) I refer the honourable member to page 1385 of the Queensland Government Gazette of 14 December 1968.

(2) \$1,460.20 per fortnight.

(4 and 5) I refer the honourable member to section 7 of the State and Regional Planning and Development, Public Works Organization and Environmental Control Act 1971-1974, which does not prescribe any particular qualifications for appointment to the office.

(6) None.

(7) In terms of salary per fortnight:—

(a) \$1286.70.

(b) \$1182.90.

(c) \$1217.00.

(d) \$1148.10.

(e) \$953.60.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MEMBERS' CRITICISM

**Mr. BURNS**: I preface my question to the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads by drawing his attention to the article on the front page of "The Courier-Mail" today entitled "States 'hog' credit" and reminding him of his answer yesterday in this Parliament.

Is he aware that the criticism of the Queensland Government's grandstanding by the Liberal Federal member for Petrie has



now been endorsed by the Prime Minister and the Federal Government Parliamentary Parties?

Is he also aware that according to the report the Federal member for Petrie is supported by other Queensland members, namely, the Liberal member for Griffith and the National Party member for Kennedy?

In view of this condemnation of the Queensland Government, will the Minister ensure that the Commonwealth Government receives fair credit for its spending in Queensland and abandon what has been called "the headline-grabbing undeserving stance by members of the Queensland Government"?

Is today's report evidence of yet another fracture in the already divided ranks of the Liberal Party in Queensland?

**Mr. HINZE:** Taking the last part of the question first, I am not aware of any division within the Liberal Party. I see that the Deputy Premier of Queensland has the matter well and truly under control. We have the greatest respect for his ability, and undoubtedly there will be no problem in regard to his party in Queensland or in Australia.

**An Opposition Member** interjected.

**Mr. HINZE:** I should have asked the honourable member the same question. Bart Lourigan lopped Jack Egerton's head off. Now Labor is trying to lop poor old Bart Lourigan's head off. Who is next? Is it Tommy Burns? I have some grave doubts as I look across the Chamber. Honourable members opposite can smile now, but we have been in the House a long time and we have seen these heads roll. Honourable members opposite do not smile then. Over there we have seen heads roll one after the other.

The Opposition did not have enough members even to send a representative out yesterday to play in the annual cricket match against a Press team. The Opposition was not even represented, yet this game has been played between members of this House and the Press for over 100 years. The A.L.P. deliberately rejected the invitation to play. I do not know whether it was poor old Bart Lourigan's head that the Leader of the Opposition was trying to lop off yesterday or whether it was the head of one of the members of his party—probably the latter. And the honourable member for Bundaberg is next.

But let me get back to the question. I am very proud that I am a Minister of a State Government in Australia. This is apparently the mantle that we will have to continue to wear as we have in Australia a Government of the Commonwealth, which was originally set up by the States under the Constitution. After representatives are elected to the Federal Parliament, they are down in Canberra for only a short time when the third-generation bureaucrats grab them. As soon as they do, these bureaucrats try to indicate to the elected members that the Federal Government is in fact giving us back our funds.

If this is the way that Mr. Hodges or anybody else in the Federal Parliament wishes to refer to me or to this Government, they may continue to do so, but we will never stop fighting for the funds to which we are justly entitled. We have been referred to as one of the most prosperous States in Australia, as has Western Australia, too. Early in December I have to sit down with Mr. Peter Nixon and argue the case for more funds for Queensland roads, which I will do on behalf of this Government. So honourable members opposite need not think that we are going to back down because of John Hodges, Esquire, M.P., or anybody like him. All I say to these fellows is that they should try to remember that the people who put them into Parliament are their own constituents, not third-generation bureaucrats in Canberra; and the quicker they learn it, the better.

#### QUEENSLAND TEACHERS' MASS MEETING AT WOOLLOONGABBA

**Mr. MILLER:** Is the Premier aware that teachers who were present at the mass meeting held recently at Woolloongabba are enraged at statements attributed to Mr. Costello alleging that a vote taken indicates support for strike action, when in fact it was shown that the teachers were 2 to 1 against strike action? Can the Premier take any action to protect the great majority of sensible teachers against this continuing misrepresentation and coercion by the union president?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I can appreciate the concern of the honourable member for Ithaca—a concern shared by very many of us—that the public should get the right figures in relation to that ballot. I am glad that

the honourable member has drawn attention to the correct figure. He also drew attention to the fact that teachers themselves are concerned about it.

Teachers have rung me also and others of my colleagues on this matter. They have asked whether it is possible to have a secret ballot conducted by the Industrial Court. I am quite sure that Cabinet will agree to the holding of such a ballot by the court if sufficient interest is shown by the teachers and there is a demand from them for it. I give the honourable member the assurance that the Government will also give protection to any teachers who take a firm stand on this issue. We will not allow them to be intimidated by the union or by Mr. Costello.

**FREEZER DISPLAYS, MARK-IT FOODS, GEEBUNG**

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I ask the Minister for Health: Will he arrange for his inspectors to immediately inspect the freezer displays of Mark-It Foods, Geebung, where I purchased these Birdseye brand beefburgers this morning in a thawed-out condition? Will he have these beefburgers fully analysed to ascertain the effect of thawing on their safety as food? Will his officers condemn all suspect food in this filthy retail barn, particularly Scott's Pizza Supreme, which are thawed, Birdseye brand beefburgers, which are thawed, and any other food covered with filthy grey sugar or rice? Would he expect these foods to be perfect if properly stored or properly frozen in these stores?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I assure the honourable member that it is the policy of the Government to maintain the very highest health standards throughout the whole of the State. As to his concern about this particular matter—I assure him that I will have my departmental officers look into the problem, and I shall give him an answer as soon as possible.

**SIGNS FOR NERANG-BURLEIGH ROAD**

**Mr. GIBBS:** I ask the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads: As the Nerang-Burleigh Road is now completed to a high standard, will he consider having suitable signs erected at Nerang and Burleigh drawing attention to the fact that this road is an alternative route to the Nerang-Broadbeach Road?

**Mr. HINZE:** I thank the honourable member for his question.

**Mr. Yewdale** interjected.

**Mr. HINZE:** I believe in niceties. I am not like honourable members opposite. They try to pop things over us at times but they do not get away with it. Let them try to put something over and see how they get on.

I will give consideration to the erection of the signs referred to by the honourable member for Albert on the Nerang-Burleigh Road. I can see immediately, of course, that they may accentuate the problem the honourable member referred to yesterday. If there is an increased traffic flow on that section—which is a very great achievement of which I am extremely proud and a road which will be used by many people, particularly over the Christmas holidays—it will accentuate the problem in the township of Nerang and at the narrow bridge there. However, consideration will be given to the honourable member's request.

Whilst I am speaking on this subject, I might say that I notice in the Press this morning a letter from a person who complained about road-hogs who travel slowly on the South-east Freeway. The signs that have been erected on main roads asking people, in what is in effect an educational programme for a few months, to keep to the left have been very successful. We propose to erect similar signs on the South-east Freeway and other roads where they have application. I thank those drivers, particularly truck drivers, who have taken notice of the Government's request to move to the left of the road.

**COMMUNIST-ORGANISED "A CHRISTIAN CHALLENGE TO PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL"**

**Mr. LINDSAY:** I ask the Premier: With regard to recent moves by atheistic Communists to infiltrate and obtain support from unsuspecting Christians through the organisation of public vigils—

(a) Has the Premier seen the memo signed by a certain Rhyl Hurley of 125 Musgrave Road, Red Hill, on 12 October 1976 which advises his readers of a public vigil on Friday night, together with details of an advertisement headed "A Christian Challenge to People of Good Will", which goes on to say—

"However, the fundamental purpose of our vigil is to take a positive stand to

build a more just society. More specifically we believe we must build a system which is marked by—

(1) Much more individual participation in the democratic process of Government rather than merely voting at elections;

(2) A truly just sharing of wealth and power—rather than its accumulation by a minority.”

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will come to his question.

**Mr. LINDSAY:** And so on.

(b) Could the Premier advise me, a democratically elected member of this Parliament who himself teaches two periods a week in an honorary capacity in a Christian school, and who has seen Communist manifestos of the type outlined in the bunkers and indoctrination centres of Communist North Vietnamese battalions, how best to alert those who believe in God of these latest moves by atheistic Communists to impose their manifestos on the citizens of Queensland?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I appreciate the question asked by the honourable member. It does show that he and many others on this side of the House at least have a very deep appreciation of what these people are attempting to do to subvert, undermine and destroy our way of life rather than to protect it. I counsel many of the people who are inclined to be deceived by these people—these characters—to be sure they are not deceived. I would like some day, if the honourable member wishes, to give a run-down on most of these so-called Christians, their backgrounds, their association with Communists and their Left-wing tendencies.

**Mr. Houston:** You've been promising us that for years.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I assume the honourable member for Bulimba supports them. Does he support them?

**Mr. Houston:** You've been promising that for years and you've done nothing about it.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I would like to know who on the Opposition side supports them.

**Mr. Houston:** State your case.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** He is not game to say, of course, because he knows

who they are and what they are. I doubt whether even the Leader of the Opposition would support them.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** He is not game to support them.

**Mr. Burns:** Are you saying these Christian people who are holding this vigil are Communists?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Burns:** He can't read your writing, John. He can't read your writing, Mr. Greenwood.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper** interjected.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I am inclined to say a little about the honourable member for Archerfield, but I wish to answer this question, which is a serious one. I want to warn many people who are so easily led and who could be influenced because there is talk about a prayer meeting for freedom—I want to ensure that they are not deceived and they are not hoodwinked. That is exactly what is being attempted. One of these days, if necessary, I will give a run-down of the characters—the subversive elements in the community—who are trying to deceive and mislead honest people.

**Mr. Houston:** Get outside this House and name them and say what you believe.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Does the honourable member for Bulimba support them? I will line every one of them up as supporters of this group. I challenge them to get out of it and I line them up as supporting this particular group. You can see, Mr. Speaker, how silent they are.

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

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### HEALTH EDUCATION INITIATIVES

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Minister for Health) (12.8 p.m.): The Queensland Government has sought to involve the people of Queensland in details of new policies and initiatives of the Government in the field of health. I have already tabled in this Parliament on behalf of the Government the new policy on the care of the intellectually handicapped and a health paper on the school dental services for the children of Queensland. It is the Government's intention to introduce later in this

session legislation which will bring about a totally new concept for the training and education of nurses in this State. It is intended that a board of nursing studies be established as part of a major nursing education programme, to ensure that our standard of nurse training is of the best and highest. To canvass advice and counsel from the nursing profession and others interested in nursing education, I have prepared and had circulated a health paper broadly outlining the new initiatives for education. I now seek leave to table this further health paper on the nursing education programme.

*Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the paper on the table.*

## SUPPLY

### COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Debate resumed from 12 October (see p. 880) on Mr. Knox's motion—

“That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1976-77, a sum not exceeding \$127,953 to defray Salaries—His Excellency the Governor.”

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Minister for Health) (12.10 p.m.): In rising to speak on the Financial Statement, I wish to congratulate the Treasurer on the presentation of his first Budget. The Treasurer has presented to this Parliament a blueprint of progress for this State and he has admirably carried on the tradition of the former Treasurer (Sir Gordon Chalk) in his previous 10 Budgets.

In recent times the Opposition has sought to make much capital of the introduction by the Commonwealth Government of a separate tax levy for the provision of hospital and medical services for the people of Australia. The Leader of the Opposition in the debate on Matters of Public Interest a few days ago and in his Budget speech again went off half-cocked in declaring the end of the free hospital service in this State. He has chosen to denigrate the hospital service by words, and further has sought to confuse the people of Queensland concerning their own personal choice of hospital and medical care.

I can assure the honourable member that the free hospital system that has operated in Queensland since 1946 will continue. By

that I mean that hospitals will make no direct charge for patients who elect to be admitted to the public wards of our public hospitals or elect to attend the outpatient or casualty departments of our public hospitals system. The honourable member would be aware that the levy referred to in his question and in his statement was initiated by the Commonwealth Government.

I remind the honourable member that the Medibank programme was introduced by his party in the Federal sphere. The results of this imposition are still being felt throughout Australia. I also remind the honourable member that it was introduced by his party in the form of a 1.35 per cent levy. In fact it was taken to Federal Parliament and was defeated in the Senate at that time. The imposition of this levy is a Commonwealth matter which was approved and introduced by a Labor Federal Government. It has also been introduced by the present Federal Government. The Queensland Government has made its position quite clear to both the Labor Federal Government and the present Federal Government. Unfortunately there is nothing that the Queensland Government can do in this matter.

Quite obviously the Leader of the Opposition has once again forgotten to do his homework. Once again he has just sprouted concepts that he has half heard to achieve a scatter-gun effect of knocking for the sake of his image. I am certain that the people of Queensland are getting heartily sick and tired of explaining and correcting statements made by the Leader of the Opposition.

For the honourable member's information I will point out that in his Green Paper tabled in Federal Parliament in May 1973, the then Minister for Social Security (the Honourable Bill Hayden) stated that Medibank would be financed not by one levy or two levies but by three levies, plus taxation funds from Consolidated Revenue. Mr. Hayden and his A.L.P. colleagues, including the Leader of the Opposition, obviously don't wish to be reminded of their scheme that I call “Levibank.”

Mr. Hayden proposed a health insurance levy on individuals' taxable incomes; his second levy was to be on workers' compensation and motor third-party insurance premiums; and his third levy was on products “believed” to be deleterious to health in order to recover the cost of health services

to which the product and/or the consumption of the product gives rise, whatever that may mean.

Mr. Hayden made it quite clear that he wanted the income levy to be quite clearly shown to all taxpayers as the cost of their medical care. Mr. Hayden spoke constantly about the 1.35 per cent levy, but he firmly stated that all estimates and financial planning were based on the announced rate of 1.35 per cent in the first year only of operation of the programme. The A.L.P., through Mr. Hayden's paper, said—

“The rate of the levy be adjusted regularly to take into account changes in relationship between taxable incomes and health care costs for which the fund is liable. The rate to apply for the year should be announced no later than Budget time.”

Quite obviously the architect of Medibank, Mr. Hayden, saw that his initial income levy couldn't be held to just 1.35 per cent. No doubt his economic experience warned him of the inflation plight that the Whitlam Government of the day was steering the nation into. Mr. Hayden said on the question of any ceiling that this should be reviewed annually. Mr. Hayden also proposed to levy repatriation beneficiaries and then have them make application for reimbursement from the levy fund, on the basis that it should be a universal income levy and with full collection of the levy it would be easy to administer. On behalf of the Labor Party, Mr. Hayden, in his Green Paper, stated that with the introduction of the levies, the “Australian Government will actually reduce its contribution to the cost of medical and health services”.

Mr. Hayden's plans called for a series of levies on workers' compensation and third-party motor insurance. As he stated, “in the case of workers' compensation insurance, the levy on premiums would need to be supplemented by a levy on notional premiums of self-employed employers”. The levy on the workers' compensation programme would be of the order of 8 to 11 per cent, Mr. Hayden stated, while it would again vary by a few per cent in third-party motor premiums from 5 to 8 per cent, just to give flexibility to his levies.

The Leader of the Opposition has claimed that the Queensland free hospital system has been stopped through the introduction of the

Medibank levy. Surely the Hayden plan of levies, a complex and confusing scheme of finance, sought to pay for health service delivery to this nation; but this is a levy scheme that no doubt the Leader of the Opposition just wasn't aware of, or for the sake of political mileage, chose to ignore, and with its complications as I have indicated, it is extremely hard to comprehend with all its intricacies.

The honourable member is well aware that the Queensland Government has lodged protests with the Federal Government against the Medibank levy; however, because of the confidentiality of the discussions held and this correspondence, I am unable to table these documents or to disclose the nature of the contents thereof.

The Queensland Government's position is quite clear. We were opposed to the imposition of the levy by the Commonwealth Government in 1972 by the Labor Government and we are opposed to the levy still. We have had the courage to express our opposition on every occasion. The Opposition is playing politics in this matter. It astounds me beyond comprehension that the Labor Party representatives in this House, who proudly campaigned to have Whitlam elected in 1972 with the Medibank scheme as one of the chief planks of their platform, should have the audacity and the political naivety and dishonesty to try to shift the blame for the Medibank levy from Whitlam to Fraser. What utter hypocrisy! What total dishonesty!

The Labor Party has not changed its spots. I remind the people of Queensland that the Leader of the Opposition is the same Mr. Burns who was Australian President of the A.L.P. in 1972, the same Mr. Burns who supported Mr. Whitlam on every occasion and the same Mr. Burns who is now trying to convince the people of Queensland to “Bank on Burns”, no doubt to achieve the same disastrous results.

**Mr. Aikens:** The biggest A.L.P. lime-lighter in the 1972 campaign.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I believe that would be quite correct.

The Leader of the Opposition makes reference to his staff being unable to obtain information from Treasury or Health Department officers. The honourable member is

aware of procedures that should be adopted in obtaining information such as that requested from departmental and Treasury officers and had he availed himself of these recognised avenues I could have advised him that the estimated amount which Queensland will receive under the Medibank Agreement for the current financial year is \$106,739,000.

Total expenditure budgeted in this financial year for hospital operation and maintenance as provided in the Trust and Special Fund Estimates this financial year is \$264,100,000. This includes the operating costs of the Mater Public Hospital, which are now included in the Government accounts. The comparable provision for the previous financial year was \$218,400,000 and this year we see an increase of \$45,700,000, or 21 per cent, which will permit services to be maintained at their present level and new facilities to be brought on line as they are completed. The Treasurer in his Budget has shown an increase of 87 per cent in the growth in real expenditure in hospital services over the past 10 years.

I want to explain that while Queensland's free hospital system has been free at the point of delivery, and is still so today, running such a mammoth organisation takes mammoth funds, which have had to be found by successive Treasurers. For Opposition critics of the Queensland hospital system to say that suddenly from 1 October when the Medibank levy was introduced, the \$200,000,000-plus service is now for the first time costing Queenslanders money is indeed to make a mockery of the intelligence of the community at large.

Queenslanders have been well aware that because we have had a so-called free hospital system, one that today still is free to all people at the point of delivery and one that will continue to be free, State moneys have had to be used to provide this service. Because we have led Australia in the provision of health services to the people, it was to Queensland's decided financial advantage to accept the A.L.P.-initiated Medibank hospital scheme, which was also to be financed by a levy, for with the introduction of the Medibank hospital scheme, the Queensland contribution to the running costs of our public hospitals and health services fell from 83 per cent to 50 per cent. Thus in very real terms, the State Government was able to free funds which had previously

been committed to the maintenance of the hospital service. In the last financial year, the Commonwealth Government provided \$68,000,000 towards the running of hospital services in this State, but as honourable members will all be aware, this was taxpayers' money, and for the past 30 years it has been every taxpayer's money that has been financing our free hospital service.

The Opposition has chosen to select words to try to bring this fine health and hospital service in Queensland into disrepute, and I believe its members stand condemned today for trying to trick Queenslanders by the smart use of words.

Today I wish to outline to honourable members the great initiatives shown by this Government, and I refer to the major capital works programme that is being undertaken in the health field to ensure that this State, and every section of this State, has medical and hospital facilities that will service the people well in the last quarter of this century and into the 21st century.

The Queensland Government has undertaken a massive building programme because of the extra moneys that have flowed from the Commonwealth Government since it has accepted more of the financial burden to provide a scheme for the rest of Australia that, in delivery, will compare with the progressive Queensland scheme, which has been in operation for many years. Because of this building programme, Queensland will continue to lead the rest of the nation in the provision of hospital and medical facilities for the benefit of all people. This is no idle claim; these are the undisputed facts.

Let us look at the cost of delivering medical services from our hospitals. In today's modern medical and scientific boom period, costs of delivery are indeed of great concern to the Government. As a Government, we are conscious of the need to ensure that we get the best value for every dollar spent on the hospital service, and the efficient running of our hospitals is due to the strict budget scrutiny that is maintained by officers of my department. I wish to point out to honourable members that the running costs each week for the Royal Brisbane Hospital complex, for example, now have reached in excess of \$1,250,000. The cost of caring for a patient in the public wards of the Royal Brisbane Hospital is \$81.19 a day; at the Royal Children's Hospital, \$104 a

day; and at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, \$73 a day. Another cost example is the Townsville Hospital, where the average cost for the care of each patient in that hospital last year was \$527.23.

I have mentioned the major building programme that has been undertaken by the Government, and I believe that honourable members will be interested in a progress report on some of the major developments that are being undertaken throughout the State by this Government for the benefit of all Queenslanders. At Atherton there is a two-stage project to build a new ward block. The first stage will have 52 beds and the second stage 22 beds, together with full modern facilities. The completed cost of this project will be \$3,300,000, as the honourable member for Mulgrave would know because he has made strong representations for this project, and we anticipate the completion of Stage I next year.

At Boonah, the Government is building a new hospital of 35 beds at the cost of \$1,400,000 and this, too, is scheduled for completion next year.

Several projects are being undertaken by the North Brisbane Hospitals Board, and the largest of these is the completion of the Block Seven project, which is to have a final all-up cost of \$30,000,000. It is planned to progressively occupy this new block during the next financial year. Associated with the Block Seven project is the rehabilitation medicine department, and the first stage of this project is scheduled for completion later this year. The two-stage programme is to cost \$2,200,000.

At the Princess Alexandra Hospital a new 90-bed psychiatric unit is being built at a cost of \$4,900,000. This centre is in line with the Government's policy to break down the community stigma associated with mental illness and mental disease and to treat the acutely psychiatrically ill in the same centres as any other sick person, that is, in the acute hospitals. This project is scheduled for completion next year. We also have a two-stage project to extend the X-ray department at the hospital. This project, again to be completed next year, is to cost an estimated \$1,600,000.

Recently I opened a new day hospital attached to the geriatric unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, and we are currently spending \$395,000 on renovating the existing unit.

Work is progressing on the \$3,700,000 four-storey upward extension of the hospital's administration unit, and this project is scheduled for completion in 1978. This year we also expect the \$968,000 new dialysis unit at the hospital to be completed.

It will cater for patients who have terminal and other forms of renal disease. I remind the Committee that it is now recognised that the Princess Alexandra Hospital has one of the most outstanding renal units in the world.

Honourable members will be aware that tenders for the site works for the new obstetrical unit of some 230 beds at Mt. Gravatt have been called and are currently being assessed by officers of the Works Department. The current estimate for this on-line development is \$20,000,000.

The Government has guaranteed the Mater Hospital authorities to finance the redevelopment of the public hospital at an estimated cost of \$18,000,000.

Returning again to Brisbane's northside—at the Prince Charles Hospital four major projects are under way, as this hospital continues to develop to a full major acute general hospital. I am certain that all honourable members know of the international reputation that this hospital already holds. Next year we expect to have the observation ward of the neuro-psychiatric unit completed at a cost of \$1,300,000, while this year the central chilled water station costing \$636,225 is now nearing completion.

The major pathology block costing \$7,500,000 is under way and on schedule, and it is expected that it will be completed in 1978. Plans have also been completed for the services building for the neuro-psychiatric unit.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Mr. Row, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to the state of the Committee. There is not a quorum of members to hear this important speech by the Minister.

(Quorum formed.)

**Dr. EDWARDS:** Also in the metropolitan complex is the Redcliffe Hospital programme, and I know that the honourable member for Murrumba is well aware of the work that is being done there. Work is under way on the first stage of 144 beds, which

is to cost \$19,700,000 and is scheduled for completion in 1979. The second stage of this project will provide a further 180 beds.

We expect that the second stage of the maternity section, providing another 24 beds, will be completed this year at a cost of \$198,000.

I am mentioning bed numbers to assure honourable members that the Government has planned well ahead in the provision of adequate numbers of both public and private and intermediate beds. With on-line developments in both the public hospital and private hospital sector of hospital building, bed needs both in the Brisbane metropolitan area and in country centres will be more than adequate. We expect the new Medibank scheme to make little difference in the demand for the type of hospital beds, although some unqualified spokesmen have again tried to panic the public with misleading statements.

Returning to the Government's initiatives—at Cairns Hospital, site preparation work costing \$737,601 is under way for the two-stage ward block complex to provide a further 268 beds at an estimated cost of \$18,700,000.

The first stage of the new 80-bed nursing home unit at Dalby costing \$1,400,000 is due for completion next year, while the \$212,500 new kitchen and dining room block is to commence shortly.

At Gympie Hospital, planning is being undertaken to remodel the main block to provide 69 beds, while at Inglewood the new general block of 25 beds and kitchen and dining room block costing \$660,000 is due for completion in December this year. I visited this area with the honourable member for Carnarvon and I know that he is very keen on this development. Investigations are being made following his representations about conditions at the Goondiwindi Hospital. I hope to have a discussion with him later on this matter.

Work on the \$14,000,000 maternity section, nurses' training school and dental clinic at the Innisfail Hospital is also almost complete. At Ipswich, in my own electorate, work is progressing on the \$9,100,000 ward block which will provide a further 190 beds. At Mackay, final planning is underway for the second stage of development there to provide 140 beds at a cost of approximately \$6,000,000. It is hoped that tenders can be called later this year.

Another \$6,000,000 development is planned at Mareeba, where the whole hospital is to be redeveloped.

At Maryborough Hospital, work on the upward extension over the outpatient section to provide operating theatre accommodation, more private beds and a dental clinic is expected to be completed in the middle of next year at a cost of \$4,000,000. The honourable member for Maryborough has constantly made representations to me on this matter.

At Mt. Isa, we plan to build a five-storey extension for additional accommodation and our current estimate for this project is \$11,600,000. I read the comments made by the honourable member for Mt. Isa in his speech in this debate. I assure him that his representations will be taken into consideration in the financial programming of the Health Department in the near future. Next month I will be visiting Mt. Isa as part of my pledge to visit personally all of the 134 hospitals under my administration. I have already inspected over 90 hospitals, and on this trip I will be returning to the Richmond Hospital to perform the official opening of the \$1,000,000 new hospital of 14 beds.

Recently I was in Rockhampton and opened the new \$1,400,000 intellectually handicapped unit, and at present planning is under way for a new medical and services block to provide 230 maternity, paediatric and medical beds for private, intermediate and public patients.

The first stage of work at the Southport Hospital is well under way and this project, to be completed in 1978, is to cost \$18,600,000. I am pleased to see that the honourable member for Albert is in the Chamber. When he was a member of the hospitals board he was very closely associated with the planning of the programmes for the Southport Hospital. Although it is situated outside his electorate, I know that he retains his interest in its development. We expect the \$1,100,000 42-bed block at Thursday Island to be completed by the end of this year.

At Toowoomba, work on the \$7,200,000 new medical block is under way and on line for completion in 1979.

At Townsville, the first stage of the new child welfare and guidance centre costing \$763,000 is due for completion early next



year, while planning for the redevelopment of the Townsville Hospital to make it an 800-bed teaching hospital is well under way. I am very concerned about a decision made at Federal level concerning the deferment of the Medical School at the James Cook University and as a result of which development of the teaching hospital complex may be delayed through lack of finance. We will certainly be going ahead with our plans so that, when finance is available for the development of the university section, we will be in a position to proceed. I shall be submitting to Cabinet in the near future details of a proposal on this important project.

Further north at Tully, plans are being considered for a new outpatient and administration section estimated to cost \$638,000. I know that you, Mr. Row, were very interested in this plan and you brought it to my attention when I visited the hospital with you last year.

We expect the \$2,000,000 extensions at the Weipa Hospital to be completed next year, providing an extra 12 beds, while work has begun on the new general ward block of 16 beds at the Winton Hospital costing \$565,000. At Yeppoon, I recently inspected the work on the new 35-bed hospital, which is to cost \$1,700,000.

While I am speaking about development, let me briefly turn to the field administered by the Psychiatric Service of my department. At Wolston Park, the \$4,900,000 admission and treatment centre is under construction, providing 168 beds in a new complex. Tenders have closed for the new hospital ward and clinic facilities. This is estimated to cost \$2,000,000. On 5 November I will be officially opening the therapeutic, educational and recreational building at the centre. The total cost for this building is almost \$500,000.

Honourable members will recall the opening earlier this year of the \$900,000 ward for the intellectually handicapped at the Basil Stafford Centre. This followed the opening of the new alcoholism unit at the Wacol Rehabilitation Clinic.

Progress is well advanced on the first of the villa complexes for the intellectually handicapped at Basil Stafford and these are expected to cost \$1,400,000. We hope to have this occupied early in the New Year.

Work on the \$1,600,000 detoxication centre at Roma Street is expected to be

completed next year and will spearhead new initiatives in the care of alcoholism in the community throughout this State.

At the Baillie Henderson Hospital, work is almost complete on the two new ward blocks, which have cost \$2,000,000 and will provide accommodation for 80 patients.

The second stage of the Moreton Bay Nursing Unit, which I know the members for Wynnum and Redlands are particularly interested in and they have visited it with me, is now almost complete, at a cost of \$4,750,000, and tenders have now been let for the final stages of this 260-bed centre, which will be one of the most advanced nursing centres in Australia. Overseas people have already paid us tributes for that development.

Work is well advanced on the \$1,100,000 second stage of the maternal and child health centre at St. Paul's Terrace.

For the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition, especially, and for other honourable members, too, I am giving just a brief survey of some of the capital works that are being undertaken by the Health Department. As the Treasurer mentioned in his Budget speech, further expansion is being undertaken in the fields of community medicine and school dental services and indeed in every other aspect of my department's activities. I have no doubt that honourable members have studied the health paper on school dental services that I tabled earlier this session and are well aware of the tremendous expansion taking place in this important area of preventive health services throughout the whole of the State. Last Saturday I was in Townsville opening the new training centre for dental therapists in our northern area. I intend to table a health paper on the community medicine programme as soon as printing permits that to be done.

There are many unsung areas of the Health Department where the dedicated officers work to provide the best possible services for our patients and other Queenslanders who need our services. Despite a reduction of Commonwealth finance in some areas, this Government has assured continued development. Despite the attempted denigration of our health service by a few knockers, including the Leader of the Opposition, this year will again see further consolidation and development in our hospital and medical services. I again congratulate the Treasurer on his most progressive Budget.

**Mr. PREST** (Port Curtis) (12.39 p.m.): As I see the Budget, I must agree with the Treasurer's statement that it is not one that includes an array of dramatic new initiatives. Unfortunately, under the Federal Liberal-National Country Party Government, Queensland has not fared as well as it did under the previous Labor Government. As funds were being allocated in the Federal Budget, we saw that we were receiving less for roads and less for housing, after allowing for inflation. When the full rate of inflation is taken into account, it is seen that the allocations will do nothing at all to halt the increase in unemployment in our towns and cities and nothing at all to stop the drift from the smaller country areas to the cities and the larger centres, where the cost of living is somewhat lower and the job opportunities are perhaps a little better.

Unfortunately, I read in the Financial Statement that even Government departments are not to be allowed to increase staff numbers, so that we must see a big increase in the number of unemployed when, in nine weeks' time, so many school-leavers will come onto the labour market. They face a bleak future and the charge made by members of this Government that they are nothing but dole bludgers. No provision is made in the Budget to raise the confidence of the private sector when Government departments themselves are not allowed or are not willing to take on more employees. I cannot see how members of this Government can continue to blame Mr. Whitlam or the Labor Government for the existing circumstances. It must be remembered that the people of this country were dissatisfied with the Liberal-Country Party Government in 1972 when the Labor Government was put into power. Mr. Fraser cheated the Labor Government out of office in 1975. We have reached the stage today where promises made during that election cannot and have not been kept. We now have record unemployment, a cost of living that continues to rise at a high rate and an inflation rate as high as it ever was.

While having to meet the increased cost of living, the people of Queensland are being asked to pay more for services which are not taken into consideration for the Consumer Price Index. As we see it, the Treasurer said that wages did not rise to the anticipated level last year, so we can say that the workers of Queensland have played their part, which is more than I can say for the other sections of the community that kept on increasing prices.

**Mr. TENNI:** I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Port Curtis is reading his speech. I thought that this was not allowed.

**An Opposition Member:** Give him a go; it's his first Budget speech.

**Mr. Tenni:** No way in the world.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Row): Order!

**Mr. PREST:** It is most disappointing that the number of Housing Commission homes to be constructed is to drop from 1,359 to 800 for the current year. At present there is a long list of people waiting to rent homes. Meanwhile they are asked to pay high rents for unsuitable accommodation. They have young families, who are being raised under conditions that are nerve-racking, to say the least. It is no wonder that we have so many family problems in our community. Some of the problems lead not only to broken homes but to divorce. This is what happens when people are compelled to live under such conditions. If more commission homes were procurable, people would have a better family life and some happiness.

Rents in some of the Housing Commission homes in my area are as high as \$61 a week. This is ridiculous, but families are prepared to accept that level of rental in order to get a home in acceptable surroundings where they can bring up their families. They realise that \$61 is a big cut out of their pay packets, but they pay it so that they can give their children the opportunity of being raised in decent homes. Let us hope that interest rates on home-building loans can be lowered so that people who are on the border-line in being able to build their own homes and are frightened by the high interest rates, can obtain decent housing.

Medibank has been adopted by the Fraser Government and it is going to prove to be a burden on all of us. As I see it, Medibank will bring about a change of Government, and not before time. What is needed is a Government with an understanding of the problems of the people generally, and a willingness to consider special consideration for country people. Will Mr. Fraser give back to the Queensland Government for expenditure on medical care all of the money raised by the 2½ per cent levy paid by all of us? I see no provision in the Budget for any form of medical service to people in country areas where there are no hospitals or doctors within 100 miles. Those people will be forced by law to pay 2.5 per cent of their weekly wages or yearly incomes. If they require medical attention or hospitalisation and have to travel 100 miles to obtain it, they are also forced to pay their own travelling expenses, with no recompense at all from the Government.

I see in the Budget that money has been made available for the building of some hospitals, but not in western areas from which there is the biggest drift of population. I listened intently to the Minister for Health, but I did not hear him say that the Budget contained anything for hospitals in Gladstone or the Port Curtis area, which has the largest growth of population in Queensland.

Nothing at all is provided for there. No wonder people in those areas who are given this type of treatment by a Government that says it is interested in country people leave them.

On top of this, people who live in the country are going to be hit again by the 15 per cent increase in rail freights and fares. This is in addition to the 40 per cent increase of just 12 months ago. The 15 per cent will be passed on to the country people in every possible way. Electricity charges will have to rise again because the electricity boards in these areas will have to pay the 15 per cent increase on coal carted for power generation at their power stations. Coal carted to supply electricity for the people of Queensland attracts a 15 per cent increase in freight rates but coal carted by the same railway system for power for the Japanese people will not attract that increase, just as the 40 per cent increase imposed last year was not imposed on coal carted by the Queensland Railways to provide power for the people of Japan whereas we Queenslanders had the 40 per cent increase passed on to us in many ways. We are told to use Queensland-made goods and to use the Queensland Railways, but we pay more for our goods and we pay more for our freight than the Japanese people who buy our minerals and use our railways.

I agree that we must act to reduce the loss that we are told the railways made in 1975-76. In view of the service the Railways Department offers the rail traveller, it is little wonder that we show a loss in this section.

One of the greatest mistakes that this Government made when it came into power in 1957 was to scrap the Labor Party plans to electrify the Brisbane rail system. Now, after 19 years it has decided to electrify that section. Unfortunately, the National-Liberal Party Government is just 19 years behind the thinking of the Labor Party. Just imagine the extra costs involved today! This Government is just not interested in the costs. It will increase fares beyond the capacity of the people to pay, and thus this system once again will not be of any great benefit.

Unfortunately, this Government has no thought at all for Queenslanders, as instanced when I asked the Minister to consider granting a rebate on freights paid by fruit and vegetable growers in my area who use the railways; the request fell on deaf ears. For the people of my area this added cost of 15 per cent in freight rates on fruit and vegetables railed to the Brisbane market will be the straw that breaks the camel's back. They have had many problems in the last few years, and now they have to go to road transport, which they do not want to use. I hope the Minister will agree to receive a deputation from the people of my area in to allow them to put their case and then give it serious consideration.

For the life of me I cannot see why some sections of the State have to pay increases in their freight rates while other sections are exempt from them. It is true that the cattle producers have had a very bad time owing

to the low prices for the last three years. It is good to see that this Government is at last recognising that these people do need some consideration; but consideration should be given also to other sections before instead of making an increase right across the board.

It must be remembered that the slump that hit beef producers in the last three years has had a marked effect on workers and business people in the rural areas. Graziers have had to pay off staff, adding to unemployment. These unemployed people will have to pay extra for their groceries, and for their electricity, but no extra money will be coming in. Business people also are affected as unemployment and low incomes do not allow for big spending. Yet they, too, must pay more for their services and rail fares and freights. They cannot afford this.

The coal-owners should have to be the ones to pay the increase. They are not paying a fair freight rate at all. They make their hundreds of millions of dollars a year profit. Part of the reason for their huge profit is that they are not paying a fair share of freight charges. The Government should come out into the open and tell what the freight rate is per tonne per kilometre. The only reason this is not disclosed is that it is a gift in comparison with what Queenslanders have to pay in freight rates.

Believe me, the big coal and mineral trains do a lot of damage to the tracks and it takes a tremendous amount of time and money to keep these tracks in a safe condition. Maintenance and re-laying are a continuous job even in dry times, let alone during the wet season, when a large number of clay holes appear. I would like to know the cost of maintaining just one kilometre of track a year. I am quite certain that the new sections of the track that have been built have not yet found a bottom for their foundations. I know that two gangs of men pump 50 tonnes of concrete a week into holes on the Moura line. That has been going on for some years now, so honourable members can imagine the cost, especially with the difficulties of finding a foundation in black soil. I believe they have to go as deep as 30 ft. to find bottom. The cost of digging as deep as that is not hard to imagine.

Now the Premier is talking of building a rail system from here to Western Australia. What a dream! One of these days that dream will end and he will realise that there are such things as ships. I hope he comes down to earth for the benefit of all Queenslanders before we spend large amounts of money on Fisherman Islands. Why should we spend large sums building a new port on a tidal island when we could no doubt build one on the central coast for a fraction of the cost? The money allocated to the Fisherman Islands project this year will be only a drop in the bucket compared to the cost before

the project is completed and the port is operational. The money that other departments will have to make available for road, rail and other services could be spent in other areas of the State where it is necessary. I can see the rest of the State being bled for funds while this port is being built.

If the Minister for Transport can get his hands on the funds, he should give some consideration to the railwaymen of this State and their families. The upgrading of railway stations and the rebuilding of the Mt. Morgan and Gladstone stations are long overdue. Railwaymen have to work overtime and so earn a gross weekly income in excess of the \$143, which is the upper level of the means test applied before they can be allocated a Housing Commission home. But taxation eats into the gross wage they earn by working overtime, so really overtime should not be taken into consideration when determining their gross wages, or the means test limit of \$143 should be increased considerably.

I am very pleased that succession duty is to be eliminated after 31 December, but unfortunately an equivalent sum will have to be found elsewhere in order to balance the Budget or to provide for only a small deficit. The increase in liquor licence fees will no doubt make up for some of the money lost through the elimination of succession duty. There has already been an increase of 1c in the price of all drinks in hotels in my area. So again those who have a bet, those who drink and those who smoke have to pay additional tax. They pay these taxes all their lives, and they miss the money. Make no mistake, it becomes a costly proposition over 12 months if one does one, two or all three of those things. So it must be consoling for those people who drink, smoke and gamble to know now that they will be free from tax once they are dead. It is some future to look forward to, no doubt, after a lifetime of paying tax on everything that they enjoy doing.

The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads will find this year just another year of frustration for him in his efforts to improve the roads in those parts of the State outside Brisbane and the Gold Coast. We in the country have not had a fair go with our roads for the past 19 years, but I hope that we will see some improvement in the roads in the Port Curtis area after the Minister told this Assembly on Tuesday, 12 October that the roads he saw in the area are the worst in the State. I can assure him that there are many other roads in the electorate of Port Curtis in an exactly similar condition, and I extend to him an invitation to inspect them.

The Police Force has not received the treatment it deserves in the Budget either. Our police stations are overcrowded, and yet no provision is made in the Budget for additional space. Even now, the members of the Police Force are packed—

**Mr. Newbery:** Have you got too many up there?

**Mr. PREST:** No, not too many but too few. Some years ago the Government built a police station designed to house 18 policemen, and now 30 policemen are forced to use that same accommodation, so it is obvious that the station is overcrowded. The number of police in Queensland is to be decreased by seven, despite the fact that the number of police now on duty after midnight is inadequate to detect or prevent crime. I should point out to the Committee that, even though policemen in the Gladstone-Port Curtis area are working under difficulties, the detection of crime in the area has risen.

I am very disappointed that the Government has not yet acknowledged the work done by the Gladstone Area Social Development Board. Because the provision of funds has been discontinued by the Federal Government and the State Government has not seen fit to make funds available, the board will cease to function on 31 December this year.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Row):** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I ask honourable members to desist.

**Mr. PREST:** The Gladstone Area Social Development Board employed social workers, youth workers and guidance officers, who did a wonderful job with the social and drug problems that exist in the area. As the Government had me believing that it was sincere in its attitude to tackling these problems, I was almost certain that it would make funds available to enable the board to continue the good work it has done over the past three years or so. It is not yet too late for the Government to come to the rescue and save the social workers employed by the board and, indeed, save the board itself.

Education is a field in which there is never enough money spent. However, if we can get pre-schools at the Central, West, South and Clinton State Schools in Gladstone, I shall be very grateful. I should like to know which ones will be available for the start of the 1977 school year.

It is pleasing to see that \$1,750,000 will be made available for teacher housing, septic and sewerage. As I have said on previous occasions, schools in my area still have earth-closet toilets, and I hope that some, or all, of them will have septic systems or sewerage installed. I was promised that these would be installed when money became available, and I hope that it is now available.

I would have liked to see provision made for a high school at Calliope and a technical college at Gladstone. As I have said before, 239 apprentices now have to travel to Rockhampton or other centres for their seven

weeks' training each year, and employers say that they would employ more apprentices if a college were built in Gladstone. A college is necessary because Gladstone will be a major industrial centre, as all honourable members are aware, and I am almost sure that before long there will be another boom in the construction of industrial buildings in Gladstone. A high school at Calliope and a technical college at Gladstone were promised by Government members to the people of Port Curtis in May this year, and I hate to see promises broken, especially when what has been promised is so urgently required.

The Department of Sport should be able to make a greater contribution now that it is assisted by funds from the soccer pools. The department has a very important part to play, because if money is made available to subsidise sporting facilities we will soon be able to overcome some of the problems that now arise because young people do not know what to do with their spare time. I believe that if they had sporting facilities available to them, they would keep out of trouble.

I say very sincerely, Mr. Row, that we must not allow Queensland to lose the Commonwealth Games. We are part of the Commonwealth, and we must support the Lord Mayor of Brisbane and assist to make the Games a success.

My area has received quite a lot of assistance from Mr. Leahy, and we look forward to continued support from the Department of Sport for quite some time to come. Sporting organisations in my electorate are playing ball with the department. They have appreciated what Mr. Leahy has done, and I am sure that he has appreciated the way in which the Gladstone Sports and Parks Development Committee and others have worked within the budget he has set.

Under the present system of local government, I cannot see anything in the Budget to raise the hopes of councils of shires, towns and cities in this State. A new formula will have to be devised for the handing out of money. The Grants Commission had good intentions. However, the council representative who told the best story got the most money, and I agree with the honourable member for Landsborough that some councils received a pretty raw deal in comparison with others in this year's allocation by the State Government committee.

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

**Mr. PREST:** Before the luncheon recess I was speaking about the provisions made in the Budget for local government and I referred to the serious plight of many local authorities. In some areas people are forced to pay up to \$10 a week in rates and charges simply to live in their own homes. I know of some local authorities that are paying 50 per cent of their revenue to meet interest and redemption on money borrowed over the years.

Almost all of the remaining 50 per cent is spent on administration costs and wages, which means that very little is left for works and other improvements that could be made in the various shires and towns.

Under the system that applies today those who tell the best story to the Grants Commission receive the largest hand-outs. I know of one city that was embarrassed by the assistance received by way of grants whilst others with a far greater need were more or less neglected. I think the system must be changed to give people in such areas the better amenities and better standard of living found in the larger cities.

I should like to point out to the Minister in charge of fisheries the urgent need to improve the wharf at the fish market at Gladstone. This branch of the Fish Board handles a very large amount of fish and there is considerable congestion at its wharf, particularly in the prawning season. An extension to the wharf facilities is needed for the loading and unloading of boats. The decking on the wharf is in bad condition and it needs replacing or repairing. Some of the piles supporting the decking are broken and they, too, badly need replacing. A little dredging of the area where the fishing boats tie up would also be of great benefit to the fleet and to the fishing industry as a whole.

I should now like to make some reference to a state of emergency that could arise in Queensland. It has been said that Queensland could be hit by a natural disaster somewhere on the central coast this year. Unfortunately I do not think that at this stage this State is prepared for such an eventuality. It is many years since my area was hit by a major cyclone but on that occasion there was great devastation. If people on some of the islands off the coast in my electorate had to be evacuated today, no facilities are available for taking them off. There are, for example, no police launches to use for their evacuation. I think it would be very fitting if the Government considered this possibility and made emergency facilities available at all times.

Only a few days ago, during the parliamentary recess, a seaman on the motor vessel "Silver Hawk" was seriously injured at 9.20 a.m. off Shoalwater Bay. Although a military exercise was about to take place in the area, and helicopters and medical services would certainly have been available, this seaman, after falling 18 ft. onto a steel deck, had to lie from 9.20 a.m. till 6.15 p.m., when his vessel berthed at Gladstone. I am pleased to be able to say that at last report the injured man was making steady progress, although he had serious head injuries and a badly broken wrist. That is not good enough. People who go to sea realise that these hazards are always present and that it is very hard to get medical assistance when it is required. However, as the ship was so close to the Queensland coast, I do not think the man was given a fair go. Perhaps not much could have been done for the seaman at the time; but, if a doctor had

been put on board the boat, the rest of the crew would have felt much more at ease. Unfortunately, a doctor could not be taken on board the "Silver Hawk" until approximately 3.30 that afternoon. I sincerely hope that this Government looks at emergency services.

As I said at the outset, there is no great hope in this Budget. There is no hope at all for the unemployed. What we see is very little progress. The people can look forward to continuing indirect taxes. The only relief they will obtain will be when they die.

**Mr. SIMPSON** (Cooroora) (2.21 p.m.): I congratulate the Treasurer on the introduction of his first Budget in a new format. It indicates that we have a new Treasurer and a new approach to laying out the Financial Statement. I could not think of a worse time to be trying to balance the books, when an effort is being made to contain prices and costs, which have been escalating following what the Labor Party did to Australia's economy. Through the inflation that it caused, wages increased at a greater rate than this country's productivity. It is no mean feat for a Treasurer to find ways of containing costs while not in any way dampening enthusiasm or the incentive to retain employment and improve production.

The abolition of all death duties, following the abolition 12 months ago of spouse-to-spouse duties, will lead to the transfer of a lot of capital from the public sector to the private sector, where the productivity that results will be taxed. In turn, that benefits the nation. Of course, taxation will be collected by the Federal Government. As has been said at an earlier stage by the Treasurer, those taxes must be returned to where they were collected—where the productivity was—the State of Queensland.

The Federal Government will continue to levy duty on estates. Following the abolition of State death duties, there will be larger amounts in estates for assessment by the Commonwealth, and a slightly higher amount will be collected by it. However, there will still be a net gain to Queensland which will be available for greater investment. It will also prevent the loss of expertise, for death duties forced the closure of small businesses and rural holdings. That caused productivity to decrease instead of increase. I believe that overtures should continually be made to the Federal Government for it to introduce legislation to abolish all death duties.

However, in the meantime we will gain from those people who see the advantage in investing, living and retiring in Queensland and shifting businesses to Queensland. That is already happening, but it is a benefit that we should make known. Some might say that it is a bit of a gimmick to go round Australia and indicate to the rest of the States the advantage of having a business in Queensland or retiring here, but we should

inform the people in the other States of the moves we have made to arrive at a fairer form of taxation.

Quite often death duties have to be paid at a time when people can least afford to pay them. Because a person does not know when he will die, he does not know when such a tax will be collected. As Queensland is the first State to abolish death duties, it will reap the benefit.

Workers' compensation has been getting out of hand. I certainly welcome the move to lower the premiums. Following increases in wages, the premiums had risen steeply and were becoming a real burden on employers and were out of all proportion to the value of the return. At this stage I should like to look more deeply into this subject. Employers have to pay a 17½ per cent loading for holidays. That becomes part of the amount on which the premiums are paid, yet the individual is not entitled to workers' compensation if injured while he is on holidays. I repeat that the 17½ per cent loading, which represents a substantial proportion of a year's wages, is taken into account in the assessment. This anomaly needs to be looked into with a view to overcoming it.

Pay-roll tax is a counter-productive tax and results in fewer people being employed. Its imposition falls unfairly on the employers of large numbers of people. Employers whose wages costs do not reach the exemption figure are fortunate, but many businesses have wages costs above that figure and are looking at cutting down their work-forces to avoid the payment of this tax. Because of it, and the effect it has on raising costs, other employers are not expanding their businesses. As a wise Government we should find alternative forms of taxation and look towards phasing out pay-roll tax and, in the long term, the incentive that will provide for increased productivity.

Tourism is an area of productivity that has never been properly exploited in Queensland. With the wise use of our present resources we could present for more profitably what we have to sell in tourism. I believe that with inter-departmental co-operation we could make the State far more attractive to the tourist. An example would be for the Main Roads Department to properly sign-post destinations and not be bound by red tape as it is at the moment concerning towns that are just off a highway. We should assist tourists as much as possible to find their destination.

Certain tourist attractions should be sign-posted in a standard way, as they are in some other States, so that people will definitely know that they are tourist attractions. The signs should indicate clearly how the people will reach the attractions. We should provide all other information to the travelling public that will make the visit as pleasant as possible.

We were very proud of our rest areas along our highways.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper** interjected.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** I have not started yet. The poor unfortunate interjector does not even know which State he is in.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You don't know. You're the biggest dill in the place.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** From the ruddy complexion of the honourable member, if he were a thermometer, he would burst.

We need more attractive rest areas on our highways throughout Queensland so that people will be encouraged to journey on our roads and enjoy the State.

Another department that could co-operate in this field is the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Many people are interested in seeing the attractions that it controls, which are unique. The service should arrange guided tours in these areas, and have rangers who can in fact highlight the educational aspects of our parks so that young and old alike will enjoy the naturalness and the different interesting land formations and vegetation and fauna of our State.

For a small outlay in promotion in other areas we will find that there will be a great reward in the number of people who come to this State. The return is very much a net gain in productivity. It is also one that will lead to an increase in housing and in services and support, and those will in turn help to overcome our unemployment.

The areas served on the coast, similar to my electorate, have the problem of too few jobs for young people when they leave school. There is a need to encourage light industry, and it concerns me somewhat that there has been no move in the electorate of Cooroola to establish a Crown industrial estate supported with the incentives that are provided in other areas.

I agree with the Minister for Industrial Development that it is also a responsibility of the local authorities to help in this regard, but in my area they have been very helpful, and so have private individuals and chambers of commerce, in an endeavour to promote more industry to the area.

The development of more industry will mean more jobs. And this will avoid the loss of the young people, who at the moment have to leave these areas to obtain employment.

The reduction in road transport permit fees announced by the Treasurer is in line with the promise to phase these out over three years. Under this Budget, they are to be reduced by 50 per cent. This is going to put a greater stress on our roads and thus create a problem in that at the moment we do not have the finance to keep our roads in order. This concerns me greatly, particularly in view of the need to complete a four-lane highway to the Sunshine

Coast. The lack of such a highway is retarding commercial and industrial development and causing a greater number of accidents on the existing road. As well the road is strategically inept.

I believe that an approach should be made to the Federal Government to follow the roads commission's recommendation that there should be a doubling of the allocation to Queensland so that these roads could be upgraded. The funds that have been phased out are those for tourist roads. I believe that these should be looked at on the basis that good roads encourage tourists to the area.

The cost of roads in Queensland is a big bugbear. With the higher incidence of rainfall in Queensland, it is not just a matter of road construction being a little dearer than in the southern States; in Queensland roads cost a great deal more. And there is a higher incidence of bridge construction per kilometre in Queensland than in southern States. Looking at it purely from a strategic point of view in the defence of Australia, I believe our roads in the North should be improved.

The Budget gives an increased allocation for education, and although this increase appears, and I believe it does, to keep pace with inflation, as I see it there has been no change in the direction of our education system. The system should be directed to the more technical side of education so that we will turn out people who will be more readily absorbed into the work-force. I believe those educated in the technical field show the greatest leaning towards creativity and inventiveness, which is the basis of the development of most new industries and small businesses. I believe it is high time our education system was redirected along those lines so that we produce more people who are educated for the jobs they will do rather than continue to turn out more and more unemployable people who end up being a burden on the community as they draw unemployment relief. I should have thought that the increased allocation in the Budget would have covered the maintenance of the pre-school building programme, which we have come to expect. I have heard a rumour that the proposed pre-school in Nambour will not be built and I certainly hope that this is not the case. There are 8,000 people in the surrounding district would in fact use the proposed pre-school. At the moment Nambour has no pre-school.

**Mr. Akers** interjected.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** Has the honourable member lost one, too?

I hope the rumour is not true. There are many children in Nambour at the moment who are being denied the opportunity of a pre-school education.

A new technical college is urgently needed on the Sunshine Coast to provide more qualified employees for the light industries

in the area. The availability of qualified people in the area will encourage the development of more industry. The thinking at the moment is that all our young people should come to Brisbane. I believe that is wrong and that in fact we should be trying to keep families and communities together. We can encourage family life by providing both education and employment opportunities on the Sunshine Coast.

The 15 per cent increase in rail freights this year has been a great disappointment to me because it affects those who can least afford to pay, those who live the greatest distance from Brisbane.

**Mr. Tenni:** Wouldn't you say we have to look at the over-all control of the Railway Department and try to make it more efficient?

**Mr. SIMPSON:** I quite agree. The primary producer is always being told that he must make his business more efficient. I believe we should try to make not only the railways, but all Government departments more efficient. We are overtaxed. Increased taxation cuts down the incentive to private enterprise and this in turn slows down productivity and, indeed, the whole process of running a business. This eventually means that people are not being able to obtain the extra amenities with which to enjoy life. If taxation is too high or there is inefficiency or duplication in the public sector, incentive wanes. That became obvious when the Labor Government was in office in Canberra.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You are not still blaming them?

**Mr. SIMPSON:** Yes. It will be several years before the damage done by that socialist Government is overcome.

One often hears the expression "the user must pay". In the Railway Department it has become necessary to increase freights, and it is now said that the user must pay. What in fact has happened is that people in the department are being paid fully for their services and others outside the department are paying very dearly. In spite of that, the railways are still running at a loss. Although the loss increased by about \$22,000,000 in the last 12 months, running costs in the Railway Department increased by \$66,000,000. Therefore, it is obvious why it is running at a loss.

If it is true that the user must pay, people who eat a nice piece of steak really ought to be paying, too. At the moment they are not, because the producer is not being paid adequately for his product; in fact, he is almost giving it away.

**Mr. Burns:** Someone is making a dollar out of beef. We didn't get much advantage even when the grazier dropped the price of his cattle.

**Mr. Moore:** The meatworkers are getting it.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** The awards that are given to the slaughtermen—

**Mr. Burns:** The slaughtermen deserve more than they receive now. They are not well paid.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** Doesn't the honourable gentleman agree that the producer is not getting a fair lick?

**Mr. K. J. Hooper** interjected.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** It is obvious that the Opposition has little idea of the problems of rural industry.

The problems of local government have been discussed by other honourable members who have taken part in the debate. In my opinion, shires on the coast that cater for large influxes of tourists and for many day trippers from Brisbane should receive greater consideration when allocations are made. Shires on the Sunshine Coast are not receiving a fair share of the over-all funds at the moment.

Population figures for the various shires give some indication of how the money is allocated. The Albert Shire has a population of about 75,000 and an allocation of about \$500,000, but it has no beaches to look after. The Maroochy Shire has a population of about 36,000 and receives only \$186,000. The Redland Shire, with a population of 28,000, receives \$143,000. I believe that the cost of services and wear and tear on roads that must be provided by the shires is not being met. If the allocations are not increased, the standard of roads and services will deteriorate and local ratepayers will eventually have to pick up the tab. They will not like that and will eventually move somewhere else—probably farther north.

Very little is now being done in the field of beach protection, again because of lack of funds. Both the State and Commonwealth Governments should provide substantial amounts of money for beach protection work.

I believe that the Commonwealth Government has a responsibility to look after the real estate of the whole of Australia from a strategic point of view. The State, too, has a responsibility to the whole because it is the collector of State revenue from not only Queenslanders but others who use its services such as tourists and those who visit for other reasons.

The Budget gives some incentive to business but not to all businesses. It is hoped that it will have the desired effect of stimulating the economy. With the overcoming of business hesitancy and the restoration of productivity which was lost under the Federal Labor Government, the rate of inflation will decrease. The honourable member for Port Curtis claims that the people are overtaxed indirectly. He says in effect that he no longer has any joy in his grog and that he will be broke and no benefit will flow from the removal of death duties when he dies. He should realise that we are trying to reduce his intake of nicotine and alcohol so



that he will live longer, be more productive and help make the State an even better place than it is now.

The allocation for sport is to be slightly increased this year. I would have preferred a new formula giving encouragement more specifically to young people in sport and to sport itself. The advantage tends to be with clubs that already have means of raising finance, such as bars. Other organisations catering more for younger people, such as pony clubs, do not have such resources and I believe that a new formula is needed to assist them.

Only by having an efficient State, with departments run efficiently and without duplication, can the people be taxed at the lowest possible level and still provided with the services that they want, thus creating an atmosphere of incentive under the free-enterprise system—the type of approach that will allow us to go forward in Queensland.

**Mr. PORTER** (Toowoong) (2.48 p.m.): In the 10 years in which I have been in this Assembly I have tended to use the debate on the Budget to draw attention to what has always been a very uneasy relationship between the States and the central Government, and certainly to draw very strong attention to, and to place heavy emphasis on, the steady erosion of State sovereignty over the years, which became quite massive after 1972. Whilst later I shall make some comments on the Budget, I also want to make wider comment on the general frame of State and national reference into which the State Budget must fit.

I realise that some of what I say will be seen as controversial and will not be liked in some quarters but I certainly believe that it is necessary to say it and to say it now. Otherwise small but prickly problems of the moment, if left alone, may grow rapidly into very large, ugly and unmanageable problems. It is very fashionable in some quarters to decry Queensland. We read and hear about ourselves in the Press and on radio and television from time to time as the Deep North, the place that runs under dog-and-goanna rules, the State that is ruled by the "flying peanut", the place of coarse-grained, crude people. In general terms there seems to be a tremendous tendency to try to present Queensland as backward, retarded, primitive and atavistic—the real hill-billies of Australia. The unfortunate part is that the Labor Opposition in this State seems to be only too happy to help foster that myth about our own people. The net result of all this is a tendency, particularly among the media, to regard Queensland with a sort of ribald contempt. We are derided; we are sneered at; we are laughed at. There is a consistent pattern—and a very superficial pattern—from writing practitioners, pompous pundits and failed prognosticators to try to paint us in these terms, to sedulously foster the notion that we are a stupid, ignorant, backward, different lot.

Why I say "failed prognosticators" is that over the last five years not one person in the media has been able to predict accurately what the Australian electorate was going to do—not one. I cherish amongst my possessions here a cutting from a national weekly newspaper which, about three days before the Governor-General dissolved the two Houses of Federal Parliament, made a statement to the effect that "Every journalist in Canberra is convinced that Fraser has played his last card. It isn't now a question of, 'Can he win?' The only question is: 'How can he graciously lose?'" Every journalist in Canberra was convinced, and every journalist in Canberra was damned wrong, as they are consistently wrong about us.

Let us look at the facts because the facts are vastly different from the myth—very different indeed. Far from being strange and backward and the odd man out, this State has for three decades been the bell-wether in Australian politics. We have been the vanguard in political changes, the leader. For the last 30 years Queensland has led Australia in recognition of major political trends. These are facts of history, facts which can be attested by any examination of electoral records. We have consistently been more aware than other States of the huge groundswells of public opinion that have been developing in the electorate. We have always been superior at identifying early those groundswells. In plain terms, what I am saying is that, whatever Queensland thinks and does politically today, it is certain that the rest of Australia will do tomorrow.

It is important that these things be said in a debate on the Budget, which charts the Queensland economic health inside what I hope is a resurgent Federal system. I want to state clearly that the record does indeed show over 30 years the record, inescapable truth of what I have said. In 1946 we provided the only three non-Labor senators for the whole of Australia under the system of voting that then obtained—Queensland was able to see before the rest of Australia what the trend was. In 1949 we in Queensland provided more than half of Menzies' winning majority. We won 15 of 18 seats. New South Wales had a winning margin of one seat and Victoria had a winning margin of seven. In plain terms again, there would not have been the Liberal victory of 1949 without the Queensland contribution; it could not have been achieved in the other States of Australia. In 1961 we saved the Federal coalition Government by the skin of its teeth by pulling off a victory in Moreton. Contrary to the suggestion that it was won on a drift in Communist preferences, it was won on a failure of the Labor Party to get preferences from an Independent whom Labor thought it had in its pocket.

We have performed remarkably well in Senate elections. I say this to the Committee: had Queensland not won six Senate seats

in 1972 and again in 1974—and it was the only State in Australia to win six out of 10—there would not have been the 1975 Federal election, and Mr. Fraser and Mr. Anthony would not now be sharing office. Indeed, had we not achieved those electoral victories to the degree that we did, Australia today, I suggest, would be a republic under El Presidente Whitlam. We have defeated every socialist referendum attempt that has been made—and six of them were made over the past three years—by the most massive majorities of all of the States except, in one case, Western Australia. We led Australia in the final decimation of Labor when, in the 1974 State poll, Labor came back with only 11 out of 82 seats. That was followed by the 1975 Federal poll, when Labor won only one of 18 seats in Queensland. Again we won six of the 10 Senate positions and in fact almost achieved the mathematical impossibility of winning seven out of 10. Colston survived by the very skin of his teeth.

It is easy and very convenient for certain partisan people to keep on saying that we are an odd lot and that we are excessively Right-wing or even dangerously Right-wing. In view of that fact I become somewhat amused at this tendency of sophisticated, clever young people and also some of my own Federal colleagues to suggest that this Government is so Right-wing that we are becoming a millstone around the Liberal-Country Party neck. All I can say, if I can perhaps paraphrase Churchill, is "Some millstone! Some neck!"

What does "Right-wing" mean? Does anybody stop to think what the term means? If it means standing for enlargement of individual freedom and reduction of repressive government, if it means believing in upholding Christian standards of morality and integrity, if it implies wanting to maintain the essential fabric of law and order, and if it means doing all those things that every election for 30 years and every public opinion survey poll ever taken anywhere in Australia show that the overwhelming majority of people in Australia devoutly want—then count me as Right-wing and proud to be so labelled!

Labels like that are merely easy rationalisations by which people back away from analysing matters of deep principle. It is much easier to project people as cut-out cardboard figures than to endeavour to really assess them and their beliefs. I say again that the records show amply that, far from being oddly different or politically regressive, Queensland is the undisputed leader in the Australian political scene. For anyone to disparage us or to sneer at what our voters have done is to display an undergraduate arrogance towards the people and a cynical contempt for the processes of democracy.

It is in this context that I want to say something about federalism. Every year for 10 years I have talked about the federal

system. I have lamented what I have seen as the steady dismantling of the federal system and the erosion of State powers. I have also used the opportunity afforded by a Budget debate to stress what is for us an essential dichotomy between federalism and the maximisation of individual responsibility and opportunity.

I have pointed out that we in Queensland, more than any other part of Australia—indeed more than the rest of Australia—can be credited with bringing down the Whitlam monolithic edifice of socialism and centralism. Therefore when we on the Government side in Queensland become concerned with unilateral actions of the Federal Government in areas such as the Torres Strait border dispute, the Advisory Council for Intergovernment Relationships, and the reappearance of block grants in so many areas, it is high time that our Federal colleagues took heed.

As I said earlier, it will do none of us any good to ignore the problems. It is much better to face up to them and resolve them before a cloud on the horizon now no bigger than a man's hand blows up into a major storm. This it can do. This it could do if we in the States, particularly the outer States of Queensland and Western Australia, feel that the fair words of federalism are not going to be matched by the deeds.

I have fought over a political lifetime, much longer than anybody else in this Chamber, for the preservation of a federal system. I think I can say that I played a pretty substantial role in assisting the Premier with his stances in this regard over the last three years.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. PORTER:** And I am not prepared to see the essential partnership that is required by the Federal Constitution diluted and debilitated by any Government. I am prepared to resist violently any moves, as violently as, say, I resisted the same moves when brought in by Whitlam, if they are now introduced by our own colleagues in Canberra in, perhaps, a slightly more bland or polite form. If anybody thinks I am going to welcome that, all I can do is use Shaw's phrase from "Pygmalion" and say, "Not bloody likely!"

The highway to disaster is for anyone to fall into the error of believing that Canberra always knows best, that all the best brains are congregated down there and that the solutions for problems can always be safest left to them. You know, if you think this way, then the vaunted federal compact between equals, which is what the Constitution provides, will become no more than an arrangement between master and serfs. For my part, that isn't on! I certainly did not survive the Whitlam years to see the victory eroded by a resurgence of Canberra's folie de grandeur, if I can put it that way. I often wonder whether a miasma arises in

the mists over Lake Burley Griffin that seems to affect everybody who goes to Canberra so that automatically they feel superior to the rest of us, more clever, abler and wiser, and that we should all be happy to accept their proposals and just let them be paternalistic and do what they want with us.

A federal system for me must be truly a federal system. I think it is very necessary for all of us to bear in mind what the federal system is meant to be. Sir Robert Menzies, delivering the first of an inaugural series of lectures in Western Australia a few years ago, had this to say—

“For myself, I have always believed that Australian Liberalism must be truly Federalist. Constitutional changes involving some alterations in the distribution of powers may be made in the future; though past experience shows that the way of the amender is hard. But the vital thing about our Constitution, and I quote the authoritative words of Sir Owen Dixon in one of his judgments, is this:—

‘The foundation of the Constitution is the conception of a Central Government and a number of State Governments separately organised. The Constitution predicts their continued existence as independent entities. Among them it distributes the powers of governing the country.’”

It is very important that we recognise that the Federal system requires the recognition of a compact between equal partners. If there is any inequality, then to that extent there is not true federalism.

Shortly, I will have the honour, with some other members of this Parliament, of attending in Hobart the Australian Constitutional Convention, which will, of course, be its final and its crunch session. It is at this session that we will have to make final determination on a whole host of matters, and if they are agreed upon them, presumably they will go to the Federal Government as recommendations for referendum proposals. I want to say here and now that I most certainly will not be giving my support to any amendments which are deviously designed to enlarge the central Government's power. And I don't give a toss who speaks in favour of them! I will most certainly give no stimulus to the malevolent processes that Australians believe were halted when they threw out last year Whitlam's muddled men neck and crop.

I think that a pretty good example of this disastrous Canberra inability to see straight on the issue of the federal partnership is the creation of the advisory council for intergovernment relationships. This was supposed to be designed to ease frictions between the States and the Canberra Government in their operations together. That is the rationale, but I wonder what the real purpose was.

Just let us look at this for a moment. In February of this year it was agreed at a Premiers' Conference that this body should

be set up on the basis of 27 persons—six representatives of the Commonwealth, 12 from the States, three from local government and three citizens' representatives nominated by the Federal Government. We, the States, had 44.5 per cent of the representation on the council. Then there was a conference of Ministers called in March of this year and it was decided to change that representation. The Commonwealth was to have five representatives; the States, six; local government, three; and citizens, five, making 19 in all. And the States' 44.5 per cent of membership dwindled to 31.5 per cent.

Then, of course, the Prime Minister contacted the States and informed them that the composition of this council was to be changed. And what was it to be changed to? Six for the Commonwealth, six for the States, six for local government and five so-called citizens' representatives, making a total of 23, and the States' proportion of membership was to be 26 per cent. In a few months our proportion of membership has come down by almost half.

Now, I want to say this: I see no place in a council supposed to be dealing with federal matters for local government representatives. There is no mention of local government in the Federal Constitution, and there is no doubt that the Commonwealth wants local government representatives to be there because it will be able to dangle before them the bait of direct grants, and local government, desperately needing money, in my view will do what the money persuasion suggests. Then, of course, if the so-called citizens' representatives are to be appointed by the Commonwealth, I think we can reasonably expect that it can count on most of their votes. For the life of me, I cannot see what possible purpose can be served by having so-called citizens' representatives on a committee which is supposed to work for the better and smoother operation of relationships between Governments.

I say again what I have said here often enough: with the other six States we should concentrate on forming a council of State Governments to deal with the Federal Government. We should scrap this bastardised proposition as of now and refuse to play any further part in it. We at least have shown the strength to take a stand and opt out of it, but so should the other States, and we would then get the federal system back on a proper keel. A council of State Governments is the real answer to the States' dealing successfully with the central Government and I can see nothing but trouble for everybody if there is any proceeding with this dreadful business of a so-called advisory council in which the States are totally outgunned and totally outnumbered, and where plainly the Commonwealth Government will exploit to the hilt the age-old tactic that it has used at Premiers' Conferences—divide and conquer. There is no future for any of us in that sort of nonsense.

I say it will undoubtedly exacerbate the very problems which it is supposed to ease.

When the Bill setting up this committee reaches some sort of conclusive stage in the Federal Parliament—and it is before that Parliament at the moment—I hope there will be enough common sense to kill it then and there—that it will be stillborn—but if it is not, then the States have to do something about it. If we want the federal system to work we have to get back to first principles. We have to start again on a system where both sets of partners, the central Government and the States, accept that there has to be mutual sincerity and goodwill, not that one set of partners can be conned by the other.

Let me speak about the economy. One should not talk about a State Budget without at least dealing a glancing blow here. Opposition members have done a great deal of ranting and raving about the supposed inadequacies of the Budget. They think it is quite wrong of us to want to live within our means. They feel that we should go into deficit, that we should do the theoretical experiment of providing make-work programmes. This is always the amateur economist's solution—borrow now, pay later; print money now and buy back your script (maybe) some time in the never-never future.

**Mr. Marginson:** Chalk had a deficit Budget last year. What are you talking about?

**Mr. PORTER:** Let me say to the honourable member that I have never agreed with deficit financing at any stage. At this stage, with the Federal Government desperately trying to reduce its deficit, for the States to go into deficit spending is, I think, evil in the extreme. I believe that this attitude of spend, spend, spend is a classic example of the A.L.P.'s economic venality. As I said, Mr. Kaus, they want to spend; they want to kill private enterprise, stifle initiative, turn the individual into some sort of dependent parasite, so that the big omnipotent central Government can manipulate the lot of us.

It is very easy to demand instant economic improvements, but it is impossible for anyone to provide them. We have to remember that in three years the Whitlam Government transformed a stable, progressive economy into an inflation-ridden, unemployment-haunted shambles, and a country does not recover from that overnight—not in one month, six months, two years, or possibly even three years. We have a long, hard economic row to hoe before we get out of the political morass into which these people have plunged us, and anybody who tries to pretend that there is an easy way out, that there are painless cures, is either a fool or a knave—or maybe a combination of both.

What effrontery for the Leader of the Opposition to come into this Chamber and read page after page of pretentious balderdash that was sheer economic nonsense! I

suggest to him seriously that, for his own sake, he should get some new writers, because what he gave us was a juvenile, undergraduate approach to an economic situation. He was peddling the Keynesian economic theories that have failed everywhere in the world and which have now been discarded by all economists of any standing. In spite of that, the honourable member peddles them here as though he has the panacea for all economic ills. It is a great pity he does not take half an hour to talk to Professor Hayek, who would be able to tell him that the Keynesian theory of priming the pump was never meant by Keynes himself to be applied in the way in which so many Governments take it to apply these days. In any case, it does not work, and the history of all Western countries over the last 30 years shows that it does not work.

As I say, Mr. Kaus, it is very easy to talk about what should be done, about how deficiencies should be remedied. But the Queensland stringencies, the Queensland unemployment, the Queensland financial problems are totally the products of or the problems created for us by those tragic three years from 1972 to 1975. I have no doubt whatever that Whitlam and his men set out, in their frenzy to achieve a socialist revolution in Australia, to deliberately debauch the currency. They set out to practise what the Marxist-Leninist doctrine preaches—debauch the currency and you have the people in your hand. That really is the core of all our problems. That is where the blame for unemployment really rests; that is the reason for our disastrous level of inflation.

These puerile attempts to suggest, "Oh, it was imported. Look at what is happening in other countries.", was always a load of nonsense. Now that other countries are recovering from inflation, we still have to carry the load of it, and the fact that it was not imported is clearly indicated by any comparison of the situations that exist today. To deliberately debauch the currency and encourage inflation, and produce a situation in which the decent, steady, hard-working family people are grossly disadvantaged and their future imperilled and only the fast talkers, fast thinkers and spivs are advantaged, is a crime indeed against society. And the Labor Party stands thoroughly indicted of it.

I point out that there is much to be done in this country and much for which recognition is due in Queensland. I would hope that this State will be recognised as one with a magnificent future. There was an article in the Press only recently that dealt with the position of Queensland and Western Australia in terms of the provision of nuclear power. Nuclear power will come to this country as surely as night follows day. It is the energy source of the future and, when it comes, the position of Queensland will be of enormous importance. Queensland will indeed be the leader in an economic as well as a political sense.

It behoves all of us to stop downgrading our State; to stop throwing off at it; to stop believing what people write about us. We should, instead, look at the facts and recognise ourselves for what we are—far-seeing, hard-working, decent, in many ways leading Australia, and with the potential to become in the very near future the greatest State of the Commonwealth.

**Mr. LAMOND** (Wynnum) (3.17 p.m.): In addressing myself to the Financial Statement, I extend to the Treasurer my congratulations on his approach to the framing of a Budget in a difficult period when not only the economic structure of Queensland but that of the whole world is experiencing a period of readjustment. There is no doubt that it is difficult to bring down a Budget at such a time.

Treasurers at all levels of government and in private enterprise have great responsibilities. Possibly Sir Gordon Chalk, who recently retired from this Parliament, will look back on the period during which he served the State so well and be relieved that he no longer has the heavy burden of the office of Treasurer on his shoulders. He served us well for many years by producing Budgets of forethought, encouragement and efficiency, and for that he is to be congratulated.

In addition to being a person of considerable ability the Treasurer must be capable of assessing the facts put before him by his many Treasury advisers and those from the community who place before him matters affecting various sections of the community. The Treasurer must be a little clairvoyant because there are so many factors that will influence his Budget in the coming year.

It will be noted that the Treasurer has budgeted for a surplus of \$150,000—to be exact, \$149,000—as at 30 June next year. There was to be a deficit of \$565,000 but, because there was a surplus of \$715,000 last year, we will in fact end up with a small surplus. The carrying forward of a surplus or a deficit has become one of the practices of Government. If we look at Queensland's Budgets over a period back to the 1920s, it is interesting to see that deficits and surpluses have occurred on many occasions. In fact, on some 27 occasions we had a deficit and on 30, a surplus. That in itself gives us an indication that, during that period of our Government, this system of surplus and deficits most certainly has existed.

It is interesting to note the amount of deficit or surplus over the years as compared with the total revenue. In the year 1931-32 the Government's revenue was in the vicinity of \$26,000,000 and a deficit of some \$4,000,000 was budgeted for. The revenue returned in the year 1955-56 was about \$151,000,000 with a deficit of some \$3,500,000. I am making these points because I think they will bear out what I am about

to say. In the year 1944-45 the revenue was in the vicinity of \$53,000,000 and there was a surplus of \$1,000,000. In the year 1972-73 the surplus was \$1,200,000 on a returned revenue of \$704,000,000.

If we go through the record of our Treasury in the period since 1920, it is very evident that this type of budgeting has occurred. Those who are critical of the Treasurer for budgeting for either a surplus or a deficit must realise that that system has been followed for many years.

As I have said, budgeting for either a surplus or a deficit has most certainly become a way of government. A treasurer, whether he is in private enterprise or in Government, must take into consideration the economic climate prevailing at the time. On that depends whether he budgets for a deficit or a surplus. As we know, while at the present time Queensland has undoubted export wealth and an ability to hold her own on world markets, we would not be sound in our thinking if we did not realise that the problems or failures throughout Australia as a whole are reflected on each State, and thus most certainly reflected on Queensland.

Queensland and Australia have emerged, or that is my hope, from what I believe to be the wilderness of unemployment and of inflation. The journey is slow, and there is no doubt that quite a time will pass before we can take our place in the world's economy because of that period of wilderness. An improvement will occur only through work by the average Australian, the average Queenslander. Good government and time are the only cures for our problems.

No doubt the Treasurer considered these facts when he formulated his Budget. There is no alarming deficit; there is no sizeable surplus brought about by increased demands on the people. Yes, Mr. Hewitt, I do believe this to be a responsible Budget.

Death duty is a subject that has often been discussed here. By this Budget we are abolishing death duties from 1 January 1977 and also removing gift duty. Those are two forms of taxation which, though applied in different directions, really result one from the other. It is not unusual for members of a family wishing to avoid the problem of taxation on death to make gifts to their descendants over a period. The time of death is when the greatest hardship confronts a family. The size of estate has little bearing on the difficulties. It is ridiculous for those who oppose the abolition of death duties to say that this form of taxation affects only those in the highest income bracket or those with the larger estates.

Succession and probate duties affect practically all sections of our community to a disturbing degree. They affect those people who have been astute enough to acquire a reasonable standard of home and the simple amenities of life such as a caravan, a boat

or a motor-car. Also they affect the people who have had sufficient foresight to invest a portion of their income during their lifetime in stocks, shares or bank deposits. Very frequently and very quickly they come within the category of those paying both Federal and State death duties. There is no doubt that they affect the average person who tries to accrue some security for the present or for his old age.

Also in this regard we must consider the people who have planned for the future and have involved themselves in private enterprise. Bear in mind that, in referring to "private enterprise", I am not necessarily speaking of people who are in business, industry or primary production; I am referring to the average young couple who are purchasing their first piece of land or home. In doing so they enter the field of private enterprise. With that purchase, they accept the responsibilities, joys and possibly the benefits of private enterprise. Too frequently we use the term "private enterprise". I think we really mean enterprise on the part of those people. So when we talk of private enterprise and the effect of the abolition of death duties, we are talking about the average person who represents the majority in many of the electorates of the State.

The improvements in pay-roll tax, workers' compensation and land tax will be a boon to those in small businesses, primary production, general industry and general business and, once again, will be of assistance in private enterprise. A previous speaker said—and I agree with him—that pay-roll tax is quite an incredible form of taxation because it taxes an employer for employing people. This, of course, is quite unreasonable.

In the same area, I suppose like most other honourable members, I am disturbed about the funding for housing. The Treasurer said that there has been no increase in Commonwealth funds in the past two years. There is no doubt that this will cause hardship to those people who have the right to own a home. I say they have a right because Australia, and particularly Queensland, holds the record for home-ownership in the world. It is disturbing. The answer can only come from funding—from the availability of funds.

Today we see the re-establishment of the terminating building societies which were started in the early 1950s and have been supported in funding from the various sources of State Governments, insurance companies and, ultimately, through our own Government funding from Federal sources. It is an area that is causing grave concern, not only to people employed in the industry but to those young people and, in many cases, older people who are seeking a home within our State.

The provision in the Budget for \$2,250,000 to be spent on the Moreton Bay nursing care unit to give additional comfort to those

aged people of our community is very pleasing. It is pleasing because it is a section of need that for so many years possibly has not had the expertise or the funding to meet it. Anyone who has visited this centre and has spoken to the residents who are enjoying the very modern surroundings and nursing facilities offered today would have no doubt of its importance to the community.

I am greatly interested in this because for many years I have personally been involved in work associated with the aged, and in recent years particularly I have been involved in the development of a community centre for the aged in Wynnum which is known as the Waterloo Bay 50s and Over Centre. I am proud to say that I am the chairman, and I am most hopeful that in the early part of 1977 we will see the completion of this fine project, which will cost slightly in excess of \$500,000.

The Waterloo Bay 50s and Over Centre will be completed through subsidies from the State Government, the Federal Government and from funds made available by the people of that particular district, the service clubs and sporting organisations too numerous to mention here today. It will be erected on a piece of ground being made available by the Brisbane City Council. To my way of thinking this is truly a monument to the involvement of all levels of government and people in this particular area who have seen fit to club together to establish a much-needed centre.

The centre when completed will house a very modern Meals on Wheels section, occupational therapy rooms, an auditorium, meeting rooms, a dining-room, and other necessary facilities.

It is pleasing to note that the Queensland Government has seen fit to subsidise such projects as this, and it is also pleasing to me to note the expenditure on the programme of works within the Health Department; but I would be less than honest if I did not say that I was disappointed that consideration this year could not be given to the early stages of a hospital or an out-patients' complex within the electorate of Wynnum or, in fact, for the bayside area including Redland Bay and the Wynnum area. There is no doubt that with the advent of the proposed port of Brisbane, this will become a heavily populated section of our community and most certainly in need of a hospital facility. I am hopeful that the Minister will give it consideration during the year.

It is interesting to note the graphic increase in the Education Vote in Budgets from 1966 to the present year. It is interesting also to note that provision has been made for some 486 additional school-teachers at secondary primary and pre-school levels. This is most certainly pleasing to me because we all know we need to increase expenditure on school buildings. We all know that the building of any school complex must have

the approval of the Minister for Education before the Works Department can proceed with construction, but I hope that a very important part of the education system, that of the maintenance and repair of school buildings, will not be overlooked in the Education Department Estimates this year. Despite the incredible increase in expenditure on education, I believe we must see an increase in expenditure on additional school facilities and on the maintenance and repair of school buildings.

I know many members could quote examples, but it is my intention to comment briefly today on some shortcomings which are evident in schools in my electorate. I want to refer particularly to the administration block at the Wynnum North State School. A total of 950 students attend that school, and the facilities for staff administration are far below what I consider to be a reasonable standard. For many years the staff have worked under extreme difficulties trying to uphold the high standard for which this school is known. There is a continual need for maintenance in schools, particularly the older schools in my electorate such as the Manly State School and the Wynnum Central State School. They are for ever in need of maintenance.

Of the 51 approvals for new pre-school centres throughout the State I am hopeful that the Manly and Wondall Heights State Schools will be among the recipients.

To me the announcement by the Treasurer of the provision of some \$2,000,000 from soccer pools revenue and \$2,500,000 from Consolidated Revenue for sport is forward thinking, because anyone who has been or is involved in the administration of sport, and particularly the extension of sport to the young, realises what a great need there is for additional facilities. Those people who are responsible for sport, through both school organisations and other responsible organisations, will applaud this proposal by the Treasurer. It is an area of great need. I have commented previously in this Assembly that, with more encouragement and more financial assistance for sporting facilities for the young, we would see less juvenile delinquency, and certainly fewer of our young people before the courts.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** It makes men of them, too.

**Mr. LAMOND:** That is true; I agree with the honourable member for Archerfield. We see dramatic results from this sort of expenditure. Young people who grow up participating in sport learn how to co-operate with their fellows.

Tourism is an area which we all too frequently think too little about. It is a very important industry within our State, and we saw during 1975-76 an expenditure by the Government of some \$12,250,000. The estimated expenditure for 1976-77 is

some \$13,900,000. I feel very confident that this industry will play its part in the State's economy during this financial year.

When one speaks about tourism, one must look at Moreton Bay, which is the tourist area closest to the most thickly populated part of the State, and realise its unlimited potential. It has become the playground of South-east Queensland; it must be developed and become the playground for visitors from other States and from overseas.

Money must be spent in areas adjacent to this developing tourist area. I have spoken previously to the Minister for Marine Services about putting sand on the foreshores at Wynnum. People have said that it is a ridiculous suggestion. In my opinion, it is far from ridiculous, because Wynnum is a township that services a population of about 60,000, and it is on the edge of this playground and adjacent to a new port that will attract tourists from all over the world. Money must be spent on the foreshores at Wynnum and it is not a new concept to bring sand to an area to make it more attractive. I shall continue to pursue at Federal, State and local government level the possibility of having sand put on the foreshores at Wynnum.

It is disturbing to many honourable members to see that a section of the community in Queensland—fortunately, only a small section—is hell-bent on destroying the existing system of law and order and democracy. These people are setting out to destroy the structure of orderly control that protects the majority. Although, as I said earlier, this radical group is only small, all too frequently it gets the ear of the Press. Possibly because it sells newspapers, the Press give headlines to the conduct of these people. In doing that, the Press are encouraging the radical behaviour of people who are out to destroy not only us as a Government but also the freedom of the Press and everything that we, as a free-enterprise Government, believe in and stand for.

For that reason it is necessary that the Police Force be strong and efficient, and it is pleasing to see that the Treasurer has made provision for an increase of 5.6 per cent in police numbers. As a Government, we have a responsibility to develop an efficient Police Force and to ensure that it is supported adequately. I do not deny that in the Police Force in Queensland there would be some who might be referred to as bad apples in the barrel; but, generally speaking, we can be proud of the Queensland Police Force. It is the responsibility of the Government to ensure that corruption does not come from outside and destroy the Police Force, because corruption outside the force is just as devastating as is corruption within its ranks.

There is no doubt that the return of policemen patrolling a beat on foot will do a great deal to prevent crime. In effect, it

is a showing of the flag in the form of a policeman's uniform on the footpath, and this has a very sobering effect on those who may be criminally inclined and gives encouragement to those who believe in law enforcement. I compliment both the Minister for Police and the Treasurer on the intention to return police to the beat.

There are many factors in the Budget which I should like to debate but I have endeavoured to restrict myself to those matters that directly or indirectly affect my electorate. I should like to make the comment that it is the responsibility of every Australian (I was about to say "good" Australian, but most are good, anyway) to recognise that there is in this country at present a force that is hell-bent on plundering our democratic system. I am sure that none of us, whether in Opposition or in Government, wants to see our present system destroyed. The way of life that we have come to accept as part of our heritage in Australia should be jealously guarded. It is fragile and could easily be destroyed if we do not all play our part in seeing that that does not happen.

There is no doubt that unions play an important role in the structure of democracy. However, all too frequently today good members of unions become tools in the hands of radicals. I believe that the average Australian is happy to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, but all too frequently some people within the union structure, although they represent only a minority, take from others their right to a reasonable living. The youth of today, as I suppose was the case in the past, are inclined to look for change. Possibly all of us look for change, but we cannot permit young people to be influenced by pressure groups that are disrupting and destroying their lives.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** What about the influence of the League of Rights on the National Party?

**Mr. LAMOND:** That influence is non-existent. Whilst we of the National Party believe in law and order in the State, we also believe in the rights of the individual at all levels.

It is the responsibility not only of us as a Government but of all Queenslanders, and, indeed, all Australians, to realise that Australia is a country, and Queensland a State, with a foot on the threshold of greatness. We are a young country and we will achieve the benefits of greatness only if we involve ourselves in work at all levels. Unfortunately, too many people are avoiding work rather than trying to find it so that they can look back and say with pride and great satisfaction, "That is what I achieved today". Fortunately such people represent a minority. Australia has a great future. Queensland has a quite incredible future provided it has

good guidance and there is a realisation at all levels that greatness can be achieved only by one thing—hard work.

**Mr. DOUMANY (Kurilpa) (3.50 p.m.):** First, I pay my compliments to the Honourable the Treasurer on his first Budget. I believe that it is a very sound document, a very responsible Budget. It is the sort of Budget that continues the tradition of responsible management that the coalition Government has achieved since it took power in 1957. It is only fitting, before one looks at the 1976-77 Financial Statement itself, to pay tribute, first of all, to the late Treasurer, Sir Gordon Chalk—

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** He's not the late Treasurer; he's the former Treasurer.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** I stand corrected; the former Treasurer—the former Treasurer, who did so much with the coalition Government during the 1960s to provide the impetus to development of this State that has made Queensland the best State in the Commonwealth.

It is no good beating about the bush. It is little use the Opposition trying to refute this. Until 1957 Queensland was in the doldrums. There had been practically no development at all, apart from what took place during World War II—and that took place of necessity—and what took place in the 19th century and the beginning of this century. The concept of developing and building the nation just does not exist in the A.L.P. There is no question that all those massive resources—the minerals, the brisgalow lands that were opened up and the development of the sugar industry—were all there before. They were not hidden. They were known. However, there was no interest in development; there was no interest in bringing these resources and assets into a productive state.

It took this coalition Government to realise the potential of Queensland by bringing a philosophy of vigour and a philosophy of constructive activity to raise the level of aspiration of Queenslanders and to give Queensland the base of economic activity and enterprise that has led to so many people deciding to make this State their home. Let us not kid ourselves. The population growth of Queensland has been attributable not only to the entry of people from other countries but also to migration from the southern States. People have come to regard Queensland as a place where there is a future under the coalition Government.

I stress that, with Sir Gordon Chalk's responsible management during his term as Treasurer, there was undoubtedly a hardening of resolve to bring Queensland forward and to give this State the best possible level of achievement under the circumstances. I pay my own personal tribute to Sir Gordon for his hard work, his persistence, his determination and his get-up-and-go. I am certain that the Honourable Bill Knox, as our



Treasurer, will bring the same will to succeed and determination to the task of running the affairs of this State. There is no doubt that the Treasury carries a major responsibility for management, because it integrates and co-ordinates the resources of the State as a whole. Upon its performance depends the over-all success or failure of the State.

I believe it is very important in looking at the Financial Statement for 1976-77 that we be mindful of what has been happening at the Federal level of Government. There can be no doubt that after the three years of wild and irresponsible spending by Mr. Whitlam, the economic management at Federal level has had to take a certain course. I shall give some figures which will indicate the spectacular effects of Labor Government between 1972 and 1975. I take the 1966-67 Consumer Price Index figure for Brisbane as the base of 100. The following figures indicate the increases for the ensuing years—

1971-72	.. ..	121.6
1972-73	.. ..	128.6
1973-74	.. ..	146.1
1974-75	.. ..	168.7
1975-76	.. ..	190.9

They indicate the fruits of three years of a headlong rush into spending, a headlong rush into business-bashing and a headlong push on wage demand and escalation. There is no question that Mr. Clyde Cameron, as Mr. Whitlam's first Minister for Labor, did his very best to promote the wage award cases that were being considered in 1973 and 1974.

**Mr. Elliott:** He was totally irresponsible.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** He was. So far as he was concerned, it was a case of, "Get at the bosses. Every boss must be a villain."

At the end of last year we inherited that serious situation in Canberra. Therefore I believe that we must look at the philosophy that has underpinned the Federal economic programme and particularly the recent Federal Budget to see why the Queensland Treasurer has done things in the way he has and to understand the reasons for the constraints at State level that have been imposed in the Budget and why certain objectives and goals have been given the highest priority.

If I may summarise, there were five principles underlying the Budget strategy of Mr. Lynch in August. They were: to treat the eradication of inflation as the No. 1 priority; to restrain Government expenditure to allow the private sector to expand and create jobs; to restrict the Government's tax take in order to reinforce wage restraint, strengthen company profitability and boost business confidence; to reduce the size of the deficit to moderate increases in the money supply; and to continue the Government's programme of social reform. That

strategy placed some definite constraints on the Federal Treasurer when he was drawing up his Budget for presentation in August.

So that when we look at the Financial Statement drawn up by our own Treasurer, which has been tabled in this Chamber, it is most important to look at some of the background that has been provided in it. There is one belief that we hold, and the Treasurer has stated it from the outset. It appears at page 1 under "The Economy" and reads—

"A dynamic, expanding economy is the mechanism by which all Queenslanders can share in the benefits from our great natural resources, past and current capital investments, and the productive utilisation of our skilled human resources. A growing economy provides job security, a wider range of future prospects, a stronger base for Government activities, and a sense of confidence in the future."

That is a core statement in this State Budget. It predicates, in my opinion, everything that has been done by the Treasurer in determining the Revenue and Expenditure Estimates for the coming year.

I would like to point to the three major Budget constraints that are referred to in the Financial Statement. At page 3 one will note there is the "Commonwealth Government Expenditure Restraints". This undoubtedly represents a flow-on from Federal strategy to State strategy, and as much as we may bridle under some of these restraints that have been imposed by Mr. Lynch and Mr. Fraser, I believe that we, as a responsible Government, accept that much of it is necessary, although we may argue—and I personally would argue—that there is room for selective relief-valve treatment here and there, particularly if that relief is provided in areas which will be productive and which are not necessarily wasteful in themselves.

That moderation concept is alluded to in the Financial Statement by the Treasurer, and, undoubtedly, one of the areas of negotiation that I would see our Treasurer undertaking with Canberra is selective moderation over the months to come in opening up the purse-strings perhaps a little faster than the Federal Treasurer would want to. I believe this does not in any way deny the validity of the Federal Budget strategy. It does not cut across it, but it attempts to guide it and to give a greater or lesser velocity to where we believe it will be needed because of our local grasp of the conditions and circumstances in this State. I would be disappointed in the Federal Treasurer if he were inclined to ignore that type of advice and that sort of request from our State Treasurer because there is no doubt that, over all, sound management must rely on that type of give and take and flexibility in budgeting as time progresses and as conditions develop, and we know more about what room is available for us to move in.

The second constraint that is referred to in the Financial Statement is headed "Burdens upon Industry". I refer to the first sentence of the last paragraph on page 3 because I believe it is a most important statement. It reads—

"The second major constraint in the formulation of the Budget has been the need to ensure that impositions by the State in its revenue raising activities have the least possible detrimental effect on the ability of industry to continue to provide employment and on the prices of commodities and services."

This is undoubtedly a hallmark of a Liberal-National Country Party Treasurer, because he is cognisant in that statement of the fundamental importance of a viable private sector. That is what differentiates us from our socialist Opposition because invariably when Labor has the reins of Government the last concern it has is for the viability of business. Business is regarded by the A.L.P. as a suitable milch cow when it is in production, but when it is convenient and when the inclination takes it, the A.L.P. likes to bash the cow around the head so that it can get a feeling of satisfaction.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Sometimes they kill and eat it.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** Yes, sometimes they kill and eat it and there is no milk left at all.

That second constraint that has been observed by the Treasurer has undoubtedly made the framing of this Budget a most difficult task for him and his department, because to minimise these burdens on industry the Government has had to stand back, it has had to withdraw, and it has had to be as careful as possible in its revenue-raising. At the same time in its expenditures it has also had to take out the pruning knife. It has had to fight the temptation of being popular and of being everybody's man—someone for all seasons. Once again, that is another quality that tends to differentiate Liberal-National Country Party Governments from A.L.P. Governments. A.L.P. Governments love to be involved in "man for all seasons" type of management. It is nice to let everybody seem to have a slice of this mythical cake that is often full of whipped-up air, but, nonetheless, the new Treasurer has taken a direct approach and met this problem head-on. I believe that the business community throughout Queensland, and in particular the small business community, is most grateful for the consideration that it has been given, and I am sure that it anticipates further relief and further boosts to confidence as soon as this Government is able to make the necessary moves. I will talk about this particular area in more detail later in my speech.

The third constraint that has been imposed on the Treasurer in framing this Budget is related to the uncertainties that we face in

regard to the future rate of inflation and the likely trends of the revenues which we receive under the new tax-sharing arrangements that have been introduced by the Federal Government. The most fundamental area in this particular constraint is undoubtedly the rate of inflation. In fact, the rate of inflation is the real determinant of what is happening in the economy nationally and at State level. It will be the real determinant of many things—interest rates, taxation changes and policies—and certainly it will continue to determine the policies that Governments, State and Federal, implement in their respective spheres of financial management.

If we look at what inflation means merely in terms of salary and wages costs and appreciate the massive escalation that has taken place, and continues to take place with each quarterly review, we can surely see just what a critical and vitally important part the control of inflation must play in Government strategies in this country for at least the next two or three years.

Let us consider very briefly some of the changes that were effected in the Budget recently brought down by our Treasurer. If we look at the summary of events in terms of increases and decreases, it becomes clear that the Treasurer has achieved a remarkable end result—in fact, virtually a balanced Budget—and in view of the performance of Queensland in the last financial year, when the State ended with a significant surplus, there is no reason to believe that the same skills and management applied to the coming year will not again produce an in-line result in this State.

Looking at some of the really critical measures that were taken, I see the moves on pay-roll tax and on succession and gift duties as being extremely important to the immediate feeling of confidence about prospects of business in Queensland. Pay-roll tax is one of the imposts that I think most businessmen would like to see ended. Unfortunately, it is one of the few taxes open to State Governments to levy, and it would be difficult to perceive a full withdrawal over a very short period from this means of raising revenue. But there is no doubt that small businesses, with the enormous escalation of wage packets and pay-rolls over the last couple of years, have carried a massive load and burden from that tax. It does not discriminate between profitable and unprofitable industries or between labour-intensive and capital-intensive industries. It is one of those shot-gun taxes that sprinkles everything without regard to justification or otherwise. The maximum exemption is to be lifted by 50 per cent as from 1 January; the present level is to be doubled as from 1 July next; and it is then to be lifted to \$100,000 by 1 January 1978.

If at the same time the Federal Treasurer's anti-inflation policies have a favourable result, the \$100,000 limit will mean a great

deal to the small businessmen of Queensland in January 1978. Hopefully, that will open the door for much new investment and many new employment opportunities. That is really what I believe we are talking about when we speak of concern for the private sector.

The alleviation of pay-roll tax contained in the Financial Statement is based on concern for an important segment of the private sector. Let us make no mistake about it; small business accounts for a very big slice of the private sector in this State and the exemption increase will mean, certainly from 1 January 1977 and undoubtedly much more so from 1 January 1978, a great deal to hundreds and even thousands of businessmen in Queensland. It will give them the heart, the inclination and the will to expand their operations, to be more ambitious in their budgeting and forecasting and to increase the number of people on their pay-rolls. This is the only positive way of finding jobs for the thousands of young people, as well as family men and women, who now have fairly arid prospects in the private sector as a result of the enormous inroads of inflation and the battering of businesses and business confidence that took place in the three years of government under Mr. Whitlam. It is impossible to recover overnight from three years of battering.

I should now like to refer to a statement made by Mr. Lynch at a recent conference on the world economy organised by the London "Financial Times", Qantas and "The Australian Financial Review" and held in Sydney. During that conference Mr. Lynch reiterated the Federal Government's economic strategy and, in particular, he made a statement which I believe is most significant for all the knockers and particularly for Opposition members, who, now that they have no responsibilities in the State and Federal Governments, are pre-occupied with saying, "You said you would turn on the lights after 13 December. Where are the lights?" They expected the sort of thing that happened to Paul of Tarsus; the light shone on him and he went blind for a couple of days.

I propose to quote from "The Australian Financial Review" of 14 October.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Of this year?

**Mr. DOUMANY:** Yes. The article is headed "Lynch's Tough Line", and I shall read the last three paragraphs—

"There is now a common view that control of inflation is the fundamental precondition for sustained economic recovery and progressive growth in employment," Mr. Lynch said.

"It must be stressed, however, that Australia has adopted this strategy at a later stage than other developed economies, the majority of which are now reaping the rewards in terms of lower inflation and stronger growth.

"For this reason the Australian economy will necessarily lag behind a general trend towards improved economic performance that is being reflected in the industrial economies."

There is an explanation of why we have to experience a lag in recovery. It is because the patient was almost allowed to die before the competent doctor and physician was permitted to go near him. If the physician attempts a speedy recovery, there is a chance that he will in fact induce worse effects and a recurrence of the ailments. I believe Mr. Lynch has the resolve to back up the words contained in those three paragraphs. I believe that Mr. Knox in this Financial Statement is confirming that resolve. Naturally enough, we are seeing that resolve confirmed in Queensland because this Government is responsible for Queensland.

We have taken an initiative in pay-roll tax for the sake of the private sector because we believe that to be of the highest priority. When we look at succession duty and gift duty, we are looking at the same regard for the private sector. Let us not make a big fuss about these concessions applying only to the very wealthy. More often than not the very wealthy have the means, the skills and the opportunities to avoid or alleviate these imposts to an enormous degree—almost to the point where they do not have to pay them at all. Undoubtedly for many small businessmen with capital investment in plant, factories, stock and land—as well as all the primary producers of this State, who also for the most part are small businessmen—those duties have been the cause of enormous disruption at cyclical intervals. All that is quite apart from the unnecessary hardship and interference with privacy—with people's lives in difficult times of bereavement—that the enforcement and administration of these taxes entails.

Let us make no mistake about it; death and gift duties have cost the State a lot of money to administer. Perhaps if we looked at the net result of some of our other taxes we would be surprised at how lean is the revenue from some sources.

We have also seen a most responsive attitude by the Honourable the Treasurer to the many representations that were made to him on workers' compensation. Certainly, although he has not met all the requests that have been made—and I do not think that would have been possible in the short space of time since his assumption of the office—he has reduced the minimum rates and restored merit bonuses, in most cases to previous levels. That has meant that, for many employers whose industries incur very few claims, if any, the rate of workers' compensation premium has fallen back to a sensible level—to something like reality. We know that this subject has been an enormous bone of contention to many business people.

It was an extra straw on their backs after the harvest of inflation had crushed their lives and their profits.

Whilst I am dealing with the word "profit", perhaps I should make the point that there is nothing immoral or wrong about profit provided that the business practices being pursued conform to the law. Whilst I believe that some businessmen operate outside the law in some of their practices and do great damage to individuals—we could all cite serious cases at the present time—the question of profit in itself in a legitimately run firm, company, partnership or sole trading business is not the unclear, unrespectable thing that the A.L.P. would lead us to believe it is.

**Mr. McKechnie** interjected.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** Without a net return at the end of the pipeline, no-one will invest money or commit capital to risk and there will not be the employment.

**Mr. Byrne:** The ripening fruit of progress.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** That is not a bad definition.

Profit is very important. It was disregard and contempt for profit and distrust of it that led to the follies in Canberra between 1972 and 1975—the intrinsic assumption in every policy and statement that a positive net return meant that a company or a business was undoubtedly hoodwinking the public and working against the public interest.

I am all for the enforcement of trade practices. Frankly I believe that a strong trade practices approach is infinitely preferable to price-fixing and price control. Price control interferes to an alarming degree with the forces of supply and demand and with the forces of resource allocation. Anyone who can hark back to the years immediately after World War II until the Menzies-Fadden Government came to power in 1949 does not need to be reminded of the drastic consequences of price control—the black market and all of the other evils such as key money and rental arrangements. The mind boggles when one remembers the profiteering that was permitted under those arrangements.

The real secret to securing honesty in business and to making profit respectable is to enforce legitimate trade practices to ensure that traders compete against one another but, at the same time, to ensure that in doing it we do not impede unnecessarily the forces of supply and demand. They represent the best method of directing effort, resources and investment in our community. That is what we in free enterprise believe. That is what it is all about.

**Mr. Frawley:** You have put the honourable member for Archerfield to sleep.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** I am pleased that I have put him to sleep.

**Mr. Byrne:** It's a bit over his head.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** Not necessarily. He is not interested in this sort of subject matter. I think this delineates his position and ours.

**An Honourable Member:** It is absolutely scandalous.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** I do not intend to say anything scandalous. Frankly I think that the Budget we are debating is a very respectable document and there is no need to indulge in scandal or innuendo.

We have also seen a further reduction in road transport fees. It is a 50 per cent reduction from the immediate previous level and represents the second of the three instalments in the phasing out process that was promised some time ago. We have seen an increase in the exemption levels from land tax imposition both for residential landowners and for primary producer landowners.

**Mr. Houston:** Who is going to win after Saturday in Lockyer?

**Mr. DOUMANY:** Mr. Miller, in answer to that pertinent question, it certainly will not be the A.L.P.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Miller): Order!

**Mr. Frawley:** The coalition is going to win.

**Mr. Houston:** You're the expert.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the Committee to come to order.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** I have every confidence that if the people look at the Financial Statement brought down by the Treasurer the Government will win in Lockyer because when we look at the over-all picture—the balance that has been maintained, the success that our Treasurer has achieved in keeping those revenue items within reasonable limits—then I believe we have every reason for confidence in the prospects of the Queensland Government.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. DOUMANY:** Undoubtedly it has been necessary to hold down and bring down certain of these critical impositions, and to eliminate some of them; it has also been necessary to maintain the prices for services offered by the Government at something like the rate of cost escalation. Although I am sure the Treasurer has been reluctant to raise rail fares and freights, the deficit on the railways' operations is a very critical item in an annual Budget in Queensland. It has been necessary, I believe, to increase these rates by 15 per cent; but it is also very significant

that exemptions have been granted to specific critical areas, in particular beef and grain. There should be no objection to this type of separation of items in an economy such as ours where these products are absolutely critical to prosperity.

Another very significant area of the Financial Statement is in spending. Despite the paid rabble who want to stir up trouble for us and who said that we would denude education, education has enjoyed an increase of \$67,600,000, which is an increase above the \$330,000,000 approximately last year. I believe that is a verification of this Government's concern for education.

Health expenditure also has been raised by a similar proportion. It is increased by \$45,700,000 from \$220,000,000 approximately in the year.

We have an increase in Sports, Youth and Recreation, despite a lot of negative philosophy that it is a luxury which can now be done without. In the development of youth in this State and in the nation there can be no neglect of these activities.

While on this subject of what we might call non-material or intangible items, I would like to talk very briefly of culture and the arts. Very recently the Industries Assistance Commission report on culture and the arts was brought down. It was commissioned by the former Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, and if there was ever an inappropriate body to look at culture it was the I.A.C. It is remarkable that any Prime Minister could have felt that the I.A.C. economists—essentially number-fumblers at the best of times—would be able to quantify the benefits and costs of culture and the arts. If we had set aside the "Blue Poles" exercise and the money that was paid out to people like Germaine Greer for all sorts of purposes—I will not define them in this Committee—

**Mr. Powell:** I think you would embarrass us if you did.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** Yes, I probably would. But most of the money spent on culture has gone into activities of the community that are vital to the development of a balanced attitude and a healthy approach to living. It is tied up with quality of life just as much as good nutrition, good roads and a healthy, attractive environment in which to live, and I would not like to think that the various performing groups and amateur groups right throughout this State are to be put in jeopardy simply because of some economists in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne doing a few numbers exercises and saying, "This does not pay." How on earth can they expect these things to pay?

Right throughout the world culture has to be promoted by Governments to a substantial extent or it does not survive, and I believe that it is symptomatic of the type of myopia that was absolutely rife in the Whitlam Government that they gave that brief to the I.A.C. That would have to be

the biggest waste of money conceivable. How much it cost the I.A.C. to produce that report on culture I do not know precisely, but if it cost \$500,000—and that would probably be a realistic estimate—and we think of what good that could have done spread through a lot of these little organisations in the community, then we see the lack of perspective and priority that is so evident in the thinking of the A.L.P. when it gets into government.

I have a lot of respect for the I.A.C. in looking at strictly economic matters. I believe they are doing a fairly good job in eliciting the feelings of the whole community on many issues—certainly better than the sort of consultative councils that were asked for by some of Mr. Whitlam's advisers in late 1975 which would have meant a very exclusive panel of people set up outside many segments of the community. I think the I.A.C. does a good job because it allows the whole community to give evidence and have its say, but it has no place outside of strictly economic issues. It is not a political body and it should not be asked by any Government to make political judgments.

We have heard a lot from the Leader of the Opposition about interest rates. I want to digress onto this subject because there is an enormous misconception about the subject of interest rates at the moment, and statements of the sort that we get from the Leader of the Opposition do not help to remove the ignorance that exists in the community.

Unfortunately, the honourable member for Mackay tended to indulge in the same fantasy when he discussed interest rates a couple of days ago. He is not in the Chamber and I do not wish to criticise him, but I think he should have answered some of the questions that were directed to him at the time.

**Mr. Powell:** Do you think that there is much difference between his philosophy and that of the A.L.P.?

**Mr. DOUMANY:** No. One gets the feeling that the honourable member for Mackay has one foot on each side of the fence.

**A Government Member** interjected.

**Mr. DOUMANY:** As long as he does not get stuck on the barbed wire—that is true. I think he would make sure that the fence was a very low one.

We come back, Mr. Miller, to the very kernel of the strategy that is being followed by both the Federal Government and the State Government—that inflation is the No. 1 priority. Interest rates have to be related to the rate of inflation, and it is absolute fantasy—it is like "Alice in Wonderland"—to think that interest rates can be cut back to about 5 or 6 per cent, which is what they used to be, and still have inflation running at about 12 per cent or more. That

is not possible. Who is going to deposit money, who is going to lend money, at those rates when the rate of inflation is about 12 per cent? A person would be much better off filling a warehouse with durable goods, holding them for 12 months and then selling them.

I asked the honourable member for Mackay where he invested his money, because he wanted interest rates cut arbitrarily. Someone has to provide the funds to lend out, unless we are going to have a totalitarian State in which funds are commandeered, in which we say to people, "You will deposit 'x' proportion of your income in these funds." Unless we want that sort of totalitarian dictatorship—and we do not want it under any circumstances—interest rates cannot be cut arbitrarily. If they are, money will have to be taken out of the public purse and given away, and there is a limit to how frequently that can be done, particularly in difficult times such as these.

The other reason why interest rates must be realistic is that there is a capital market. The Government bids for money in that capital market, as does the private sector. All sorts of companies and institutions are bidding for money in that market. It is not possible to set a general rate of interest below the ruling market unless a dictatorial policy is applied. This is demonstrated in the interest rates in our building societies. I am sure that the Minister for Works and Housing, who is now in the Chamber, will agree that it would not be possible to bring those rates down artificially to a point substantially below the ruling interest rates unless the Government dipped into the public purse and paid out the difference.

One cannot make bricks out of straw, but unfortunately the Leader of the Opposition continues to believe in that method. He wants interest rates reduced—and it is a very popular message—and at the same time he and his colleagues in Canberra are criticising the Federal Government and saying that it should maintain a massive deficit and continue what was being done over the previous three years. The bigger the deficit, the more money that has to be raised on the open market by the Federal Government. The more money that the Federal Government has to raise on the open market by loans, the more it has to bid for it, and the more it bids for money, the greater becomes the pressure on interest rates. Make no mistake about it—the tight control on deficits being displayed by Mr. Lynch and by our own Treasurer is vital if interest rates are to be controlled. The necessity for Governments to go out and raise money on the open market is one of the prime causes of high interest rates.

I have one concern and I shall express it because it is a matter that we have to consider seriously. Quite recently the Minister for Works and Housing introduced legislation which foreshadowed a cut-back in the

interest rate for borrowing of money by permanent building societies from passbook holders. I am a little concerned because only a week after this legislation was passed the Federal Government increased the bond rate to attract funds because it has to raise more money. This is one area that has to be watched. The last thing we want to see is the diversion of money away from permanent building societies as they make a very important contribution to home-ownership. I am sure that the Minister for Works and Housing will look closely at interest rates and protect the interests of our own home seekers by ensuring that sufficient funds will flow to building societies.

In conclusion—I feel there is every reason to be confident of the future of Queensland and of Australia. The resources, skills and expertise that were here five years ago are still here. What has to be married to them is confidence and a belief in the future. It is not very easy to do that after three years of irresponsibility, wrecking and squandering at national level. But it will be done, and the Budget brought down by the Treasurer will help to get it done. It is a Budget based on the belief that there is a future for Queensland and for Australia. It is a Budget that sees the need to re-establish economic conditions and people's attitudes so as to restore the development and growth that was so effectively fostered and sustained earlier in this Government's history in this State as well as by the coalition Governments at national level prior to the advent of Mr. Whitlam.

The job can be done, but it will take faith and hard work. What we want to see is a display of the same beliefs and attitudes in many other quarters, particularly the trade union movement. I hope to see these beliefs shared and displayed throughout the community, and without delay, because there is a great deal of work and achievement awaiting us in this great country of ours.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD** (Toowoomba North) (4.46 p.m.): I should like to congratulate the Treasurer and his departmental officers on a sound and carefully prepared Budget. It continues the coalition Government's line in that it favours neither the country nor the cities. It seeks to do its best to see that both sectors of the community are allowed to continue to function and to expand. Once again the Treasurer of the State has had to cope with the very real problem of inflation.

If we cast our minds back to the 1975-76 Budget, we remember that Sir Gordon Chalk had to contend with increased wages and increased capital costs amounting to \$160,000,000. That imposition on the State was caused by the irresponsible financial measures of the Federal Labor Government and the irresponsible action of the unions which caused a tremendous wage and inflationary spiral. Sir Gordon had not anticipated that. Of course, he had much exper-

ience in dealing with inflation; but who could have believed that a State such as Queensland would have to find an additional \$160,000,000 to cope with the effects of the wantonness of the Labor Party and the Left-wing unions? This year our Treasurer has to provide only \$83,500,000 to cater for increased wages resulting from inflation.

That Sir Gordon Chalk ended the year with a surplus showed that he did in fact cope with the inflation and was able to very critically predict its effect. Although it was only a very small surplus of \$714,000—

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

(Quorum formed.)

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** Although Sir Gordon Chalk managed to achieve a surplus of \$714,000, the Federal Labor Government managed to wreck the finances of this country and shackle it with a \$4,000 million deficit. On the one hand a responsible Liberal Party Treasurer in Queensland managed a small surplus while, on the other, Australia was shackled by a Federal Labor Government with such a huge debt. As a result of the irresponsible spending by the Labor Government, it was necessary for it to sneak overseas, approaching Arabs and trying to borrow \$4,000 million to allow this great country to continue for another year. If that loan had eventuated, Australia would have been shackled to overseas payments for 20 or 30 years—just to pay for the irresponsible policies inflicted on Australia in a time of peace.

Queensland's public servants, of course, are extremely grateful to the Government for its efforts and its sound financing, since it has enabled all of them to stay in their jobs. They have not had to suffer like their fellows in commerce and industry, a great many of whom have experienced shorter working weeks and a lack of overtime. Many have even been put off work as a result of the Labor policies that affected commerce and industry. Jobs dried up as inflation prevented business and industry from borrowing the money necessary to pay for much-needed replacements of machinery and business expansion. Imports flooded into the country.

It is curious that some new fellow in the Labor Party—Senator Mal Colston—is saying that the actions of the Liberal and National Parties have caused the unemployment problem we have today. Obviously he does not consider for one moment what his friends in the Labor Party did before he got into the Senate. He will not acknowledge the effect they had on destroying jobs, job opportunities and incentives for industry to continue in work, let alone expand. He will not consider the effects that imports, particularly from Iron Curtain countries and Communist China, had on factory workers whom he expects to vote for him. He is a very shortsighted man. He needs only to read the

newspapers and some of the parliamentary debates of a year or two ago to learn the state that this country was in before he was elected to the Senate.

Queensland has protected jobs better than any other State. We have seen in this State an increase in population when another State—the Labor State of South Australia—has suffered a shrinkage of population. It has achieved zero population growth not by birth control, but by exporting workers.

**A Government Member:** They are glad to go.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** They are leaving South Australia and going to better places such as Queensland.

I am particularly pleased to see that from now on the Works Department will be allocated funds on a monthly basis. We are all aware of the embarrassment to this Government and of the extreme upset caused to State Works Department employees who, every May and June, faced the prospect of insecurity of employment as the dwindling funds dried up under Federal Labor Government policies. These men were left with no jobs because there was no money to pay them. I hope that the State Government will be able to plan not on a year-to-year basis, but for two or three years ahead so that these jobs will continue on a year-in-year-out basis and not be subjected to a stop-go policy every year in the tight last quarter of the financial year when money has been running out.

It is curious that in a time of unemployment there are 2,800 jobs vacant in the Public Service. It behoves all of those people who say they are genuinely interested in seeking employment to see that they are qualified to do the work. There are plenty of opportunities in Queensland for people with any sort of qualifications at all above those of the unskilled worker.

I regret that welfare housing took such a bashing under the Federal Labor Government. The number of Queensland houses completed dropped from 1,069 to only 800 while some of the pro-Labor States received generous hand-outs. Queensland has not yet recovered. Labor discriminated against widows, deserted wives and pensioners in an unprecedented manner.

**Mr. Houston:** You would say anything.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I would say anything if it is true, and it is.

The honourable member could come to Toowoomba and even with all of his friends, he would not find a place to live. Housing is in short supply for the reasons I have previously outlined in this Chamber, including the drift from the country areas, the expansion of Toowoomba industry, the expansion of the education services in Toowoomba, particularly the Darling Downs Institute of Technology and the expansion of the Army

aviation services at Oakey. They have created a need for increased housing, particularly welfare housing.

Under the Labor Government, young couples who had saved for a deposit were unable to approach building societies for loans because they did not have sufficient money. So these people have been turning to houses traditionally offered for rent, purchasing them and then renovating them room by room as they are able to. I hope that both the Federal Government and the State Government will see their way clear to increase Queensland Housing Commission accommodation—both houses and flats—in Toowoomba in the near future.

While on this subject, we should consider the plight of the widows, deserted wives and pensioners who are unable to get a house or flat when, under one of Labor's ill-conceived schemes, up to \$60,000 and sometimes \$90,000 was spent on a home under the guise of its being Aboriginal housing. Very often these houses were occupied by a white official who was sympathetic to or a supporter of the Labor Party. Many other houses that were built under this scheme were found upon inspection during the first year of occupancy to be so unsafe that they were ordered to be demolished.

**Mr. Houston:** Who built them? Private enterprise.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** Who built them? That is a very good question. The honourable member's friends in Canberra organised the building of these houses, and I am afraid that competent local government and other inspectors ordered their demolition for the protection of the people who were living in them.

The abolition of death duties has been implemented in this State, and it will attract increasing support as it comes more and more into effect. I voted for its abolition, although for Toowoomba I would rather have seen the abolition of pay-roll tax as I believe that such a step would have provided an immediate and great incentive for commerce.

We must never lose sight of the fact that this country is in the grip of incredible taxation. Death duties, which in the absence of income tax, might have been a realistic State tax or a national tax, have become one of those things in the category of the last straw. When death duties can be applied in such a way as to prevent the heirs of a business from assuming financial control of that business, the heirs of a farmer from assuming managerial control of the farm, or the heirs of a grazier from ever assuming control of the grazing property, it is time this form of tax has to be very seriously looked at. We should never forget that this tax is one of those 10 points on which the Labor Party seeks to socialise this country.

**Mr. Houston:** What a lot of nonsense! Why don't you tell the truth?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** What a lot of nonsense, yourself! It is the truth.

**Mr. Houston:** It has taken you an hour to do so; why don't you get on to the facts?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** The abolition of this tax became an absolute necessity with the Federal Labor Party in power because it was determined to use this means to bankrupt industry and the farming and grazing industries in one generation.

**Mr. Houston:** What a lot of nonsense!

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** It is not a lot of rot, and the honourable member knows it. He cannot live it down. Why doesn't he stand up and renounce all the things that his Government had going for it, including the tax that it was going to put on home owners? It had the Priorities Review Committee. Look at that one.

**Mr. Houston:** That is not true, and you know it.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** It is true and it is an embarrassment to all of the Labor members who used to be in State Parliament and have gone.

One generation could in fact see all the farms and businesses go into the control of a national Government. Toowoomba farmers are extremely anxious to see that Toowoomba continues to grow. We saw nationalised-style farming go hopelessly broke at Peak Downs in this State a long time ago. We should never forget that. It would never work. Nationalised farming everywhere is a fiasco and tends to stifle the very incentive that it is supposed to bring out. It is supposed to make farming more efficient, but it does the opposite. The venture at Peak Downs, some of the best farming country in this State, was an absolute fiasco, and it ended up a financial and economic disaster. If that is the way farms are to go in this State through death duties taking the last cent out of farming, then I am afraid I must vote—and I did vote—for the abolition of death duties. I hope that no future Queensland Government or National Government ever considers the reintroduction of this tax. I hope that it is abolished in every State in this country and that the National Parliament deals with it similarly.

If this had not been done and had Labor stayed in power, I do not doubt that in two or three years towns like Toowoomba would have been ghost towns. Toowoomba is a town which manufactures and services a lot of farm equipment, machinery and things used by the man on the land, and provides the man on the land with technical advice, seed, fertiliser, transport to and fro, as well as other essentials for daily living.

Not even the workers who wanted the Labor Party in power in Canberra would tolerate the thought of seeing their home



town reduced to a ghost town by the continuation of State death duties on top of what could be added in this lot at the Federal level. By abolishing death duties the Queensland Government hopes to bring people to Queensland to retire, and if it does this it will have my blessing and, I assume, everyone else's. But it is particularly the need to protect farms and businesses from nationalisation by stealth that prompted this Government to abolish death duties, and I must, as I say, give it my whole-hearted support.

The pay-roll tax reforms mentioned in the Budget will be an undoubted relief to businessmen and those in Toowoomba well and truly look for the total abolition of pay-roll tax, which has been done in some areas of Victoria well removed from the capital city. Pay-roll tax has reduced some of our very largest industries to the stage where they are teetering on the brink of non-profitability. As I said previously, it has reduced their potential resale value to zero. They have tremendous assets, but what use are assets if no-one will purchase them? For example, some of the large industries employing more than 100 people are looking at an annual profit level of only, say, the total wages of six or 10 working men, and this is not good enough.

If profits are not increased we could see the workers dropping out one by one as machines fail and cannot be replaced with more up-to-date and modern machines capable of a higher output. We will see the profitability of these industries falling further and further behind and finally being forced out of the market. I am, of course, referring to our metal and machinery-manufacturing industries and I think we could even say the same of our meatworks.

It is pleasing to see a reduction in workers' compensation premiums and the reintroduction of and increase in the merit bonus system. Nevertheless I think that the workers of this State were dealt a sad blow when the system was changed so that they were paid 100 per cent of their pay from the first day of an accident. While this might have been good for the great number of people who suffered only minor injuries such as strains, cuts, etc., it took a huge amount of money out of the S.G.I.O. pool and we saw a tremendous increase—a 100 per cent increase in the first year—in the number of claims.

I put it to working people that instead of having this insurance for minor injuries, they would be far better off having a realistic insurance for those major injuries which can keep a man out of work for a great many years, although perhaps not permanently. I refer to those very severe conditions such as back injuries which might require open surgery or the removal of discs, major burns (which might prevent the person affected from ever again wearing normal clothing or returning to his former employment), major fractures caused by penetrating injuries in sawmills, amputations and the

like as a result of motor-vehicle accidents, and other severe injuries suffered in factories.

I feel that what we should be looking at is a realistic wage for people who suffer permanent or prolonged major disability. I think any man who has a couple of days off for a small cut would gladly forgo compensation if he knew that if, through some unforeseen accident, he lost a major part of his anatomy such as an arm or leg and/or suffered an extremely severe injury and could no longer return to his former occupation or any other occupation, he would be well and truly cared for by this State. I do not think we are being honest about workers' compensation if we expect the Federal Government eventually to pick up the remainder of the bill on social security.

I believe in merit bonuses. Each and every industry should endeavour to make working conditions as safe as possible—not just for the dollars and cents of lost production or money being paid out in premiums, but for the real handicap that comes to people who suffer major burns or major disasters such as amputations. Each industry should be encouraged to do its utmost to improve safety, and in this regard the Railway Department is always looking at accident risks, discussing them and adopting extremely safe procedures to protect workmen, wherever possible, from the chance of a major catastrophe.

It is very pleasing to see that, as promised by Sir Gordon Chalk in 1974, road transport fees are now only one-third of what they were in 1974-75. I look forward to their total abolition. In Toowoomba, road transport fees have been one of the major brakes on increased decentralised growth. Industries in Toowoomba have the road transport tax applied both ways—on goods to Toowoomba and on goods from Toowoomba. That is totally unjust and I am very pleased that the tax is being removed. In Brisbane, where goods move only a short distance round the city, the tax does not affect people. However, it is a very real tax when applied to goods going to and from the country. It is a great bone of contention with all truck operators, and the sooner it goes the better it will be for the State and the sooner there will be decentralised growth. Queensland leads the way in decentralised growth. It is really the only Australian State that has anything to show outside the capital city by way of commerce, industries and townships. Having served the people living in the northern and western parts of the State as I have, I believe that any discriminatory taxes on freight should be removed once and for all and their reintroduction never considered.

There might be some complaints about freight rates being increased by 15 per cent. Last year members were complaining not about the final increase of 40 per cent but about the very suddenness of the increase. Many transport arrangements were revolutionised as a result of that sudden increase.

I said then—and I still believe it—that it is better to have a realistic freight rate published yearly and, if need be, reviewed quarterly. If a service costs so much, that is the figure which should be stated. If the State has to modify that to meet a particular need, it can publish that fact and give charity where charity is needed.

In this instance, representations to the Treasurer were considered on true coalition lines. The members for Cunningham, Balonne and Carnarvon and I, as member for Toowoomba North, saw the Treasurer and outlined to him the difficulties that were being experienced in freighting grain, particularly from southern Queensland through Toowoomba to Pinkenba. We told him we did not think that the industry could stand an increase in freight at this time. The industry is not expecting a good yield, and even before the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers farmers were ploughing in crops that were not going to provide a good yield. The sooner they could get rid of them and plant a summer crop, the better off they would be. I am pleased that the Treasurer considered our submission and, on true coalition lines, made a concession to the grain industry and the beef industry that will ensure that there will not be any increase in freight for them this year.

The Treasurer's decision will, of course, enable the Queensland Railways to obtain business from New South Wales. For example, wheat from the Moree district will come through Goondiwindi on trucks, be loaded onto Queensland railway wagons and then be transported for export through Pinkenba. This is a real "plus" for Queensland as a result of positive planning by the State Treasurer. This real help to the beef and grain industries has not come too soon as they are both facing very severe losses in this financial year.

It is very pleasing to see the Public Curator Office in Toowoomba given increased local responsibilities. It will now provide a better service to those who have dealings with it in and around Toowoomba.

I am also pleased to see that the Government has been able to budget for a new court-house to be completed in perhaps a year and a half from now. The old court-house, in which I was often a witness, suffered very greatly from the noise of the passing traffic. In the days when it was designed the passing traffic was probably a vehicle or a horse only now and then. Noise from the present traffic flow makes it impossible for judges, juries, magistrates and all others in the room to hear the witnesses. The windows on the street side have to be opened for ventilation and this allows noise to enter and echo around the building drowning out all that is being said.

There have been many public works continuing in the field of education, despite the difficulties produced by hail storms in Toowoomba.

A new deaf unit is nearing completion in Toowoomba. The Department of Works and the Department of Education are to be congratulated for the parts that they have played in its erection.

It is very pleasing to see that mining will once again be able to play its part in the decentralised growth of this State. It suffered severely as a result of a discriminatory tax introduced by one of Labor's stars, Mr. Connor. He introduced this tax, I am sure, to give a concession to the Wollongong coal-fields to support his Labor seat in New South Wales. He did it when he was a Federal Minister, not to help the nation or Queensland miners but to bolster his own electorate. This was the motivation behind a great many things done by the Labor Government. There is no doubt that it was a discriminatory tax but Mr. Connor did not have the guts to come out in the open and say, "This tax will be levied only in Queensland." He found a type of coal that was exported from Queensland but not from New South Wales and applied the tax to that type of coal.

**A Government Member: Shame!**

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** It was a shame. The Federal Government has reduced this tax but has not yet abolished it. That Government has given strict instructions that the Queensland Government should not adjust State taxes to match any reduction in Federal taxes.

Queensland has found a way to obtain a net gain without increasing taxation. With the reduction of the export levy there will be increased production from the mines. There will be new mines with new rail works, new ports and a great many new jobs. This is just one example of the way in which a Liberal-National coalition Government works both in the State and federally. It gathers more money not by increasing taxes but by increasing job opportunities. Queensland, it should be noted, will get more not by charging more or by increasing taxes or prices but by encouraging more work.

I am pleased to see that there is to be an increase of 20.5 per cent in spending on education. That is considerably above the inflation rate and it indicates the Government's very real concern for the education of children, and all others who seek education, in Queensland. Education should not be considered as concerning only young people in primary schools and high schools. It is a continuing process. A great many people have had to return to education later in life as jobs have changed and new opportunities have appeared. They have had to re-educate themselves and become more adaptable in order to make the best of their lives.

The Queensland Government is helping tremendously in education—from pre-school through primary school to high school. It assists private schools such as church schools, and I am pleased to see that the Government has increased the per-capita grant to private

schools this year. Allowances paid to some students at tertiary institutions have been increased, and the Government is presently looking at ways and means of increasing the response of industry to apprenticeship in this State. The Government is ever alive to the opportunities that dedication can bring and the need to increase education at all levels in all places in Queensland. We have seen schools in various places in this State. I have been on a trip with the Honourable Claude Wharton, and the schools we saw at Jessica Point and Weipa are the equal of any to be seen in any major city. Queenslanders can take pride in what the Government has done for education in this State.

I am pleased that funds have been made available for the continued development of the new block at the Toowoomba Hospital. Although it is not in my electorate, nevertheless I am pleased to see the hospital's growth. The 200-odd beds that will be provided by the extensions will be a marvellous boon to the people of Toowoomba. At times in the past it has been very difficult to get people into a hospital bed, but the extension will overcome those difficulties. The new block will be marvellous for the people of Toowoomba and the district served by the hospital. The area covered by it extends west to the Northern Territory border and south to the New South Wales border. The hospital perhaps serves the largest area of any in the Commonwealth.

Sporting and youth clubs in this State can look forward to increased Government support for junior coaching and capital works. It is hoped that \$4,400,000 will be available to the Department of Sport, \$2,000,000 of which will come from the soccer pools. Since we legislated to allow soccer pools to be conducted in Queensland, Queensland money is remaining in Queensland. It stopped a large flow of money to Victoria. I am very pleased to see the rapid expansion of youth facilities in Toowoomba by clubs that have received grants.

All in all, I congratulate our Treasurer on a very well-prepared and calculated Budget—one that has enhanced the position of Queensland's coalition Government. As I said before, the Budget has not sought to favour any section of the community. The Treasurer has done his very best. I do hope that in the future we will see the continued reduction of road tax and pay-roll tax through the very capable and conscientious administration of the Treasury by the Honourable Bill Knox.

**Mr. POWELL** (Isis) (5.24 p.m.): The prophets of doom have been destroyed. The Budget presented by the Treasurer is one that will advance Queensland for a further 12 months in the manner in which it has been advanced since the National and Liberal Parties formed a Government in Queensland in 1957.

I congratulate the Honourable Mr. Knox not only on the Budget itself but also on the excellent manner in which he presented it. Clearly and concisely, he was able to explain to the Parliament and to the people of Queensland what the Budget was all about. It is a good document and one that must please the people of Queensland. Prior to its introduction we heard many statements by various so-called experts that it would be a Budget of doom, a Budget that would hit the people's pockets, and so on.

Death duty and gift duty are to be abolished as from 1 January next year. That is an excellent move in the right direction. We are overtaxed in this country. A school of thought that may not be far from the truth holds that we are overgoverned because far too much money is being paid out by the people for the services that they receive. The abolition of the iniquitous death duty and gift duty drives one more nail into the coffin of taxes which affect people badly.

It is pleasing to note that the Treasurer has been able to change and improve slightly the conditions for small businesses by being more lenient in pay-roll tax. Of course, we would like to see it abolished, too, but the Treasurer, when he is trying to balance his Budget and maintain expenditure at the present level, cannot wipe the major part of his income. The Treasurer has had to be a bit careful there and no doubt he has done an exceptionally good job.

He has also provided a benefit in workers' compensation. A lot of people do not regard this as a tax but it is a tax applied to employers for the benefit of their employees. A little while ago the incentive was removed so that, regardless of whether no claims or 100 claims were made for compensation, the employer was still charged the same premium. I am pleased and certainly the small businessman in my electorate will be very pleased that the incentive is being reintroduced. It must be emphasised that the small businessman employs most of the people in our country and we should be careful not to tax him out of business or make his conditions so bad that he cannot continue. It is very difficult for a Government to make sure that it gives everybody a fair go.

It is with pleasure that I note also that the education allocation has not been decreased. Not many months prior to this Budget and prior to the Federal Budget, the prophets of doom, instead of being at colleges and schools where they should have been, were running up and down the streets with banners telling us that we as a Government intended to reduce spending on education to such a drastic extent that they would not be able to continue their studies. A perusal of the Budget shows that was so much poppycock from people who no doubt were led by others who did not know what they were talking about. Once again the prophets of doom have been discredited.

I believe that the people of Queensland would do well to listen very carefully to the statements from this Government and to examine them. It so happens that the enemies of the Government—and there are enemies of this Government—are out to destroy it by innuendo, by false statements and by half-truths. The stage is being reached when a person does not know what to believe when he peruses the headlines in the morning newspaper.

The prophets of doom, in the case of the budgetary matters of Queensland and even of Australia, have been proved incorrect. Whilst Opposition members like to jump up and rant and rave and complain about different things, it must be realised that their complaints and criticisms have an ideological basis and are not based on fact or the ways in which people are being helped.

These days it is popular to criticise our federal colleagues. I have seen honourable members jump to their feet and have heard them condemn the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, other Cabinet Ministers and our other Federal colleagues. I have no intention of doing that. While perhaps I would have liked the Federal Government to do certain things, we must be realistic; we must be patient and we must realise that three years of misdemeanour cannot be overcome in six months. Under the very sound leadership of the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister the Federal Government is doing an excellent job. Theirs is a difficult and thankless task. I believe that from the way they are going about their business, this country will soon be back on its feet again. If we are impatient, if we cannot just wait and let them get the economy back where it ought to be and if we make unrealistic demands, we will not get the economy back to where it ought to be. Individuals will not quickly regain their self-respect, and we will have a continuing decline in the quality of life.

The State and Federal Budgets together should plan for the sound future of this country and people should look at them realistically.

The Government has a right to be proud of its provision for a 20.7 per cent increase in expenditure on education and on the way in which that money will be spent.

The quality of our education has been under considerable attack throughout the community. I wonder if those critics of the education system, the teachers and the quality of the students really know what they are talking about. I wonder how long they have spent studying the system of education in Queensland. While I do not believe it is perfect, I do not agree that it is as bad as it is painted by many people.

We are told by some employers that the students coming onto the employment market at the end of grade 10 or grade 12 are

not acceptable to them. I can remember such statements being made as far back as 30 years ago, and when I finished Junior—the present grade 10—and entered teachers' college, the same things were being said about students: they were unacceptable; they couldn't read or write, and they couldn't spell. I question the validity of much of the criticism.

Sure, there are changes in education and certainly within the evaluation procedures and assessment procedures there have been vast changes. It seems to be very popular to criticise the Radford system as instituted in Queensland. As a practising teacher I do not believe that there is a better system, so long as it is implemented correctly. That is the important proviso. I do not believe for one moment that if we went back to the old Scholarship, Junior and Senior examinations we would turn out better students. Under the correct system of continuous assessment, provided that the assessment is done correctly—and I will always add that proviso—the student will finish up at least as good as the student under the old system and probably better. I say that because the pressure upon him is not as concentrated as it was under the old system.

It is claimed by some that the pressure is more constant today, and that is probably true. The student who puts his head down and works has to work harder and more constantly under the Radford system than he did under the old scheme of Junior and Senior examinations. But under the old Junior and Senior system—and this was the whole problem with a life-or-death education system where there was one final examination that counted—if the student felt off colour for only three critical hours, his examination results could have reflected it in outright failure and therefore his prospects could have been ruined for life or, alternatively, he could have had to spend another year repeating those subjects for another three-hour go at the same examination. So I very much prefer the continuous assessment procedure.

One of the problems is that employers do not understand the assessment procedure and the way evaluation is made. It should surely be up to the Education Department to make sure that the employers know exactly how the assessment is made, and if the department has done that, but has not done it successfully, then it is to be condemned for its failure. I, and probably all other honourable members, have seen the publicity put out by the Education Department on the matter, and it is extremely difficult to follow. Most employers do not want to have to spend two or three hours sitting down and studying an evaluation procedure in which they really have no interest. They have an interest in it to the extent that they want to know how they are to assess the product that comes from the

schools, and perhaps if they claim the students are being turned out in an unacceptable manner, then they, the employers, should be doing something about it. They should be putting forward proposals to the Education Department and they should also be conducting their own examinations or their own evaluations to select the type of student that they wish to employ.

A quick look through the Estimates of the Department of Education and Cultural Activities shows that there will be a decrease of 107 in the number of personnel in the secondary education section. What disturbs me most about this decrease is that it is planned for high schools and is enumerated in a number of different classifications such as principals, deputy principals, stenographers, clerk-typists and laboratory assistants. In all 107 fewer will be employed during 1976-1977 than in 1975-1976. I wonder at the rationale of that move because, for the life of me, I cannot understand how 107 positions can be eliminated. I know of no school that is overstaffed to the point where teachers are doing nothing. I know of no school which has too many administrative officers, stenographers, clerk-typists or laboratory assistants, and I will be very disappointed if that trend is continued over the next two or three years.

I notice that there are to be three fewer personnel in the evening classes section of the secondary education section, and once again I will be disappointed if that trend is continued. In the secondary correspondence section there is to be an increase of four. I just wonder where those four will be fitted in and where they will come from.

In the primary education field the picture is a little brighter. There is to be an increase of 268 in the personnel described as principals, teachers, stenographers and clerk-typists.

While talking about numbers let me digress to suggest we would be well advised to change our teacher education system by providing that, before a teacher is employed in a secondary school or an upper tertiary institution, he should have a turn at teaching in the primary field. There are, of course, arguments against that suggestion. I call them pseudo-academic arguments. We have people in our community who believe that, if a person starts teaching as a pre-school teacher and then proceeds through grades 1 to 7 and then on to high school, he must be getting better as he goes along. That, of course, is absolute poppycock. The Teachers' Award—State does not recognise any difference in the type of quality of a teacher in a pre-school and a teacher of grade 12 at secondary school, nor should it. The skills are the same: the experience needed is different.

A large part of the problem in secondary schools is of a disciplinary nature. If a teacher taught in a primary school before going to a secondary school, he or she might learn how to control a class and how to

teach effectively. Although many of the teachers coming from the colleges at the moment are very good, as they have been in past years, one could hardly say that, after their three years professional training at colleges of advanced education, all of them are as fit to teach as graduates of bygone days were.

I hark back to the old pupil-teacher system, under which young people, at the age of 14 or 15, began teaching and had to study at the same time. While that system was not desirable from the teacher's point of view, it certainly was desirable from a practical point of view, and most of the teachers who went through that pupil-teacher system are far better teachers. Admittedly, they had to work hard and study hard; but they learnt how to teach, and they learnt at an early age. I believe that is one of the things wrong with education today. However, it is pleasing to note the provision for an increase of 268 teachers in the primary field.

In guidance and special education there is to be an increase of 35. Like many other teachers in this State, I believe that there are too many already in guidance and special education. There are far too few teachers in the field and too many sitting down attempting to plan what ought to be done. In fact, it has been said that many of the teachers who gravitate to guidance and special education are refugees from the classroom; yet they sit down there and give guidance to the teachers in the classroom and attempt to tell them how they should teach. That is totally unacceptable to most teachers.

I notice in the section covering guidance and special education that there are to be 44 speech therapists in 1976-77. I hope that the Department of Education can find that number of speech therapists and that, having found them, it will send some of them to country areas. It is strange that when provision is made for 44 speech therapists—and perhaps the additional 35 should be put into the speech therapy section—most of them are assigned to the big cities of Brisbane, Rockhampton and Townsville, very few in the smaller provincial cities and, of course, virtually none in country areas, unless one happens to be married to someone who lives in a country area or a far-western area.

**Mr. Houston:** Why do you think so many children need that assistance?

**Mr. POWELL:** Which assistance?

**Mr. Houston:** From speech therapists.

**Mr. POWELL:** If the honourable member goes back in history, he will find that there has always been a large number of children in the pre-school and infant age-group who have needed speech therapy but have never had it.

**Mr. Houston:** I know; but what is the basic problem?

**Mr. POWELL:** Probably there has been research into the basic problem, but I am not aware of it. I do not think that one can

point to a particular sociological or socio-economic reason for the problem. About 10 per cent of the population have a speech problem. If it is dealt with quickly by a person who is trained in speech therapy and specialises in it, it can be rectified. The person concerned then has sufficient confidence to be able to speak in public.

The honourable member for Salisbury suggests that it is lack of communication in the home. That could well be so. Children may not be talked to enough by their parents and perhaps they do not communicate enough. The honourable member for Bulimba knows as well as I do that once a person becomes an adult, it is very important that he be able to communicate and, having communicated, be understood. Of course, speaking is one means of communication.

Provision has been made for additional personnel in special schools and pre-schools. The prophets of doom, of course, said that the Government was going to abdicate from the pre-school area. It will be seen from the Budget that the Treasurer has provided for 51 new pre-schools and 126 additional staff for those schools. I hark back to the question that I was asked earlier. If children who are not given the correct stimulation in their homes are able to attend pre-schools, there is a strong possibility that their problems will be overcome. The speech therapist is most important in this area.

The media services section of the Education Department has, I notice, 27 fewer personnel. I do not think anyone will cry very much about that.

I am very pleased to see an additional 13 staff provided for the agricultural project section, the section of which I was a member before coming to this place. This is a section that needed extra staff but could never obtain it. It was only after a considerable amount of work in the last two years that additional staff were appointed to the agricultural project section. This is the section that is implementing the environmental science curriculum in schools. It is giving children a much better outlook on their environment through the environmental field study centres that are being established throughout the State.

It is very pleasing to see that this section, under its organiser, Mr. Jack Althaus, is being given extra personnel. Hopefully, it will be able to continue to advance until every school in the State will be visited by an officer of the section at least every year. At present it cannot possibly cover the whole State. The area that I used to cover extended from Gympie in the south, north to Bloomsbury and west to the Northern Territory border. Honourable members can well imagine the number of schools in that area and the amount of travelling required to visit them. I was not able to cover anywhere near all the schools in the area. It is therefore pleasing to see an extension of the section.

Technical and further education in Queensland is certainly advancing. Under "Technical and Other Colleges", the number of personnel attached to Brisbane technical colleges will increase by 77 while the number in country technical colleges will increase by only 16. The number for the Technical Correspondence School will be decreased by 18. Here is another example of a preponderance of staff being stationed in Brisbane whilst country centres are left out.

Bundaberg has a brand-new College of Technical and Further Education. It is a very good complex indeed, of which the Government should be extremely proud. But it is not being used to its fullest extent. It could be used much more for the old type of adult education and I am hopeful that this will happen in the future. In fact, the colleges in Bundaberg and the one in Maryborough could be used for first-year courses at a college of advanced education standard.

For many years the people of the Wide Bay area have been fighting for a college of advanced education. We have been told that the Gold Coast area has a far stronger claim than ours. I cannot accept that. People living on the South Coast have a drive of between an hour and an hour and a half to Brisbane, where there are a number of colleges and two universities. The people of Wide Bay have to leave home to attend similar colleges, not permanently but certainly during semesters. They have the option of going to Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Townsville or Brisbane, which means that they have to leave their homes. There are two very good colleges of technical and further education—one in Maryborough and one in Bundaberg—and I cannot see why the Education Department cannot look a little further ahead and plan to use those two colleges, certainly for first-year students undertaking courses at colleges of advanced education. As a little more expertise is built up in the colleges, they could be used for second and third-year courses. When the young people left high school they would then not have to uproot themselves from their homes and find somewhere else to live.

It is a continuing problem for country people that their offspring, as soon as they attain the age of 17, have to go to a big city and find somewhere to live. That is just not fair. Of course, in some areas of the State children as young as 6 and 7 have to leave home to attend a school. That is not fair, either. However, in the more closely settled areas—provincial cities such as Bundaberg and Maryborough—it is wrong to have institutions available but not used fully. If it is decided that we have not either the money or the inclination—and it seems to be the latter at the moment—to plan for a college of advanced education in the Wide Bay area, we should be using the technical college that is already there to help alleviate the problem.

I turn now to cultural activities. From time to time, the director (Mr. Creedy) comes in for a fair bit of criticism. On behalf of my constituents, however, I say that I have nothing but admiration for the man. He has done a good job for cultural activities throughout the State. He has brought them out of the doldrums, out of the backblocks, to the stage where cultural activities in this State are now being looked upon by the people as important and not as a Cinderella.

The honourable member for Kurilpa referred to the I.A.C. report on the performing arts. I could not agree more with what he said. At times we wonder where all this money goes, which no doubt is why the economists at the I.A.C. have looked at it rather carefully. However, I believe we must continue to advance cultural activities. We must encourage voluntary groups that do their best to advance cultural activities, just as we help organisations to advance sport in this State.

However, it is when we come to some of the activities of people in the art world who have received money—not so much the performing arts as painting and so on—that we raise our eyebrows. I refer to this morning's "Courier-Mail" and the article about the Blake prize for religious art, which was won by Mr. David Voigt. I hope honourable members looked at this article. Mr. Voigt received \$1,000 for a square painting. I do not know what it is on. However, it is called "Blue Requiem". I think the only thing blue about it is the artist. I do not know about the requiem bit. He probably called it "Blue Requiem" because "Blue Poles" brought so much money. Fancy paying anyone a thousand dollars for that thing! It does not portray anything religious, let alone merit a thousand dollar prize for religious art.

These things—"Blue Poles" and all the other junk that we see around the place masquerading under the name of art—leave me cold. Although the techniques may be brilliant, can you understand it, Mr. Hewitt? I'm sure I can't. When I say that, I am told that I am an ignorant idiot; that I am old-fashioned; that an accurate reproduction of something can be obtained by a photograph, which is not the purpose of a painting.

Whenever I hear that argument from the academics, of whom we have too many, I always think of Hans Christian Andersen and his tale of the King's new clothes. I wonder if honourable members remember that story, which was written somewhere between 1835 and 1872. So perhaps even then people were being duped by academic expertise that did not have very much logic behind it. I cannot condemn too greatly the attitudes of people who today are accepting rubbish such as "Blue Requiem" and that thing called "Blue Poles" and calling it art. If it is art, it is art of a sort of fashion.

If an artist paints a religious picture or a landscape, surely it should look like the darned thing it is supposed to depict. We are probably extremely fortunate that "The Courier-Mail" is not printed in colour or the photograph of "Blue Requiem" might have looked worse. Fancy it winning a \$1,000 prize! So I question the way cultural activities and cultural affairs are going in this country. We should assist and foster cultural activities but when people start to get off the rails and present this type of rubbish, it is time to call a halt and ask them for some accountability. It is being asked of people in education and it is about time it was asked of people who are being given money for artistic purposes.

I understand that the Estimates for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and Fisheries are to be debated later this month, so at this stage, I shall confine my remarks to the section on research in the Fisheries Branch. This is vital because fishing is a very important industry. As we have little or no research into the subject, it is not as important as it could be. I shall leave other remarks on this subject until I speak in the debate on Fisheries Estimates.

I am considerably worried about local authority grants. Under the formula dreamed up by, I understand, somebody in Canberra, the six shires in my electorate receive the following amounts—

	\$
Bundaberg .. ..	312,000
Maryborough .. ..	312,000
Hervey Bay .. ..	101,000
Isis .. ..	84,000
Woongarra .. ..	110,000
Woocoo .. ..	60,000

The formula has already been explained. The latest population figures are as follows: In 1971, Bundaberg city had 21,324 people whereas at 30 July 1976 it had 30,456 people. In 1971, Maryborough had 19,257 people whereas as at 30 July 1976 it had 21,523 people. A large proportion of its increase can be attributed to the change in local authority boundaries, which made the area of Maryborough city larger than it was in 1971. Even so, the population of Bundaberg increased over that period by 11.5 per cent and Maryborough by only 11.7 per cent, even though it has all of the extra territory, including Tinana, down the coast to Boonooroo and part of Fraser Island.

If the grants were decided on population and difficulty, Woocoo Shire, which had a population of 491 in 1971 and 3,412 in 1976, should have received more. The Woocoo Shire took the part of the old Burrum Shire with most of its problems. The areas I am referring to are Howard, Torbanlea, Burrum Heads and Toogoom. So one finds the rather strange result that Woocoo Shire with its vast area and an increase of 595 per cent in its population received only \$60,000. I believe that is totally unfair, as is the method by which it

was calculated. I hope that the new commission which is being set up will have a far more equitable method of distributing its funds in the future.

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

**Mr. POWELL:** Before the dinner recess I was saying that I was not very happy about the amount received by local authorities in my area out of the total grant of \$24,222,000 which the State Government had been given by the Federal Government for local government generally. I gave population figures and increases in local authority areas in my electorate. While I believe that the Maryborough City Council certainly needs the \$312,000 that it was granted and Bundaberg certainly needs the \$312,000 it received, it is reasonable to assume, taking Maryborough as the base, that Bundaberg should have received more because of its extra size. It is reasonable to assume that Woocoo Shire should have received more than \$60,000 because of the 595 per cent increase in population and the increase in area as a result of changes in the local authority boundary. Hervey Bay Shire, which has now been promulgated, with a population of 10,303, received only \$101,000, whereas the Woongarra Shire, with a population of 8,700, received \$110,000. So the formula, if it was worked as a formula, just does not work, and it did not work in this allocation. I look forward to a better system in the future.

While talking on local authority areas, I with many others believe that the local authority should be the body to distribute unemployment benefits. The manner in which benefits are being distributed at the moment is totally useless to the community. Many people who should be receiving unemployment benefits are doing so in a sort of fashion and many others who should not be receiving them are in fact doing so. I would much prefer to see the money handed to the local authorities to be paid out to people for doing some work. I do not believe that the money should be just handed out and that the people should not have to work for it. This has happened. Everyone here knows, and everybody in the community knows, that the way it is being done is not good enough.

The Federal Government says that it cannot allow the local authorities to use the money to employ people for even two or three days of the week. I am sure that local authorities, and certainly the six local authorities in my electorate, would have no trouble at all in employing unemployed people in the electorate and handing them out the money for two or three days' work. This would not put any employed person out of a job. All it would mean would be more equitable distribution of the money and some benefit would come from it.

Moving on to the question of housing, I am pleased that the Minister for Works and Housing has accepted my arguments on

extra Housing Commission houses for the Bundaberg area and the Hervey Bay area. Bundaberg, as can be seen by the figures from the Bureau of Census and Statistics, is a fast-growing city. If one takes into consideration the figures for Bundaberg city and the Woongarra and Gooburrum Shires, it will be seen that that area is growing very quickly indeed. There is a tremendous need for housing, and some people are living in very bad situations. I must say that the Minister for Housing in this State has bent over backwards to assist in alleviating the problem in Bundaberg. I hope that when the new designs of these houses which the Housing Commission is going to build is decided upon, some of them will be built in my electorate as well.

Probably the only really disappointing feature of the Budget is the increase in rail freight rates. I am very pleased to see that the Government has recognised the plight of the cattle producers and not increased the freight rates payable by those people, who are in dire straits. I am sick and tired of people, usually our political opponents, who tell us that all the graziers are rich fellows who drive round in Mercedes, Rolls Royces, and so on. They know as well as anybody else that that is not so. They are in dire straits and they do need assistance.

It is very pleasing to see that that assistance has been forthcoming, but I am very concerned that the fruit and vegetable growers in my electorate have not received the same consideration. The grain growers have been exempted from this increase and I do not believe that the grain-growing industry is any less worthy than the fruit and vegetable industry in the Isis electorate. I do not see why the grain growers should receive this treatment if the fruit and vegetable growers do not. If the grain growers put up a case that the price for their product is such that rail freights should not be increased, then the fruit and vegetable growers should have received the same consideration.

I have put a case to the Minister for Transport and the Treasurer and I know that they are looking at it at the moment. I hope the Railway Department will look at this problem as a business proposition, because there is no way in the wide world that the fruit and vegetable growers in my electorate will continue to use the railways if freight rates continue to rise. They will use road transport, and as this Government believes in promoting private enterprise, it has had the sense to reduce road permit fees. Therefore it is reasonable to presume that, if road transport is an economic proposition, the fruit and vegetable growers will use road transport instead of rail transport and that, of course, will be to the detriment of the railways in this State.

I wish to move now to primary industries and, apart from fruit and vegetables, the main primary industry in my electorate is



sugar. I bring to the notice of the Committee once again the disastrous situation that will prevail if the world price of sugar continues to drop.

The honourable member for Bundaberg, whom some of the gentlemen opposite recognise, made a very good speech on this subject the other night. Unfortunately, it has not been printed, and I doubt that it has been printed in the Bundaberg Press either. He pointed out very clearly the problems that will arise in the sugar industry should the price drop.

On 1 October the price of sugar in London was f5tg.118 per ton and 8.10c per lb. on the New York No. 11 market. That is not good enough. If the price drops any lower on the world market, the sugar industry too will be in dire straits.

Of course, talk of sugar leads to irrigation and the importance to my electorate of the completion of the Monduran Dam. Here again we can look at the Budget and congratulate the State Government on its attitude and the amount of money it has advanced for further works on the Monduran Dam, which will eventually irrigate much of the Isis electorate.

I notice with great pleasure that the Minister for Main Roads has accepted the submissions that have been made to him and that branch vehicle registration offices will be opened in Bundaberg and Maryborough in the near future. These offices were well and truly needed because the people in country areas were not being served in the way that they should be. I look forward to the opening of these offices in Bundaberg and Maryborough to service my electorate and also to having other offices serve areas throughout the State.

In rounding off my remarks on the Budget, I repeat that it is a very good Budget. In the economic climate in which we find ourselves it is a particularly good Budget and one of which we can be very proud indeed. I am very disappointed with some of the remarks that have been made by Opposition members. Probably the Leader of the Opposition has his speech written for him from year to year, because it always seems to be much the same; it has very little in it that is new.

It is quite obvious that productivity must be increased if the economy of the country is to improve greatly. We must reach the stage when we are producing more than we are using; it is as simple as that. If your bank balance is only \$10, Mr. Hewitt, you cannot spend more than \$10. When a country reaches the stage of spending more than it is earning, it is in a very poor state and must increase its productivity.

The vast majority of people in Australia today want to work. They want to work a 40-hour week and be paid for a 40-hour week, and they will do 40 hours work if they

are allowed to. It is quite likely that productivity in this country would increase greatly if the Left-wing fools in the unions stopped their ridiculous nonsense.

I again congratulate the Treasurer on presenting an excellent Budget. I am sure that it will help increase productivity in Queensland and keep this State at a very sound economic level.

**Mr. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon) (7.27 p.m.): First, I congratulate the new Treasurer (Mr. Knox) on the Budget that he has brought down. In my opinion, the Knox-Petersen combination is going to be a very successful one and the State will benefit immensely by having at the top two men who understand the economics of the country so well and realise the importance of finding permanent solutions to the economic problems of the State. For too long various Governments have tried to present popular Budgets that have propped up the economy but provided no lasting solutions to the problems of stop-go inflation that have confronted Australia since the Second World War.

I think it is also true to say that the Petersen-Knox combination will bring about and secure solidarity in the coalition. To have a successful economy in Queensland we need stability, and I hope that the people in various walks of life who are trying to drive a hypothetical wedge into the coalition will back off and give Mr. Petersen and Mr. Knox a chance to prove just how successful a coalition can be.

Other honourable members have mentioned the Treasurer who retired recently, Sir Gordon Chalk, and I also wish him well in his retirement. He served Queensland for a long time and certainly deserves to enjoy a long, happy and satisfying retirement.

One thing that Governments, both State and Federal, must realise is that development needs to be encouraged, and permanent development will not be encouraged if larger and larger slices of the financial cake are diverted to Government expenditure. That is a self-defeating policy. Even public servants, who enjoy relative security of employment from the Government, must realise that if Governments divert a larger share of the cake to public expenditure their children will not have jobs, because Government expenditure is largely self-defeating. It does not do very much to raise the real standard of living of a country. The standard of living is raised when the community works hard and does a fair day's work for a fair day's pay in producing new goods, many of which can be sold on the export market. Sufficient recognition has never been given to those who supply goods for export.

My electorate has had a very difficult year. The floods early in the year were catastrophic but I think it is well to note that the town of Goondiwindi was saved from serious damage by the levee banks that our

forefathers had the foresight to build with the help of Government subsidies. It is also fair to point out that at my request the Premier flew all over my electorate in the Government aircraft and landed at Stanthorpe to meet the shire council. I think that action of the Premier assisted him considerably in putting a case to the Federal Government for money for flood relief.

It is also to the shame of the media that very few people in my electorate knew that the Premier thought enough of them to go out and have a look at the situation, because the Press had a black ban on the Premier at that time. If the Press wants to enjoy its traditional freedom, it should be man enough to report the news of this State without engaging in black bans and other senseless actions.

Whilst speaking about the Press, I might observe that it has a large influence on the economy of the State because Press encouragement of development, which it can do through its reporting of events, helps to build confidence. For far too long the Press has been in effect a sacred cow that has not been attacked when it has given wrong information to the people. The establishment of a Press council will, I hope, sort out some of these problems and lead to better reporting than there has been in the past.

The whole economy of Australia has been caught up with the problems brought about by the rural depression. I read only today that Australian primary producers went into debt to the extent of another \$500,000,000 in 1975-76. Of that sum \$358,000,000 represented overdraft approvals. As a matter of fact, over the last 10 years overdraft approvals to our rural producers were \$2,800,000. The Federal Government subsidises secondary industry nearly as much as that by way of tariff in one year. It is therefore easy to see what is happening to Australia. It is suffering because it has bloated, overprotected secondary industries which receive over \$2,000,000 a year in tariff protection whilst many rural industries are going deeper and deeper into debt. I think the changing of the Government in Canberra was a start in the endeavour to return prosperity to rural areas; but it will be a long, hard battle.

I do not blame the previous Federal Labor Government for all the ills of rural industry. The present situation was developing for many years; but one reason why it has been coming on for many years, even with a coalition Government in Canberra, has been that Labor politicians have repeatedly spread the myth that everybody on the land is a small-time millionaire. As most of the voters are in the city, various Governments have tended to give them a lot of hand-outs at the expense of the people in the country. The coalition parties have had to compete with the A.L.P. for the city vote, and the A.L.P. stands condemned for the influence it has had on Australian politics over the last 20 years by painting a false picture of

life in the West, which has encouraged city voters to reject Federal Governments that try to help primary industries.

It is also fair to say that it is well known to everyone that the constraints in this Budget were brought about by the follies of the previous Whitlam Government. I can well remember when the Labor Government came to power in Canberra. The cry was, "Give us a go." That is all they wanted. "We can't undo all this mess so quickly.", they said. However, now that they are in Opposition and it has been proved that they added to the mess manifold by their actions over three years in Government, they expect Malcolm Fraser and Doug Anthony to fix it up in six months. They did not promise in the election campaign that they would fix it up in six months. They said it would take a full three years, and most people voted for them realising that it would take a full three years.

Some people delight in condemning cuts in Federal Government expenditure, but the previous Whitlam Government handed out money as though it were peanuts.

**Mr. Houston:** To whom?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** In a lot of cases they handed it out to people who spent it unwisely. They encouraged people, whether they had a job or not, to register for unemployment benefits. When an inquiry was held and it was proved that many people in Queensland who were getting unemployment benefits were not entitled to them, the Government did not continue the inquiry.

There has been a lot of hot air in the media about so-called dole bludgers. I have even been accused of saying certain things in my electorate. What other members of the Government and I have said is that, if somebody is out of work and cannot get a job, he should receive unemployment benefits—but he should be made to do some work before he receives the benefit. Let us see if the media can twist that. I remember very clearly a statement made by the honourable member for Flinders in this place, which was quoted out of context by certain of the media as being, "If you don't work, you shouldn't eat." What was not reported was that, if they would not agree to do a small amount of work before they received money from unemployment benefits, then they shouldn't eat. That is a jolly sight different from the media report.

Much has been said about the present Federal Government's cuts in the National Sewerage Program. I think Queensland's share was reduced from something like \$13,800,000 to something over \$1,000,000 this year. What has not been said by the critics is that over 50 per cent of that money is loan money. That 50 per cent is not paid in the form of a grant. What has not been said to people in the West is that the Whitlam Government put such constraints on the use of the money that not one penny of it could have

been spent in my electorate. Not one penny of it could have been spent in Balonne, Warrego or Cunningham. The Whitlam Government did not care two hoots for the man in the bush. Now that the Fraser Government is in power, local authorities in western areas have more money and they can choose how to spend it. To my constituents, all of this talk about the National Sewerage Program being cut is a lot of hot air because the Honourable Gough Whitlam and his crew refused to give us any of it. We were not eligible.

Only the following areas, listed in the actual agreement which Whitlam forced upon the Queensland Government, were eligible: Brisbane, Gold Coast, Pine and Albert Shires, Townsville, Beaudesert, Redlands, Moreton, Caboolture, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Cairns, Mackay, Bundaberg, Mt. Isa, Maryborough, Gladstone or the Sunshine Coast. The western people, who need a sewerage system as much as anybody else, were not eligible for any of that money.

Much has been said about the amount of money the Stanthorpe Shire Council received recently from the Australian Grants Commission. It has to service Wallangarra, which does not have a sewerage system. That is one reason why that shire was worthy of receiving substantial grants. Another reason is that the Granite Belt is a very narrow strip of country. Admittedly, it is fairly highly rated but the remainder of the Stanthorpe Shire area, in comparison to brigalow country, is very poor grazing country. Much of the area is national park, which is not rateable. In addition, the Glenlyon Dam was built in the Stanthorpe Shire, which lost a lot of rateable land because of the project, and the shire has not derived much benefit from it as the water flows into the Inglewood Shire and further downstream.

Councillor Rogers has been accused in certain quarters of favouring his own council because he was on the commission that split up the money. He offered to forgo some of the money in favour of an area that got little money but he was told by other members of the commission that Stanthorpe had a good case and he was being too generous in offering to forgo it. I do not want to hear any more criticism of him for that. He was my opponent at the last election, but I will not stand by and allow him to be condemned.

**Mr. Houston:** What party did he stand for?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The Liberal Party.

What councillor Rogers tried to do was see that western shires—and I mean shires farther out than Stanthorpe—that have not the facilities that are available on the coast got a fair go to upgrade their standard of living. Anybody who condemns that action has not a very good sense of values.

The Government announcement in the Budget that State death duties are to go is a tribute to a new form of intelligence that

is eventually creeping into government, which is being led by Queensland. For too long Governments have tended at election-time to promise the world and say that the money will come from some magical source. The Queensland Government has started to turn the other way. We have started to say that we will wipe out a few taxes and that if we have to wipe out a few services by doing that, so long as those services are not really needed, I think it is a jolly good thing.

Governments have to realise that when constituents come to them for something, what they are really saying is they want to be taxed more. If they were told that they would get what they asked for but their taxes would be increased, they would think twice about it. This Government and others have to cut their expenditure but cut it in a sensible and humane manner and ensure that the amount of money they spend is spent fairly in an effort to give a decent standard of living to all people for whom they are responsible, whether they live at the back of Cunnamulla or on the Gold Coast.

Last year I begged the Government to adopt this issue. I wrote to every Cabinet Minister before the Budget was planned and I pointed out to them that industry in Australia was crying out for a lead and that if we abolished death duties in the State Budget while we still had Mr. Whitlam in power in Canberra we would have industry flocking to Queensland. We could have afforded to do it last year. Abolition of this unjust tax has been the policy for many years of both the National and Liberal Parties and the fact that the Government has now seen the wisdom of totally abolishing it speaks volumes for the calibre of the members making up the coalition. Queensland itself will benefit more than any individual, and, more importantly, the unemployed, too, will benefit.

The Opposition will probably say that the Government could spend \$20,000,000-odd in providing jobs for people. It could, but in two years' time we would be in trouble again, and two years later in further trouble after we keep propping up the economy. What we have to do is take the bit in our teeth and cut taxes so that people have some incentives to enlarge their businesses and take on employees.

I would say again to public servants that they are involved in this battle just as much as anybody in private industry because there is no guarantee that their children will get a job in the Public Service, no matter what Government is in power, and that we have to establish a viable private sector in the economy so that future generations can be assured of a job.

I have heard this silly argument about reducing the number of hours in a working week and so providing more jobs. That's a lot of nonsense! The reason for unemployment in Australia today is that business

cannot afford to employ as much labour as it would wish. If the working hours are generally cut to under 40, more businesses will go broke.

One hears about the odd business that makes a huge profit, and the papers play it up. They talk about the multinationals making \$20,000,000. They do not mention the return on the investment. As I go round my electorate and talk to business people, I find that the great majority would sell out if they could get something like a reasonable price for their businesses. When they all fold up, who is going to provide jobs for our young people?

The Government's policy of phasing out road permit fees is further implemented in this Budget. This is another positive step towards trying to reduce the cost of living in Queensland. Of course, the other side of the story is the Government's decision to increase rail freight rates. All should realise that there was a \$70,000,000 operating loss on the railways this year, and there was another \$26,500,000 for the railway general debt. This makes a total loss of close to \$100,000,000. If it had not been for the profitability of hauling mineral products, which the A.L.P. has criticised year in and year out, we would have had a loss close to \$130,000,000, and that would have been intolerable. I think that we have to take a long, hard look at the railways. Naturally there are some branch lines that could never be expected to pay, but they have to be kept open and we have to accept a loss on them. It should be possible to offer incentives to attract more bulk, heavy commodities to the railways.

The Government's decision not to increase grain freight rates was a particular example of this. The Government realised that if it imposed the 15 per cent increase on grain freight rates, the department would receive less profit from the haulage of grain and the loss would increase. I predict with some degree of certainty that had the 15 per cent increase been imposed for grain freight rates, in three years' time the railways would have been hauling only half the grain carried now. That would be just stupid business practice. The grain industry has suffered financial hardship in the past 12 months. The price of wheat in particular has decreased considerably, but the grain industry is in nowhere near as desperate a plight as the fruit and vegetable industry.

I make it very clear that the grain industry was not granted the exemption from this increase because it could not afford to pay the increase as easily as some other industries, but because it would have been economic stupidity for the Government to drive 50 per cent of the grain carried by rail to road transport and then have to spend money we do not have in trying to keep the roads in order. I think the fruit and vegetable industry has a very good case for exemption from the 15 per cent increase and I suggest to any members who want to join me in

fighting against the imposition of that increase on the fruit and vegetable industry that they compare it with the cattle industry and not with the grain industry. The cattle industry was granted exemption because it could not afford to pay the increase. The grain industry would have found it difficult to pay the increase, but the Government also would have lost revenue through its imposition.

The big thing is that the railways found the haulage of grain profitable whereas haulage of fruit and vegetables is not profitable, and therefore it is a matter of economics that the Government's deficit next year would have been increased had the freight rate on grain been increased. So when we fight the increased freight rates for fruit and vegetables we must be very careful to compare it with the cattle industry and not with the grain industry.

One of the other problems I face in my electorate, which I hope the Government can alleviate somehow or other, is that of lack of profitability in the tobacco industry. We have just banned the advertising of cigarettes on television. On the surface it might appear to be a good thing, but—

**Mrs. Kyburz:** It is a good thing.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I may agree with the honourable member, but the thing is that the banning of advertising overseas has not, as I understand it, decreased the smoking of cigarettes, and what the honourable member has to realise when she supports the Federal Government in its attitude is that, just as the medical profession says smoking is harmful, and the Government gives in to public pressure and bans advertising it, so, too, the medical profession says that eating butter is harmful, that eating meat is harmful—

**Mr. Houston:** I am trying to help you. It is said that the taking of drugs is harmful and you want to ban them, so where is the comparison?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I will take that interjection in a moment, but what I am saying is that it is a very dangerous precedent to ban the advertising of some products which are quite legal just because the medical profession says the use of them might be dangerous. My reply to the former Leader of the Opposition is that the taking of drugs is illegal and the smoking of tobacco is not. I believe that this Government has a very grave responsibility to do everything in its power to stop the spread of drugs. I know all about the argument that the smoking of marijuana is no more harmful than the drinking of alcohol. I do not think anybody knows, but, goodness me, if the cost of alcohol to the community in terms of human suffering, personal hardship and loss to industry is not enough without letting loose on the community another drug, I think we have an awfully silly sense of values. Western society has tried to ban the drinking of

alcohol before, but it did not work because the habit was too firmly entrenched in the community. As yet the taking of drugs is not firmly entrenched in the community, and if we make the penalties tough enough, we will keep it down to a minimum, even though we may not stamp it out. If the A.L.P. does not want to keep it to a minimum, I think it has much to answer for when it next goes before the electors.

In a speech in the Budget debate, I think it is very pertinent to point out that the money in the Budget comes only from the taxpayers. If we want to prove what good fellows we are, Mr. Hewitt, and promise to do more in order to become popular, in effect all we are saying to the people is, "We will tax you more; you are not taxed enough now." I do not agree with that. In my opinion, people are overtaxed.

Many things are being done now that people probably would prefer to do themselves. The only reason why they ask the Government for this and that is that some other town or district has got those things. They think, "If that town or district has them, we are entitled to them, too." If the Government said, "We are not going to do certain things for anybody, but we will reduce taxes", it would be one of the best things that any Government ever did in this country.

I remind the Committee that \$400,000,000 is provided in the Budget for education. Although I strongly support education, I believe that sooner or later an attempt must be made to discover where waste is occurring in the Education Department and cut it out, at the same time spending as much money as is necessary and as the community thinks should be spent on education.

Again I say that this is a worth-while Budget, and probably as good a Budget as could have been brought down under the present circumstances.

**Mrs. KYBURZ** (Salisbury) (7.57 p.m.): I am very pleased to take part in the debate on this Budget, the first brought down by the new Treasurer of this State (Mr. Knox), who is a very capable gentleman. It is a Budget of restraint, an extraordinarily sensible Budget.

Unfortunately, in the minds of the public the word "Budget" denotes hand-outs, so many of which have been given in the past, particularly by the Commonwealth Government. Most people seem to be interested in what are the "goodies" in the Budget for them, what concessions they will get, and whether their cigarettes, alcohol and other things will be cheaper. Many people do not understand the implications of the word "Budget" and how very difficult it is to balance a budget.

I think it is a pity that our economy is consumer oriented and that it will not again become buoyant unless there is a resurgence of consumer confidence. I cite as an example the fact that so many people in

Australia have been cajoled, coerced and easily led into buying colour television sets, which are inordinately expensive gadgets. In fact, the sale of colour television sets in Australia has been extremely high in comparison with sales in other countries.

**Mr. Lindsay:** Have you still got a 12-inch black and white portable television set like I have?

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I still have a very old black and white set that I hope will last for another 15 years. If people have \$800 or \$900 to spend on colour television sets—and I consider that to be a frivolous waste—they have money to spend on necessary goods and services.

What are the major "goodies" in the Budget? Of course, there are some "goodies" and a few "badies", but I am going to be very careful not to speak about the bad provisions and mention only the good ones.

What is the most important provision? The abolition of succession and gift duties. No doubt other States will follow the lead being given by Queensland. There has already been a big influx of capital to the Gold Coast and clever deals have been transacted by real estate agents, who are always first to take advantage of any change. Many people have already invested money on the Gold Coast, and no doubt, with the present depressed market prices, it is a good place to invest.

The next major "goodie" in the Budget is the reduction in pay-roll tax. I believe that this will have a very beneficial effect throughout the community, particularly for small businessmen. There is no doubt that many small businessmen, particularly tradesmen, have been discouraged from engaging extra workers because of pay-roll tax and workers' compensation premiums that have to be paid for them. The easing of pay-roll tax will have some influence on the willingness of employers, particularly small businessmen, to take on additional workers. I think that this concession will have particularly desirable results, but only in the long term.

Road transport permit fees have been further reduced by 50 per cent. I am sure that that will be applauded by many hauliers in this State. This will reduce the costs of road transport operators by \$1,200,000 for the balance of this year and \$2,100,000 for a full year.

I become extremely annoyed when I hear screaming from certain sections of the community for more hand-outs. The point that I wish to make is that a Budget need not necessarily be one of hand-outs; it can be, as this one is, a Budget of restraint. I feel that the Federal Government, despite all the boosting and praising that it has received, is still wasting money. I wish I had an opportunity to go through the Federal Budget because the money that is being wasted on such frivolous schemes as the Australian Assistance Plan in Victoria

and the trade union training school, also in Victoria, is so far as I am concerned, money gone completely down the drain.

Of course, the money being spent in Victoria on the Australian Assistance Plan is lip-tight money; it is money that is being paid so that the politicians in Victoria will clamp their mouths shut and not criticise the Federal Government. The Federal Government is just a scared, tame tiger for not cutting off that money. It is absolute waste, and that money should be spent on something far more worth while. It would have been better put into the western areas of Queensland where people are suffering.

\$12,000,000 has been poured into the Trade Union Training School at Wodonga and I find it absolutely appalling that we have to pay for pot-bellied trade-unionists to trot along to the school in an attempt to become educated. Only the hierarchy of the trade unions will be privileged to attend that school. I hope that the rest of Australia has noticed the expenditure incurred—\$12,000,000! That is money down the drain; someone has pulled out the plug. The Federal Government is really closing its eyes to what is going on in this country.

After that little harangue, I will return to the State Budget because that is what we are here to discuss. The major allocations of expenditure which are, to my mind, extremely beneficial are almost too numerous to mention. I will, however, refer to some that I feel are particularly important. The allowance to student teachers has been increased, retrospective to 1 July. They should now shut their mouths and thank their lucky stars because they do not earn it.

Per-capita grants to non-government schools will be increased from 1 January next. Textbook allowances for students in grade 9 will be equated to the grade 8 grant. I feel that this expenditure is extremely important, particularly for the many people on low incomes.

School bus operators will benefit from an increase in rates of payment from 1 November, and the allowance for the conveyance of pupils to school by private vehicle will also be increased. This is an extremely important allowance when it is considered that many people have to drive their children 20 or 30 kilometres to the nearest school. The per-capita grants to high schools will now become a general purpose fee and that also will be increased. I hope that that money will be spent wisely because I have seen it misused in some high schools.

I note also that the rate of subsidy for home nursing services is to be increased. That is a very important subsidy. There will be a substantial increase in the payments to foster parents and denominational homes for children in care. We have had a great deal of trouble in this State finding foster parents—parents who are capable of taking

on State wards and caring for them in the manner in which we would wish. These foster parents deserve not only financial remuneration but also the thanks of this society, because they are doing a job that so many State homes just cannot do.

Allowances to jurors, witnesses and interpreters at criminal and civil proceedings are to be increased, in line with salary and wage increases. In some sections of the community there has been an outcry over the fact that those who perform jury service do not receive enough money. I know that that is true.

I now turn to some of the ways in which the Budget affects my own electorate of Salisbury. The major expenditure in my electorate over the last two years has been in the field of Works and Housing, where the allocation has been \$5,000,000. I hope everybody is sitting up and listening, because that is quite a lot. Further expenditure was necessitated by two fires in my electorate—the Woodridge High School administration block and, recently, the Salisbury State School, where six classrooms were burnt down. Those fires have necessitated the injection of \$500,000. To me it is an absolute travesty that money of that magnitude has had to be spent on the replacement of schools burnt down by young boys, who have been put on only two years' probation. As the Works Department and the Education Department will not insure their buildings and will not install fire detection systems, those two departments are just as guilty as the young lads who burnt the schools.

In this State we have only three homes that deal with problem adolescents. I feel that further expenditure in this field must be considered. We have Wilson, Westbrook, and Outlook in Boonah, which is a very beautiful home. The officers of the Education Liaison Unit in the Police Department tell me that there is just nowhere to put these offenders. It is just not good enough that boys of 14 and 15 can burn down between them, with a bottle of kerosene and a bottle of methylated spirits, a high school administration block, causing \$250,000 damage, and be told by the magistrate, "Go home to mummy and be good little boys, dears." It is just not good enough!

Two primary schools are to be built in my electorate—one at Berrinba East in Woodridge and the other in Algester. I hope that the one in Woodridge will funnel off pupils from two of the largest schools in my electorate—one of which has 1,600 pupils and the other, 1,400. A high school is to be built at Kingston at a cost of \$3,000,000. I think that someone in the Works Department has inflated the figures of some of the school buildings to be constructed. I cannot see how \$3,000,000 can be expended on bricks and mortar for a high school. That does not even cover internal equipment. I note that the Minister for Works and Housing is not in the Chamber.

At the Woodridge High School the first-year centre that is being built—and it is very beautiful—is an extremely expensive attempt to bridge the gap between primary and secondary education; in other words, between a personal form of education and an impersonal form of education. Unfortunately, these days secondary education is precisely that—impersonal. It is just a case of a number fronting up for various lectures during the day. It is as simple as that. Until we get away from this impersonal education, we will not see a smooth transition from primary to secondary education.

In my electorate the Queensland Teachers' Union is now very strangely quiet on the issues upon which it was stirring so fervently about two months ago. In fact, Salisbury was an educational hot-pot. I was told that I would be attacked left, right and centre on the schools in my electorate. Once this recent flare-up started to embroil the Teachers' Union, suddenly there are no problems in my electorate and suddenly the Queensland Teachers' Union is quiet. Where was the threatened strike that was forecast in banner headlines in my two local newspapers? Where are the evil conditions that exist in my electorate? Where are the children having lessons under stairwells? Where are the female teachers—60 of them—cramming into two toilets? Suddenly everyone is quiet. In fact I charge the Queensland Teachers' Union now that, because the public attitude in my electorate is so much against it, suddenly it is so quiet.

In fact, certain parents at Kingston took up a petition to get rid of the teachers in the Kingston school who had caused so much trouble within the whole of the suburb and at the school. The parents were fed up to the teeth with them. Suddenly they were quiet.

The petition had a marvellous effect. I believe that the teachers are now preparing their lessons—something they did not ever do—and also are handing in their c.c.p.'s and their work books to the head-master because he said, "Work, or out!"

It is unfortunate that we do not have that "out" provision in the Education Department. We are not able to get rid of teachers. Teachers who are unfortunately pushed into such little niches as the correspondence school are in fact sadly forgotten in our State. We should be able to sack teachers. We should be able to sack incompetent teachers. The sad fact is that the incompetent ones have a very bad blurring effect on the good teachers, who are in the majority, in our State.

The resource equipment in most schools is a major capital expenditure. I do believe that some schools are positively brimming with audio-visual equipment. There is so much of it that it is locked in storerooms and there is not sufficient time in the school day, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., to use it. I know that many honourable members probably won't agree with me, but I have been

in schools where the storeroom has been locked and a person has had to go on his knees to the deputy principal and say, "Dear Sir, can I have the key to the storeroom because I need to use some equipment?" He would say, "No, we can't take that out today. We cannot use that cassette recorder today. We have only 16 of them and we do not want one of them to go out." A more careful look must be taken at the funding of the Education Department.

Recently I visited the Secondary Correspondence School at South Brisbane. I should like the Committee to know what a particularly wonderful job the teachers are doing there under extremely adverse conditions. Their accommodation is cramped, dark and airless. The teachers are crammed into an antique building poked onto a very noisy corner in South Brisbane. They are even putting little storerooms to use. The head-teacher of that school is a man of enormous resources. He is determined to upgrade the services of the school when eventually it is moved to a more suitable building.

I do not know whether many honourable members are aware of it, but the Secondary Correspondence School provides courses for people all over the State of Queensland, including the city of Brisbane. Many people in the outlying areas of Brisbane are undertaking various courses and upgrading their education. Because of this the school deserves all of our support. Its effect is being felt not only in the city but also in the country. I had the occasion to meet a woman from Cairns who was valiantly trying to obtain her Senior certificate. Her husband was extremely ill. In fact, he was permanently incapacitated. She was attempting to educate herself through the Correspondence School so that she could enter the work-force as an educated woman. That, indeed, is why it is so important that the Secondary Correspondence School be upgraded. I believe that there are moves to relocate the entire school somewhere else on the south side of the river. I hope that the new building will not be a dirty little mouse hole like the present one.

Housing is a very grave problem in my electorate. Unfortunately in the past, as I have said so many times here, the Housing Commission has been so guilty of erecting shabby buildings, of lack of planning and of lack of co-ordination with the local authority. I am talking about the Albert Shire Council in particular. Now the suburbs of Woodridge and Kingston are very largely Housing Commission area, and they are a prey to door-to-door salesmen. I am sure honourable members realise what I mean by that.

At last the Housing Commission is going to conform to the by-laws of local government, and perhaps we will now see it making provision for drainage and sewerage, as it should. Many streets in my electorate still have those green hoses draining out on to the road all the sludge and muck from those Housing Commission houses. The stench

is deplorable, the more so because children play on those streets. In fact, I am ashamed to go there. If this were allowed to continue—and thank heavens it is not going to be allowed to—Woodridge and Kingston would become a blight on Brisbane and I would be too ashamed to stand for Parliament again. Fortunately the Housing Commission has come to its senses, and I believe that without a doubt it is because we have a new Minister.

Now we are seeing imaginative designs in Housing Commission houses. Perhaps we will even see cluster housing soon. Cluster housing is a very imaginative way of making full use of land without undue spreading and overuse of resources.

I do believe that priority should be given to the maintenance of Housing Commission Houses. Very little incentive is given to the tenants of Housing Commission houses now to make a minor attempt to maintain their own houses. I do not regard it as an invasion of the privacy of tenants of Housing Commission houses to have them replace their own door handles or to clean their own walls if their children have been sick on them, or to clean any mess that they have made. I am quite tired of complaints that the Housing Commission is not doing little things when it is the big things that it is not doing. There is no doubt that more money should be spent on maintenance and, in fact, the Housing Commission has been most compliant, particularly with electrical installations. I think that that is very important.

I have another gripe about the Housing Commission, and it is a very important one. I believe that certain attendants at the front counter at the Housing Commission office in the city are simply not telling the truth. In some instances they lie to clients who go into the Housing Commission, and I am tired of it, because it is the State member who bears the brunt of their lies.

There is no way that a newly married couple should be told when they go into the Housing Commission that they will obtain a house within six months. I object to having couples told that. In my electorate I have deserted wives living with five children in ancient caravans in the backyards of other people's houses, and they have been waiting for nine months or a year to get a Housing Commission house. They are willing to take one anywhere, and yet young married couples go in to the Housing Commission and are told they will have a house within six months. Either they know someone I don't know or they are jolly well paying for the house. I am tired of it.

People in my electorate have been told that the valuations on their Housing Commission houses which they now wish to purchase under the new scheme are \$26,000, \$27,000 and \$28,000. That price is one a person could expect to pay for a fairly decent brick bungalow, but these are not

even brick bungalows; they are in fact Housing Commission houses which are nothing better than three-bedroom butter boxes—they are not even as good as that—and charging \$26,000 for those houses is to me sheer extortion. When I rang an officer in the Housing Commission I was told, "Well, we have to pay for our future welfare housing, therefore we have to charge the people who presently want to buy our houses a price which will enable us to put more money into future building." I do not accept that, and I do not believe that the ones making such statements are doing anything but lying, and I am sick and tired of it.

I think it is about time we had people on the front counter at the Housing Commission who in fact are educated and who know what goes on out in the suburbs. We do not want 18-year-old flitterbug twits; we need people who have seen something of life. Those people at the counter could perhaps do with a little social education as well, because the way people look has nothing to do with what they are like inside. Some people who go into the Housing Commission are in necessitous circumstances and cannot afford to be very well-dressed, but, that, of course, is their own business. But to be told to get out of there because their kids are scruffy and they look dirty—my, my, I would go straight to the Press if that were said to me. I think that will do for the Housing Commission.

**Mr. Lindsay:** Someone has to do the work of the Opposition.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I feel a little bit like an active Opposition tonight. I have been waiting a long time to say these things, and I think many others here feel the same way.

We have seen a major increase in expenditure for the Health Department in this Budget. It is an increase which I welcome greatly purely and simply because at long last I am getting a hospital in my electorate. The hospital is the much-mooted, the long-mooted, in fact the 10-year-mooted Mt. Gravatt Hospital. As it is situated in the suburb of Coopers Plains, I sincerely hope it will not be called the Mt. Gravatt Hospital. I have invited the public to participate in the naming of this hospital and we have had all sorts of weird and wonderful suggestions which I will not enumerate here. However, I can assure honourable members that it will not be the Mt. Gravatt Hospital.

Stage 1 of a new major complex to service the southern and western suburbs of Brisbane is to cost \$1,512,000. In fact, I believe it is within the Health Department that most major developments are taking place. I have some of this development in my electorate, with the building of two dental clinics, both in Woodridge. They are particularly beautiful buildings and there is no doubt that the services they provide are extremely necessary. One clinic is situated in the Woodridge North State School and the other in the Woodridge Opportunity



School. I do hope the people of that area appreciate those services, which, of course, are free. The word "free", however, is a catchcry now, but if something is free people will smile happily and use it. I hope that everybody appreciates the school dental service.

I also have in my electorate a community health centre. I presume that some honourable members do not know what goes on in a community health centre, but it is a co-ordinating centre for health services and social welfare services. There is one such centre in Woodridge which provides a wonderful service. It is serviced by social workers, home-care nurses and people who provide psychological guidance for children. It is a very important asset to the community.

Another programme provided by the Health Department is the community home-care service. It provides help within the home for aged and invalid people. This is a very important service, particularly for the frail aged in our community who are not able to do their own housework, cook their own meals or do their own washing. They can now have someone come in and do that work for them, and that work is paid for by the Health Department of the State Government. It is a very valuable asset to the community. Perhaps it is unfortunate that not enough volunteers are available to do the work, but it is a major innovation by the Health Department.

In the field of urban transport, there will be major expenditure on the electrification of the railway system in Brisbane. I am sure that many country members will think twice about that expenditure, and I am not sure that it will be worth while. However, I am convinced that the provision of parking areas at suburban railway stations is worth while and that the money will be well spent. Work is being carried out now in my electorate to clear the way for the capital expenditure on electrification.

The ghastly old railway carriages will disappear, and I am sure that the public generally will heave a sigh of relief when the old cattle trucks in which they were expected to sit are replaced by shiny new carriages.

Perhaps the situation at the Kingston Railway Station, where people now have to climb up about 1½ ft. to get into the train, will be improved. It is very difficult for older people to board the train there, and even some younger people have difficulty.

There are many railway crossings in my electorate that have caused me much concern, and I commend the Minister for Transport for his forward thinking in attempting to phase these out. Many members of the public do not take adequate care when using railway crossings. I cite as an example a recent accident that occurred early in the morning at a railway crossing at Coopers Plains. Although the signal was given that a train was coming, the man tried to rush

through and was killed. People should have more regard for their safety than to do things like that.

On Boundary Road, Coopers Plains, which is a very busy road in an industrial area, there are two level crossings. One is for the goods and freight yard at Acacia Ridge, and it is a very busy crossing. The other is for the interstate and suburban traffic, and prolonged delays occur there.

The Brisbane City Council is to be commended for extending its bus services in the Salisbury and Acacia Ridge areas. The extensions will take in the new Griffith University and provide a much-needed amenity in the area. Many people who complain that they are without buses fail to use them when they are provided. Let us hope, Mr. Dean, that the public will now realise that unless the extended service from Salisbury to Sunnybank is used, it will be discontinued, as the Acacia Ridge service was.

I was particularly concerned to see in the Budget the size of the grant for temperance education. This is not a subject that I have mentioned previously, but the grant is only \$46,500. On the other hand, the State's income from licence fees and permits for the consumption of alcohol is \$13,249,811. The discrepancy between those two figures is enormous, and surely it is possible to spend more than \$46,500 on temperance education out of an income of about \$13,000,000.

In my opinion, it is the height of hypocrisy, when the State is gaining such a large amount of revenue by encouraging people to drink, that we are afraid to station police outside hotel parking lots because it is said to be an infringement of so-called civil liberties. In fact, some police are afraid to go into hotel bars to see whether any under-aged drinking is taking place. Poor little things they are, too—big, bully, beer-bellied policemen! If we will not do those things, we should not be afraid to spend more money on temperance education. In the school curriculum, 15 minutes a week is allocated for that old-fashioned subject "temperance education". That might be an old-fashioned term, but I believe it is a matter that must be looked at, because this financial year the Health Department has allocated \$1,635,000 for the construction of a 17-storey building with 60 beds, which will be used for the treatment of alcoholism and as an assessment centre. It will be a major building and the \$1,635,000 is only this year's allocation. I presume it will cost much more than that.

If we are spending that amount of money on the treatment of alcoholism, surely we should be spending much more than \$46,500 in treating the causes of it and in showing people that drowning their sorrows in alcohol is not the way to go about coping with their problems. Surely we should be doing more to show those who drop out at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and drop in to their

local drinking troughs to rid themselves of their suburban neuroses or what-have-you that there are better things in life than swilling themselves to death.

I say this because I am particularly worried about the problem of under-age drinking that has occurred in my electorate. Children 13 and 14 years of age have been cautioned in Woodridge and Kingston after being found literally rolling in the streets drunk. They are getting alcohol from somewhere and I do not believe that they are getting it all from their parents. I think they are going in cars to drive-in bottle shops and easily, quietly and quickly buying it. I feel that we must take further steps to maintain the drinking age at 18; I do not think that children of 13 and 14 years of age should have any access at all to alcohol.

There are many aspects of the Budget on which I should like to speak. However, as the Whip has just sidled up to me, I had better wind up my speech. The Budget does not yell out or scream from the front pages about wonderful hand-outs. It is not a Budget of hand-outs; it is a Budget of restraint. It is a good Budget brought down by a Government that I believe is governing not just for city or country people, but in the interests of all. More and more I believe that unless the lot of people in the country and provincial areas is improved, and further moves are made for decentralisation, the urban drift will continue. The population is slowly but surely moving towards the coast. We must do everything we can to keep the people in the West happy and to maintain their quality of life.

**Mr. GIBBS** (Albert) (8.33 p.m.): I should like to pay a tribute to the recently retired Treasurer, Sir Gordon Chalk, for the work that he did in his period in this Parliament, particularly in his 10 years as Treasurer. I also congratulate the present Treasurer on the presentation of his first Budget.

Quite a lot has been said about this Budget. Although it has been knocked and kicked around in many ways, I believe it is the greatest Budget ever brought down in the history of Queensland. The complete removal of death duties from 1 January 1977 is the greatest forward move made by any Parliament in any State of this great nation of ours. Let no-one try to deny that this will be the most significant step in the long term for businessmen, pensioners and indeed everyone in Queensland.

By innuendo the newspapers have played up this measure as benefiting only the wealthy people—the wealthy graziers. That is far from the truth. Every house in every street throughout Australia that is worth more than \$6,000 will attract some amount of duty. With the inflation that has affected us over the last three years, very few homes in Australia are worth less than \$30,000 or \$40,000. Because of this, the effect of death

duty has spread to all sections of the community. There may be pensioners who have only a home that has been left to them by a parent or someone else and \$80 a fortnight in income. They have to pay death duty on the home.

I was notified of a case recently where a woman died and left her old fibro house on a 16-perch block to a daughter who was on the invalid pension. The daughter got a bill for \$845 for death duties, which had to be paid immediately. Because of the Ministers' discretionary power, that has been made a charge on the property. It was altered so that, when the daughter dies, the death duties will be paid. That will give honourable members an indication of how many people in the community are affected by death duties. The average person in the street is not aware of that. I do not think there is any tax that people know less about than death duty. If only for that reason, this Budget will go down as one of the greatest in the history of Queensland.

I turn now to another iniquitous tax, which has been with us in Queensland for many years—road tax. Anyone wanting to carry more than four tonnes of goods by road within Queensland must obtain a permit, for which he pays a fee. Of course, that would have been done to offset the loss to the Railway Department caused by road transport. However, it affected the business and industry of Queensland in a major way. It affected the timber industry, because timber from New South Wales areas such as Coffs Harbour could be purchased much cheaper in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast than could timber from places such as Maryborough. Because interstate transport does not require a permit fee, our western sawmills and mills in the south-eastern part of Queensland were at a distinct disadvantage. As a result, road permit fees have acted as a deterrent to industry in Queensland. Primary industry, the mining industry and many others have been affected.

In this Budget we have made the second step in the abolition of that tax. This iniquitous tax will disappear from Queensland next year. It has taken a lot of courage to abolish road permit fees and death duties. I realise that the loss of revenue to the State from those avenues will be great. But in the long term the State will benefit as a result of our free-enterprise Government that has been in office since 1957.

They are two of the main aspects of this Budget. A third—and perhaps this is a little disappointing—is pay-roll tax. We all know the history of that tax. It commenced in 1941 under the then Commonwealth Government. It was in 1971, I think, that it was handed to the States as a growth tax. The Queensland Government has been guilty of increasing the tax but not keeping the level of exemptions in line with inflationary trends. However, it is pleasing to see that the exemption rate will rise to \$62,400 from 1 January 1977, to \$83,200 from 1 July 1977

and to \$100,000 from 1 January 1978. I am disappointed, of course, that the level was not made \$100,000 straight away. In these hard times for small business, it would have been much better to raise the exemption straight off to \$100,000.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Dean): Order! There is far too much audible conversation on my right.

**Mr. GIBBS:** Thank you, Mr. Dean. They are a rowdy lot tonight.

As I said, I believe the exemption should have been raised to \$100,000. Nevertheless there is an indication that the Government is doing something. Perhaps we may be able to go further in the next Budget than is suggested in the present Budget for the long term. I would like a further \$100,000 exemption to be given on a sliding scale for productive staff. By that I mean staff employed in actual manufacture as distinct from management. Perhaps this would assist business, particularly small business, and also our technical training of apprentices. I think that we will be short of technical staff so that perhaps we should consider allowing a rebate of pay-roll tax on the wages of apprentices. If we do not do that, we could have a shortage right throughout the State, particularly in decentralised areas where we need greater decentralisation of industry. We have to think very seriously about the future of apprentices in our State.

Recently I visited New South Wales to see what is being done down there. Youngsters are being given some technical and practical training prior to leaving secondary school and before entering the work-force. I am watching this scheme with particular interest. I understand that it is working and perhaps it should be introduced in Queensland in one form or another.

The importance of small business to Queensland and to Australia is revealed by the fact that 20 per cent of people are employed by the Government, 33 per cent by big business and 42 per cent by small business. My interpretation of a small business is one in which all management, production, sales and day-to-day decisions are made by one or two people. If each small business employed one more person, Queensland and Australia would have a labour shortage. For this reason we must give a little more thought to small business and to its day-to-day problems. We must look at the apprenticeship set-up much more seriously than in the past. This must be done because of the three years of the Whitlam Government, which enlarged the problems of small business. It has always had a certain amount of problems, but they have been enlarged by inflation, which works against small business in a big way. Perhaps a business has to sell stock at \$X and buy it in at \$X and put it on the shelf. It would make no profit at all and would have to borrow more money at high interest to keep the set-up rolling.

I have covered some of the history of pay-roll tax. It was introduced in 1941 and taken over by the States in 1971. When pay-roll tax is set at a reasonable level, it should be indexed so that it moves automatically according to the cost of living, wages and the other matters that have to be taken into consideration.

Workers' compensation affects all types of business. In some areas it has grown out of all proportion. Perhaps we can blame inflation to some degree because insurance companies did not know quite where they were going and the size of their payouts. The inflationary trend has now steadied down quite considerably, and I see in the Budget the good news that the Government is able to cut back some of the rises in workers' compensation premiums. In fact they are coming back to a level that is more acceptable to industry in general. However, I think that even in respect of some of these high premium policies, such as those in the butchering trade, sawmilling trade and other high-risk callings, consideration should be given to reducing the premiums.

Rail freights have risen, and it is a pity that it is happening in these times of inflation; however, when we look at the Budget and see how much the railways have lost over the past financial years, we realise that there has to be a movement of some kind. It is pleasing to see that some exemptions have been given for our primary products, such as grain, and that consideration will be given wherever hardship occurs. Mention has been made of the fruit industry and other industries that perhaps could have problems from time to time through market falls, droughts, and so on.

I have mentioned death duties and succession duties. The Budget also provides for the abolition of gift duties. This was an area of taxation where we were not too sure whether relief could be given. It is good to see that this has been done. It will overcome a tremendous number of problems in business today. Perhaps, the worst thing that can happen in a business is for the manager, or husband in a husband-and-wife arrangement, to die. Many such persons die in the 40-year age bracket. The assets that they have built up in 25 to 30 years of married life and in their partnership are destroyed by death duties and by duties on gifts throughout the family. The abolition of death and gift duties is a widening of our freedom and a step in keeping with the advances of our modern age when we are landing rocket ships on the moon and photographing Mars. I sincerely hope that the other States of Australia will follow our lead and abolish these archaic taxes.

The fact that people are coming to Queensland to invest here is just a side-effect from the abolition of death duties. It should never be thought that encouraging people from other States to do this was the reason for our action. I hope that the other States follow suit, and that the Commonwealth

Government, too, has enough intestinal fortitude to abolish Federal succession duties. Whether it is done immediately or over a number of years, the Federal Government should begin this action as soon as possible or as soon as it overcomes some of the monetary problems besetting Australia, which were created in the days of Labor maladministration when 10 years' money was spent in three. The easiest thing in the world is to spend somebody else's money when the one doing it completely disregards his responsibility to look after it.

We have to look very closely at future railway freights, especially those on small parcels. I believe that there were some problems with small parcel freights following the last increase of 40 per cent. Some parcel rates have not achieved the expected results, and I believe that some study should be made of the rates for these small but bulky parcels to the North.

There is another problem with sales tax on goods sent to the North or to places distant from this city. Sales tax is a Federal Government responsibility and is a tax paid on the last wholesale price. In the northern areas sales tax is calculated on the price of goods plus freight charges and this has a detrimental effect on businesses in the North.

I would like now to turn to the area of education. Although quite a lot of money has been spent in Queensland and in particular in my electorate, there is still a long way to go before we get things to a satisfactory stage. There are many minor complaints which I believe could be fixed fairly easily. The Minister for Works and Housing and the Minister for Education are making some progress on forward planning. I have asked several questions about this subject and I have had rather encouraging answers which indicate that they are in fact looking a little further forward than was the case in the past. We are seeing a little better forward planning in growth areas in the Albert Shire and the city of Gold Coast.

My electorate covers a large part of that city and shire, and so I am very happy with the attitudes of the Ministers. I hope we can purchase enough land to cater for future growth and that we do not wait until we have to buy land in the middle of suburbia and then pay four times as much as we could get it for now.

If this happens insufficient money is available for expenditure on the school buildings. This state of affairs cannot continue. Quite a number of pre-school centres are scheduled to be built in my electorate, although at this stage I do not know precisely where they will be built. I believe that they should be built in areas of fairly rapid population growth such as Nerang, Beenleigh, Woonoolba and Coomera.

We notice an increase in the expenditure for hospitals to about \$7,000,000. There is a hospital currently under construction in Southport. The first stage will have 350

beds and the second stage another 300. We are pleased to see this hospital well under way. It will adequately cater for the area for some time to come, especially when the 300-bed wing is completed. The Health Department is to be congratulated on this development.

In his speech this morning the Minister for Health spelt out in some detail the activities of the Health Department, its building programme and what it is doing for the health of the people of Queensland. If we add up expenditure on education, health, works, housing and main roads, it is realised that a tremendous amount of money is being spent in this great State and it is being spread from one end of the State to the other. Again I congratulate the Ministers for Health and Education on their forward planning.

I want now to discuss the area of local government. It is good to see that for the first time we have a tax-sharing arrangement through the State to local authorities and that on top of that the State Government has seen fit to put aside \$5,000,000 for distribution throughout the local authorities of Queensland. These are grants with no strings attached and that, of course, is the type of money that is needed by the local authorities to keep their rate structure as low as possible.

I mentioned earlier that technical education is on the increase. In fact, this year we will see an increase on the approved establishment of 66 teachers or 7.5 per cent. These proposed technical and further education colleges will to some degree take the place of our colleges of advanced education. I believe there is a greater call for technical education rather than general education, although we do need both. As technical and further education is expanded, I feel that it will cross slightly into the area covered by colleges of advanced education, and I believe that when this happens we will achieve more than we thought possible with just straight-out colleges of advanced education. It is pleasing that there is one in Southport. It is expanding, and I believe that there will be a further expansion soon because the department is looking for a new site. It is exciting to see the expansion of education in the region.

As I mentioned earlier, \$40,000,000 has been set aside from Consolidated Revenue and loan funds for loans and subsidies to local authorities. Not many people realise that the subsidy on sewerage development is 40 per cent and that the subsidy on street and road construction is 20 per cent. This is of great assistance to local authorities when they are drawing up their budgets and endeavouring to overcome the backlog of permanent works.

In the field of sport, youth and recreation, it is pleasing to see that the soccer pools are now under way and that it is expected that sport will benefit by about \$2,000,000. This will supplement the existing grants and

should help the young people of Queensland greatly to develop their sporting ability. I hope that some of the additional revenue will be spent on schoolgrounds and that they will then be shared by various sporting bodies so that the best use can be made of the available facilities.

It is also pleasing to see that in the capital works of the Department of Health the usual subsidies are provided for senior citizens centres and homes for the aged and that \$2,000,000 has been set aside in the Budget for this purpose. At the centre at Labrador, it is hoped to build a \$60,000 extension. Approval has been given by the State Government, and we are now awaiting approval of its part of the subsidy by the Federal Government. It is hoped that this will be received in the next few months so that tenders can be called and the job can get under way.

The new school at Slacks Creek will not only serve that area but also assist to relieve the growth problem at Beenleigh, and the new one at Kingston will relieve the pressure on schools in the Salisbury area that are already overcrowded and assist many of my constituents in the Kingston area.

Funds for housing are not as great as they might be, but it is good to see that the commissioner and the new Minister intend to undertake a fairly large housing programme this year. The Housing Commission has about 400 blocks of land at Beenleigh, so perhaps quite a number of houses will be built there. The commission is now building houses in scattered areas rather than building 50 houses back to back in two streets. Housing Commission homes are being integrated in the general community and better types of houses are being built. At Inala and Woodridge it is easy to pick out Housing Commission houses from miles away, so I am pleased that there has been a change of attitude.

The Minister recently increased the loan available through the Housing Commission from \$18,500 to \$20,000. This will give a greater incentive to the people of Queensland to become home owners, and the Minister is bending over backwards to allow people to own their own homes.

**A Government Member:** 7½ per cent interest, too.

**Mr. GIBBS:** Yes, 7½ per cent compared with 11 to 12 per cent charged by banks. The rate charged by building societies is a bit more than that again. The person who is living in a Housing Commission house is now given the greatest opportunity to become a home owner. It must be appreciated how desirable it is for a person to own his own home as early as possible in married life. When people have a family, it is often very difficult for them to achieve home-ownership.

Great progress has been made with main roads. The Riverside Expressway and the South-east Freeway are virtually the entry

to the Albert Shire and, further south, the Gold Coast. It is good to see another section opened and it will not be long before another is under construction. It is hoped to see the freeway extended to the Springwood area, which will allow a fast flow of traffic to the outer suburbs of Brisbane.

The freeway is, of course, creating problems by spilling a great volume of traffic into the four-lane highway through Springwood and Slacks Creek. There have been meetings with the Minister in an attempt to overcome the problems at some intersections of streets with the highway. It may be possible to bleed some local traffic off through service roads, which means that it will not have to enter the highway except when absolutely necessary. There have been many accidents on this road because of the volume of traffic, which is constantly increasing.

In the major debenture loan allocations for 1976-77 the Gold Coast City Council has been given an amount of \$6,600,000 to borrow for sewerage works, flood mitigation, street improvements, etc. That is a considerable amount of money for a city to spend. It is, however, a city that is progressing well. It is catching up on much of the backlog of drainage and street works in older areas that were developed before the by-laws required subdividers to do this work. This is, however, requiring a tremendous amount of money.

An amount of \$2,600,000 has been allocated for water supply augmentation in the northern area of the Albert Shire, mainly in the electorate of Salisbury. I believe that the Albert Shire Council has done a very good job in the North Albert area, if I may be permitted to generalise, in overcoming much of the backlog of sewerage, drainage, kerbing and channelling. There are in this area libraries, administration centres, a new swimming-pool and all the other bits and pieces of local government. I believe the council has done a tremendous job in North Albert when one bears in mind the job that had to be done. Many of the problems were, perhaps, created to some degree by the Housing Commission. That is no longer happening. The honourable member for Salisbury spoke about green hoses leading from houses and wandering across yards. That was no doubt a dreadful set-up, but that no longer applies.

I observe that the Port of Brisbane authority has a borrowing capacity of \$1,500,000 this year. That will get the authority under way. As I said in an earlier speech, this authority will have its effect all the way to the Gold Coast. It affects the entire frontage of my electorate. It extends to the Gold Coast and to other areas. It passes through the electorate of Redlands. I believe that we have to make sure that the port develops with balanced growth and is not confined to the Brisbane area.

I think I have covered most of the points I wish to make. I might perhaps refer to one of the problems for small businesses,

namely, retention allowances for private companies. I believe the Federal Government has not looked closely enough at this matter. As a Government we ought to take it up and discuss it, as well as sales tax, with the Federal Government.

Tourism is also very important in Queensland, particularly in my area. Some allowance should be made for depreciation of buildings used for tourism. I do not know whose province it is, but a special award should be agreed on for the tourist industry. There is no way in the world that the tourist industry can be run on the same strict union lines as a supermarket or a boiler-making shop. It is more like farming. There has to be a system of flexi-time. Whether it is within the province of the State or the Commonwealth, such an award must be considered very seriously. Agreement has to be obtained from the unions so that the industry is run on complete flexi-time lines. I think the Opposition would agree with me that we are destroying Queensland's tourist industry, which is so important to us, whether we are talking about the Gold Coast, the Barrier Reef or Mt. Isa. The industry has been gravely affected by the high wages paid to employees who work after a certain time.

I repeat that the abolition of succession duty and gift duty, the second step of phasing out road permit fees and the amelioration of pay-roll tax, amongst other things, have made this a Budget to get business in Queensland back on the road again. Perhaps we have not gone far enough in some respects, but we have gone as far as we dare in one fell swoop. We must continue this action. Indirectly, in conjunction with the climate that has been created in Canberra, it will bolster employment opportunities for those people out of work and help the many school-leavers who will come on the employment market in 1977.

**Mr. BYRNE** (Belmont) (9.7 p.m.): I think it would be appropriate for us not to by-pass those parsimonious comments of the Leader of the Opposition which were delivered in the Chamber on Tuesday. If I do affectionately refer to them as belonging to the Jack Stanaway script, I am sure I might be easily forgiven. I draw to the attention of honourable members that the Leader of the Opposition on that occasion appeared in the Chamber in his unusual attire, endeavouring to look somewhat like a statesman. Despite the fact that he endeavoured to look like a statesman, and some hours later returned to his attire of sports coat and so on, he still tried with flamboyance—a flamboyance not his own and quite inappropriate to himself—to go through the words of his prepared script.

I might say the words were very well chosen. Their context was fair. Tonal variation was quite good. Delivery was somewhat fast. But in effect the whole speech was totally ineffectual. Any close reading of that speech—

**Mr. YEWDALE:** I rise to a point of order, Mr. Dean. I draw your attention to the state of the Committee.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Dean): Order! There is a quorum present.

**Mr. BYRNE:** The honourable member for Wolston is deciding, most irresponsibly, to depart from the Chamber. We are all aware of the circumstances that he is trying to create. I hope that the people of Queensland, if they ever read these words, will realise that this endeavour by the A.L.P. to leave the Chamber will leave only one of their representatives here. By so doing—

**Mr. Yewdale** interjected.

**Mr. BYRNE:** Conscience doth indeed make cowards of us all, if I might add an appropriate quotation from Shakespeare.

I should like to return to this Jack Stanaway script of which I spoke. It was most inappropriately delivered by the Leader of the Opposition. In that address there was not a single financial premise upon which the people of Queensland could be in any way encouraged to vote Tom Burns or to "pledge for the Bank on Burns Campaign". If the Leader of the Opposition is desirous of trying to catch the interest of some of the people of Queensland and of trying to make them think that the A.L.P. has something to offer them, he has to come out with something more than glib epithets and comments such as these.

Of the Treasurer he said, "His is an economic epilogue that is dull and depressive, uninspiring and uncertain, predictable but pessimistic". No doubt honourable members will agree that these are very typical words used by the Leader of the Opposition in most of his addresses in this Parliament. One would have to conclude that they are somewhat unlike what the Leader of the Opposition puts forward and somewhat unlike his normal attire and appearance. So he is trying to create a sham and trying to create for the people of Queensland something that he is not. I am quite sure that they will see through that.

It is most important that we begin to ask ourselves and realise just what this script and this performance were offering to the people of Queensland. It complained that the State Budget was taking money away from the people and not giving it back. It complained that not enough money was being spent. It said that instead of having a dull surplus, we should indeed have a responsible deficit.

No doubt this responsible deficit of which the Leader of the Opposition spoke is the same sort of responsible deficit that the Leader of the previous Government in Canberra was very happy to speak of. He said it would create employment opportunities, overcome the problems of inflation and provide the circumstances for economic productivity in this nation. All that that deficit

provided was the exact opposite. Inflation rose, unemployment rose, interest rates rose and productivity fell. Yet three years after that time the Leader of the Opposition in this place is still unaware of the effects that such spending had.

**Mr. Hales:** I think the A.L.P. members are all debits.

**Mr. BYRNE:** They start searching for credits by asking people to pledge by banking on Burns and by trying to gain those funds by making statements such as, "The conservative parties in Parliament have unfettered access to the entire resources and expertise of the Public Service" and, "In contrast, the (poor and pathetic) Opposition depends on voluntary assistance, if and when it is available". I would not be surprised if it depends on voluntary assistance if and when it is available, because I would expect very little assistance to be voluntarily available to it. The Opposition says, "But to be effective and viable, full-time assistance is needed—so that in Parliamentary debate and in public, Tom and his team can counter the distortions of the Petersen propaganda machine". Apparently what we saw in the presentation of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition is some sample of the parliamentary debate and the public performance of Tom and his team, if the public are prepared to bank on Burns and go broke.

**Mr. Marginson:** Father Christmas—

**Mr. BYRNE:** The honourable member for Wolston talks about Father Christmas. That reminds me of the speech I delivered on the Budget last year. I referred to the eternal Father Christmas that Whitlam endeavoured to be and that Hayden endeavoured to be. When I referred to the eternal Father Christmas that the Federal A.L.P. tried to be, I pointed out that they could not keep on giving gifts to people, making promises, walking in the dream-time and trying to expect miracles to occur, believing that money is going to come from somewhere or nowhere or grow on trees so that they could give the people everything they should have. That just does not work. If the honourable member for Wolston, who looks like an eternal Father Christmas, wants to carry on those same promises that the Federal Government offered, he is barking up the wrong tree and his reindeer have taken the wrong turn.

The Leader of the Opposition endeavoured also to carry on the fear tactics that he has been endeavouring to use on the people of Queensland; the gloom and the doom that he seems to be able to put forward. It is nothing very inspiring but he has an article called "Straight Talk". I do not know what is straight about it because the words are probably the strangest part of it when compared with the facts. We have a situation somewhat akin to the surveys taken by the A.L.P. which show something like 67 per cent of the people in favour of the Leader of the Opposition but which are taken in "key" electorates.

Similarly the A.L.P. is trying to instil into the school-leavers of Queensland that six out of every 10 of them will find themselves without a job. That is not the case; that is not the situation that should arise. When some people refer to a percentage of students who left school last year and who are still on the dole, they fail to realise that is a number expressed as a percentage of the total number of school-leavers who originally applied for Commonwealth employment. That is only 20 per cent of the total, and the six out of 10 which the Leader of the Opposition speaks of is more likely to be six out of 10 of 20 per cent. Of course, it is far better for the A.L.P. if they can distort the facts and figures, because then they can try to inspire a feeling of ill will, a feeling of doom and a feeling of fear in the people without them realising just exactly what it is they are trying to say.

What is the responsibility that rests in a Leader of the Opposition who makes statements like these? What is there that is responsible in the speech presented by the Opposition on the Budget when it offers not a single idea, not a single premise upon which to base any budgetary changes apart from saying "You should have spent more money here; you should have spent more money here; and you should have spent more money here. You should have budgeted for a deficit", and not a single statement of where the funds are to come from? The Leader of the Opposition did not say where the funds would come from. He said, "You should have spent more," and then he complained about increases in State taxes and charges. We eat the cake; we put it away in the cupboard; we store it in the refrigerator; and we have still got it in the four forms. It doesn't work that way. We can have it in only one way. If the Leader of the Opposition wants it in four ways, the people of Queensland can judge his responsibility.

**Mr. Lane:** He is never here, anyway.

**Mr. BYRNE:** Unfortunately he is not here to listen to these words of wisdom.

In an attempt to establish the basic premise of the way in which economic mismanagement arises from the desire to work on the principle of eating the cake and having it, storing it, and freezing it, I should like to show that the problem arises here. A country cannot withstand a growth pressure of approximately 125 per cent in three years. If this State was to increase its expenditure by a much larger amount than it did this year, and if the Federal Government had increased its expenditure by a much greater percentage than it did this year, it would impose upon the Australian community the same sort of absurd growth factor that the previous Government imposed on it for three years. It was the imposition of a growth factor of 20 per cent, followed by 40 per cent and then a further 20 per cent, which created the absurd situation in which a Government tried to make industry and

the people, through taxation, pay for its grandiose ideas. It was a Government that was not concerned where the money was coming from and unconcerned where it was going to.

That just does not work. A responsible growth factor—one that State and Federal Governments should be striving to achieve—is round the 9 to 10 per cent figure. When the Federal Government this year decreased its growth factor from 21 per cent to 15 per cent, that was indeed a responsible act. Similarly, the State Government's decrease of its growth factor from 20-odd per cent to about 18 per cent is indeed a responsible movement. It is a common-sense Budget that has been brought forward. It is one in which the premises were stated and the constraints were explained. Unfortunately, I feel, these constraints were passed off.

The honourable member for Rockhampton pointed out in his address that there were only three options open to the Treasurer in framing this Budget. He said that the first was to drastically cut services and the capital works programme; the second was to increase indirect taxation; and the third was to introduce a new tax on personal incomes. He stated quite clearly that they were the only three options that the Treasurer had. He said that the Treasurer did not choose the last two, so apparently he chose the first. Because they were the only three available, the honourable member for Rockhampton says in effect, "I will criticise him for whichever one he chooses. Because he chose the first, I will criticise him for that. If he had chosen any of the other two, I would have criticised him for that, too." So he starts on the premise that there are only three options open.

If he had been the Treasurer trying to bring in a Budget he would have had the same three options, yet having been aware of those options, and despite the fact that they were the only ones the Treasurer had open, he criticised him and said that it was not a very responsible thing for him to do. So the situation has to be brought back to taws and we have to realise that there were certain Budget restraints and expenditure restraints which the Treasurer had to take into account in the creation and establishment of his Budget.

The first of those restraints deals with the Commonwealth Government's policy of restraining outlays in the public sector. Indeed, that had to be the responsible action for the Federal Government to take. If it had not taken that action it would have been continuing along the same path of economic destruction its predecessors had chosen, and to choose such a path as that would have been totally irresponsible.

I am pleased to see that the Leader of the Opposition joins us at this point of the debate. Perhaps we might arrive at a stage where he will come to understand the budgetary constraints within which the Treasury had to operate. We might then

perhaps get through to him and make him realise that this Budget is not, as it has been said to be, cruel on the jobless and in effect an epilogue. I might say, incidentally, that the speech of the Leader of the Opposition was more like an epitaph. He might begin to realise that any sensible, economic approach must be based upon common sense, upon how much money we have, how much money we can get and how much money we can therefore spend. Money does not grow on trees and it cannot be dug up out of the ground. It has to come from somewhere. It has to come from productivity.

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

**Mr. Houston:** The honourable member for Belmont had better make the most of this year and a little bit of next year because he won't be here after that.

**Mr. BYRNE:** I might point out to the honourable member for Bulimba that despite his comments his seat is somewhat more marginal than mine, and he should therefore do a little more work in his electorate because fewer people voted for him in the last election than voted for me.

**Mr. Lane:** The Leader of the Opposition is carrying that sort of burden on his back.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member for Merthyr will cease interjecting.

**Mr. BYRNE:** Indeed, Mr. Lane, the burden—

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member will address the Chair.

**Mr. BYRNE:** Through you, Mr. Dean, I say that the burden of the Leader of the Opposition must be very great to carry when we see a Jack Stanaway script coming forward. I might remind the Leader of the Opposition whilst he is here that whilst he was delivering his speech and certain members of the Government were interjecting he had a glib smile on his face. He realised from time to time, tongue in cheek, that the words he used were not words like his own; that what he was saying was not really what he wanted to say; that the sincerity that rested in the speech was not his sincerity; and that the whole thing was something that had been trumped up to try to get a point across to the public; and that unfortunately that point did not get across. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to keep his spot, if he wants the public to keep coming out and "banking on Burns", I might suggest to him now that the use of that phrase so early means that it will be worn out by the time an election comes round.

**Mr. Lane:** It is a crude document, anyway.

**Mr. BYRNE:** A very crude document. He might begin to realise that if he wants to have a greater effect on the electorate he is



going to have to choose common sense and rationality and realise that money does not come from nowhere and that money goes somewhere after it has been spent.

So I refer again to the budgetary constraints with which the Treasurer found himself confronted. The first of those deals with the Commonwealth Government's policy of constraining outlays in the public sector and the fact that that was something which the people of Queensland and Australia voted for in the December 1975 election. They wanted responsibility. They did not want enormous deficit Budgets; they wanted responsible Budgets. That point has been accepted by the Labor Premiers in South Australia and New South Wales and perhaps one day it will get through to the Leader of the Opposition in Queensland. The public does not want to be spending money it does not have. It does not want Governments spending taxation money they have not yet collected. That is just not the situation.

The second constraint upon the Treasurer was the need to impose the least possible burden upon the productivity of the State. The first point was that outlays in the public sector had to be restrained in order to overcome the absurdities that arise in deficit budgeting. Then the Treasurer had to realise that there was already the great problem of the destruction of productivity which had come about in that three-year period.

In order to overcome that, and in order to provide employment and ensure the availability of commodities and services, he had to achieve a very fine balance between restraining expenditure and the expenditure of the funds available, at the same time trying not to impose heavy taxation burdens on the public. So while there has been a decrease in expenditure in certain areas, it has been balanced by restraint and an endeavour not to increase State taxation by a large percentage or proportion.

That means that the principle being used by the Federal Government is also being used by the State Government. It is this: let people determine their own lives; let them decide how they will spend their money rather than allow "Big Brother" Government to take it out of their pockets and spend in the way that it thinks it ought to be spent.

Finally, the third constraint rests in the problems arising from inflation, where revenue will come from, interest rates, and the new tax sharing arrangements. As to the new tax sharing arrangements—I should like to make a further comment on what the Leader of the Opposition has been putting to the people of Queensland for many months. We have heard time and time again—we heard it in the New South Wales State election and in the by-elections in Queensland—that there is going to be double taxation. Where has that double taxation occurred? I would like the responsible Leader of the Opposition, who has gone out and frightened the public

on this matter, to tell us where that double taxation has come about.

**Mr. Elliott:** You should ask him to retract his statement.

**Mr. BYRNE:** Of course; it goes without saying that he should retract his statement. If he did not do so, he would be showing even less common sense than I would expect him to show.

The Treasurer had to draw up the Budget within the confines of the constraints that I have mentioned, and it is pleasing to see that he was able to provide many incentives for employment and also many incentives for productivity, which is the creator of employment. That is a fact which I hope the Opposition will keep clearly in mind. Employment is not tied up with how much money the Government pays out in the dole; it is not tied up with how much money it pays out in welfare payments. Employment is tied up with the extent to which the Government creates policies and economic circumstances favourable to productivity in the area of industry. That is what enables employment opportunities to be created. By going into a deficit Budget, by increasing taxes and charges, we decrease the possibility of industry being productive. We decrease the possibility of national productivity and State productivity providing additional employment opportunities.

I wish, however, to deal with two sections of the Budget that affect education and housing in south-eastern Queensland. In these two areas the Government must give very careful consideration to planning for the future. If planning is not undertaken now, if we do not try to create circumstances in which private ownership of homes can come about and in which people will have security in their homes, and if we do not provide now services and infrastructure in the field of technical education, in five to 10 years we will be paying very dearly for it. Without further provision for technical education and without sufficient foresight in that regard, insufficient tradesmen will be available to meet the demand for their services, and this will cause further economic tensions and inflationary pressures.

As to the area of housing—if greater attention is not paid to the provision of private housing, housing that people are able to say is their own, in the years to come the Government will have to spend dead money in overcoming welfare problems arising from lack of security.

Productivity is one of the essential principles of the Budget. It is seen in the relief given in pay-roll tax, probate and succession duty and gift duty.

I might point out that these concessions have as yet had no effect, or virtually none, on the Budget because they do not operate until 1 January. In the case of probate and succession duty, that will not have an effect on the Budget until the following year. Those who say that the State

is forgoing \$25,000,000 to \$30,000,000 are missing the point. When the Leader of the Opposition says that by removing probate and succession duty the State is losing \$25,000,000 to \$30,000,000 that could have been directed to housing, he is missing the point because there is no such amount in the Budget that could have been used for that purpose. The effect of that decision will not be felt until the next Budget.

It was pleasing to see that the Treasurer did not place great economic imposts on industry by Government taxation. When one considers transport and communications, which fall within the Federal Government's area of responsibility, it astounds me that that Government continues to impose on the productivity of enterprises taxation burdens in the form of increased charges for telephone and postal facilities, which stretch across the board and must necessarily increase costs and therefore prices. If postage is increased by 2c, every section of every industry, clerical and productive alike, has to pass that increased cost on to the consumer. Whilst more revenue is obtained by increasing postage and telecommunication rates, at the same time the rate of inflation is necessarily increased.

In the area of maintenance, I must say the Housing Commission homes in my electorate and elsewhere are very much in need of greater expenditure. The present Minister for Works and Housing has accepted this as a great responsibility and I am happy to say that in my area 30 to 40 per cent of Housing Commission homes in the electorate of Belmont have been externally painted in the last 20 months or so.

**Mr. Houston:** Special treatment.

**Mr. BYRNE:** I think the people in my electorate deserve special treatment.

**Mr. Houston:** What about other electorates?

**Mr. BYRNE:** I do not know whether Opposition members make submissions as strongly to the Minister for Works and Housing as I do. I believe that maintenance of Housing Commission homes and schools is of the very highest priority. It is because I have that view that I have striven to have money spent in this way.

In essence, I say of the Budget that it is a Budget of common sense. When the Leader of the Opposition comes to realise that the first Budget of the present Treasurer is a Budget of common sense—one that operates within certain constraints, has a rational approach and enables the State to progress in the way in which it has progressed in the last 10 years—that realisation will be for him the foundation of his understanding of economic affairs in Queensland. When that happens, the people of Queensland will be able to expect responsibility not only from the Government but also from the Opposition.

Progress reported.

## RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Kaus, Mansfield, in the chair)

**Hon. K. W. HOOPER** (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport) (9.35 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Railways Act 1914–1972 in certain particulars."

Honourable members would be aware that the Queensland Government Railways is this State's biggest single business-industrial enterprise with over 23,500 employees and an annual revenue well in excess of \$180,000,000.

Despite the problems of mounting costs, the achievements by the Queensland Government Railways in the realm of increasing business in recent years are most impressive. I have spoken in detail about these achievements and progress many times in this Chamber and I do not intend to enlarge on these facets today.

The Bill merely seeks to update and streamline the administrative area of the Queensland Railways by creating two new positions—namely, a Deputy Commissioner and Secretary, and an Assistant Commissioner (Electrification). At present, the Railways Act enables the Governor in Council to appoint a Commissioner, a Secretary, a chief engineer, general managers of the various divisions and other officers to assist in the execution of the Act as the Commissioner thinks fit. There is no provision in the Act for appointment of a Deputy Commissioner or an Assistant Commissioner, although the Act does provide that in case of illness or absence of the Commissioner, the Secretary, under the direction of the Minister, will have all the powers and perform all the duties of the Commissioner.

This Bill proposes that the occupant of the position of Deputy Commissioner and Secretary perform the duties presently carried out by the Secretary as chief executive officer of the department under the Commissioner, and to act with the full powers of the Commissioner in his absence. Furthermore, it is proposed that the new position will carry the same salary classification as at present applies to the position of Secretary.

Similarly, there is a strong need for the creation of the second position, Assistant Commissioner (Electrification). With the development of the Government's plans to upgrade urban public transport, especially electrification of the suburban network, increasing emphasis is being placed on the planning and negotiations associated with this scheme. The recent calling of tenders for electric railcars, overhead wiring and signalling and communications works further indicates the intensity in this area.

It is proposed that the duties of Assistant Commissioner (Electrification) would be all those presently allocated to the Electrification

Co-ordinating Manager. The position of Electrification Co-ordinating Manager was created in June 1975 to ensure top-level supervision of the urban electrification scheme.

The Assistant Commissioner (Electrification) would control the necessary technical and administrative staff to effect plans associated with electrification, and would also be authorised to issue directions, where necessary, to heads of branches on matters connected with electrification. As well, he would be accountable to the Deputy Commissioner and Secretary and he would have direct access to the Commissioner. The creation of this position will not mean any increase in salary; the position will carry the same salary as that of the Electrification Co-ordination Manager.

Honourable members will appreciate that Railway progress is taking place not only in Brisbane but also throughout the State with the massive developments in the coal and mineral industries. For efficient and effective Railway results, this requires considerable attention and regular inspections by the Commissioner. It is also important that Queensland's railway needs are continually placed before the appropriate interstate and Commonwealth bodies.

Honourable members will observe, following the printing of the Bill, that as far as the position of Assistant Commissioner is concerned, there is no mention of electrification in the Bill. The reason for this is that, on completion of the electrification scheme, it may be desirable that the Assistant Commissioner of the day may have his responsibilities directed to other areas of administration. The title "electrification" will therefore be attached to the position by the Governor in Council.

There is a definite need for a Deputy Commissioner and Secretary and an Assistant Commissioner (Electrification). I commend the Bill to honourable members on both sides of the Chamber.

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba) (9.40 p.m.): To be quite honest, I am astounded that at this time, when the railways are in such a shocking financial position, having suffered a \$70,000,000 loss last year without paying the interest charges and with an estimated loss of \$57,500,000 this year (after the increase of 15 per cent is applied practically across the board), the Minister, while the Budget is still being debated, introduces a Bill to change a couple of titles. He is not going to change the work or the salaries. I expect it will mean a big office, a private secretary and a lot of other people involved to add to the loss that is already being suffered, as well as overseas study tours and the rest of it.

What is this Government trying to do? What does it think the people of Queensland are? The Minister talks about changing names! For goodness sake! I have listened to the speeches since the Budget was introduced. One Government member after the

other, the Leader of the Opposition and other Opposition members have condemned these terrific losses. They have talked also about the appalling conditions of the workers, their substandard housing. After all that, a Bill is introduced to change a couple of names.

Personally I could not care what the gentlemen concerned are called. It does not matter whether they are called Deputy Commissioner and Secretary or just Secretary; they will get the same money and do exactly the same work. They will have the same responsibilities as the present men.

**Mr. Powell:** A rose by any other name.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** That is right. I am happy that one member of the Government appreciates what this is all about.

We have been waiting for about 20 years for the Government to do something about electrification, which was well under way under the Labor Government in Queensland. Officers of the Railway Department were doing the job. I suppose the change of name will change the status and it might help the gentlemen concerned, but I do not think it will. I am not trying in any way to downgrade the gentlemen concerned but I do not think that the change of name will in any way alter their performance. Most probably it will give them extra status and extra assistance.

**An Honourable Member** interjected.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** To be quite honest, I do not care what they are called.

However, I am concerned about the railways. I would have been happy if the Minister had introduced a Bill to set up an all-party committee so that we could look into exactly what is going on in the Railway Department, why we are not getting more trade and why we are suffering these losses.

If the charges as at 30 October 1975 are taken as the base, there will have been an increase of 61 per cent when the 15 per cent increase is applied.

**Mr. Miller:** How does that compare with the buses in Brisbane?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** They are losing money.

**Mr. Miller:** The increase?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** There is a certain difference.

**Mr. Miller:** Have you compared the increase?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I am not concerned at this moment with the increase. The honourable member should be more worried about getting more traffic on the railway. Buses handle only one set of customers—human beings. The railway has different types of traffic available to it. So to compare the buses with the rail—

**Mr. Miller:** Don't separate the trains from the buses.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus):** Order! I ask the honourable member to keep within the confines of the Bill.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I was side-tracked, Mr. Kaus. I am very sorry indeed.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! Please keep to the Bill.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** The honourable member for Ithaca was deliberately attempting to side-track me.

Returning to the profits, let us look at what the situation was only about six years ago. In fact, in each of the years 1967-68, 1968-69 and 1969-70 the Railways Department made a working profit. In 1969-70 the working profit was \$1,950,000. The honourable member for Ithaca and others will recall—

**Mr. Moore:** You must not forget you have to take into account capital cost and not only income over expenditure.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I said working profit. If the honourable member does not know what working profit is, he should ask his mate; he may be able to tell him.

I remember hearing in this Assembly how the then Minister for Railways and the then Treasurer got up and said, "Isn't it great? we are making a profit out of our railways!" They came in here for three years and they said that. I had to agree that it was good to see a working profit. The only thing I hoped was that we would perhaps get a bigger working profit. But it was a working profit, and no-one objected at all. That was when we began to be oriented towards mineral and coal as our main products. I believe that in that decision—and I am not objecting to carrying minerals and coal—so much thought, effort and expense were put into that project that other projects were allowed to remain static and they have not improved over the years, as I will show as time goes on.

The fact is that after 1969-70, when we had a working profit of \$1,950,000, we then had a loss in 1970-71, a quite substantial loss of \$6,400,000.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I am very patient but the honourable member is getting away from the motion before the Committee.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** No, Mr. Kaus. I am afraid in this particular case I am trying to show that there is no need for these great offices we are going to have, with the extra staff and everything else, and if

you can say to me that the railways can lose millions of dollars and then increase expenditure, I will go he. That's what I am talking about.

These are the figures—

Year	Profit	Loss
	\$	\$
1969-70 ..	1,950,000	..
1970-71 ..	..	6,400,000
1971-72 ..	..	8,900,000
1972-73 ..	..	13,900,000
1973-74 ..	..	38,600,000
1974-75 ..	..	64,400,000
1975-76 ..	..	70,700,000
1976-77 ..	Estimated ..	57,500,000

This is a time when we are supposed to be getting greater returns. Mr. Kaus, I know you will correct me if I go too far on this, but the point is the Government is reducing the road transport permit fee to increase again the ability of hauliers to compete with the railways. I believe that the major job the new Commissioner, or whatever he is called, has to do is to bring patronage back to the railways.

We have heard a lot of talk about drive-on, drive-off, and about freight rates on commodities.

**Mr. Elliott:** They were helping keep it there by not increasing the grain freights.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I am not arguing about that at all. What I am saying to you is that if that is true, as has been ascertained by the Government, it looks like the Minister has sold them a good story, that by reducing the rail freights or keeping them as they are the profit will be greater and the use increased.

What about the old fruit grower? The Government is not worrying very much about him, or the dairy farmer, or the other people in the country. They have to get their goods from the city. This is not just a one-way business. It is all very well for honourable members to look after their own electorates. An over-all view must be taken of railway operations, not just the movement of grain and cattle. Many people living in country areas are not graziers and not farmers. They live in the country towns they support, and they have to buy their goods through the local store. Quite often the big fellows do not buy from the local store, as everybody knows. But, because of high rail freight rates, the small people in the country still have to pay high prices for their commodities. I have found on many trips to country areas that one of the things people worried about was the cost of the ordinary commodities in the shops. Therefore as the Government

is increasing fares and freights again, I ask: how much is it going to receive in net gain? Apparently this is something that the Government has had to work out and on which it is taking a punt. If the argument for a reduction in wheat freight rates that has been expounded here by National Party members is sound, then is not the same argument valid for other primary products which have to be carried by rail? Quite often subsidies are given not in the form of a rebate from the railways but in the form of a payment from the Treasury to the railways to make up the difference in charges. So actually the Railway Department is not receiving less; it is just a juggling of figures within the Government between the Treasury and the Railway Department.

There is one thing that does worry me and about which I think we have to get a bit tough. I have been told quite openly in country areas that the railways are wonderful while people are in trouble; they use them and get rebates and concessions. But when times are really good they do not worry about the railways; they turn to road transport because it is much quicker. The road transport operator is a businessman. He cannot afford to give people rebates or concessions when the going is rough, so naturally people then use the railways. I have no fight with people receiving concessions but I say to the Minister that it would not be unreasonable or unfair to require those who receive concessions to sign a contract. The Minister should say, "O.K., we will carry your product for this period while things are tough and give you rebates and concessions, but when things get good, when the beef market gets good, you must leave your business with us."

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Kaus): Order! I remind the honourable member that the proposed Bill does not deal with freight rates; the motion is about the creation of new positions.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** We are talking about the railways.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** We are not.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** All right, Mr. Kaus, but the Bill says "in certain particulars". Who is going to be responsible for deciding whether or not this contract has to be signed? Someone has to make the decision. I believe it will be the Minister, the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner who will make a decision as to whether there will be a straight-out concession or whether an agreement should be drawn up so that people use the railways in good times as well as in bad. If this is done, then we can at least guarantee for the railways a chance of making something when times

are good because, after all, the road transport operator is a businessman and he cannot give these concessions when times are bad.

Although the Commissioner for Railways is paid more than the Minister for Transport, that would be about the only case where we have a public servant receiving more than his ministerial head.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** There are others.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** There might be a couple of others but the Minister's departmental head earns quite a lot in excess of his salary. The Minister knows as well as I do the history of that differentiation. It arose because it was decided that the railways were a business undertaking and had to be run without political interference, as it was termed in those days. The position was deliberately created. It would be out of order, I know, Mr. Kaus, for me to go into it, but there is quite a history behind giving the Commissioner for Railways a higher salary than the Minister for Transport. It was because he was considered to be the great businessman. Surely if we were shareholders in a business which constantly returned a massive loss, we would be asking why. I say to the Minister, through you, Mr. Kaus: let us find out why through this Parliament by setting up an all-party committee to investigate the railways.

**Mr. Elliott** interjected.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** Yes, I have shares in the railways because every time I pay taxes they go towards making up the losses. Of course I have shares in the railways, and a lot of my people use the railways, too.

An all-party committee would cost virtually nothing, because members are already receiving their parliamentary salaries. I remind the Committee that committees have been set up in other States and that the Commonwealth Government and American State Legislatures use their members to carry out investigations. I do not suggest that such a committee should investigate whether or not there was anything wrong in the administration of former Governments. All I say is that we should find ways and means of ensuring that business is returned to the railways.

I am confident that the Minister's staff of 23,000, given correct leadership, will work well for the Railway Department. I think they are working their full hours each week now, and I regret that many of them have to live and work in conditions that are behind the times.

**Mr. Miller:** Would you include the Brisbane City Council in the inquiry?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** No.

**Mr. Miller:** Why not?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** If the honourable member wants an inquiry into the Brisbane City Council, let him get up and say so. This Parliament does not pay for the Brisbane City Council transport system. The honourable member is trying to get me into trouble with the Chair again. I do not want to pool the honourable member, Mr. Kaus, but he is not sitting in his usual place.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus):** Order!

**Mr. HOUSTON:** My leader has told me that if the Government wishes to set up a committee of that type, we will be very happy to accommodate it.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** (Carnarvon) (9.57 p.m.): I support what the Minister is endeavouring to do in the Bill, and I was disgusted by the speech made by the honourable member for Bulimba, who tried to make a great deal of political capital out of the so-called 61 per cent increase since 1975. As you were patient with the honourable member for Bulimba, Mr. Kaus, I am sure that you will also be patient with me.

The honourable gentleman completely ignored the fact that the Government had kept freight increases down for many years. It was able to do that because, on the advice of the commissioner and many other people, it expedited dieselisation when it came to power in 1957. If it had proceeded with the electrification of Brisbane suburban services then, as the Opposition wanted it to, dieselisation would not have taken place in Queensland. The honourable member and all those whom he claims to represent would still have been shovelling coal on steam locomotives and the railways would have been incurring very high losses during all those years. Instead of making reasonable profits in the early years and reasonably low losses in recent years, there probably would have been losses of \$200,000,000 as far back as six years ago.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus):** Order! I remind the honourable member that we are talking about the Commissioner's powers.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I agree, Mr. Kaus, but I was answering something said by the honourable member for Bulimba.

Let me now turn to the Minister's proposal. The move to delegate powers of the Commissioner to a Deputy Commissioner is a very good one. When the Commissioner is away, the Minister should be able to tell someone to do something and know that it will be done. At the moment, it is not done. The Minister is a decent bloke and

he tries to be a very good Minister, but there are many people in the Railway Department who flout his directions.

In my opinion, the proposed Bill does not go far enough. I do not think we should simply be vesting the power of the Commissioner in someone else when the Commissioner is away. We should be giving the Minister much more power. I should like the Minister to tell me later whether or not he will consider introducing legislation to take power away from the Commissioner. The Commissioner is a very decent man. My father knows him well and there is nothing personal in what I am saying. However, the fact remains that a Government is meant to govern. We get the blame when there are increases in rail freights and when there are great losses. But the Minister has not the power to tell the Commissioner to do something without first referring to Cabinet.

**Mr. Moore:** We have to fix that up.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** It has to be fixed up.

**Mr. Houston:** Another fight within the Government!

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** It is no fight in the Government. Government members would be united to a man on this matter. All I want is an assurance from the Minister that he will look at the possibility of going further than the present legislation. I do not think that Government members would mind if the Minister amended this legislation.

It is well known that we have to do something about making the railways pay. We have to do something about getting more business for the railways. Some tough decisions will have to be made and there will have to be a system under which if a member brings something to the Minister's attention the Minister can go to the Railway Department and say, "Have this done" and have no argument about it.

The former Leader of the Opposition said something about driving business to road transport. The Commissioner has to look at this, too. I think it is probably fair to say that those same road operators would not have been allowed to operate under a Labor Government. Labor members ignore that aspect of the matter. I am to be opposed at the next election by a transport operator. He would not have been allowed to operate under a Labor Government. Labor members certainly have short memories. They criticise increases in rail transport costs. It would be interesting to compare the cost of rail transport from Stanthorpe to Brisbane 20 years ago when Labor was in power with the present cost. Such a comparison would not be very encouraging to the Labor Party.

I commend what the Minister is trying to do but I again say, without being personal to the Commissioner, that the Minister

is not going far enough. I hope that he will amend the Act at a later stage so that he, too, has a little more power.

**Hon. K. W. HOOPER** (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport) (10.3 p.m.), in reply: My old friend the honourable member for Bulimba obviously is not very well tonight; his voice is not the best. I should like to remind him that there will be no increases in salary, staff or expenditure.

**Mr. Houston:** Yet.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** There is no intention to have any increases. The purpose of the Bill is to give these people power to direct. At the moment, particularly in the area of electrification, there is not that power. That is the sole reason for introducing this very minor amendment. I ask the honourable member not to get uptight about it. I realise that he had to say something and, of course, it suited him to make a few remarks about railway losses. We are all concerned about them; we would not be human if we were not. But we have to remember that cost increases have been absolutely astronomical. I am not making excuses; I am merely stating bare facts.

**Mr. Houston:** Would you consider an all-party committee?

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** I would be happy to have a look at it. The honourable member brought it up and I owe it to him, as a responsible and long-serving member, to consider his suggestion. I most certainly will look at it. I certainly respect the honourable member's thoughts on this matter.

One sensible thing the honourable member did say was that we have to do something about getting this patronage back.

**Mr. Houston:** On your figures.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** That is right.

I turn now to the remarks of the honourable member for Carnarvon. I must say that both honourable members were kind in their remarks, although the honourable member for Bulimba was a little less so. For most of his speech he was nowhere near the Bill.

**Mr. Houston:** What a reflection on the Chair!

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** He is a very lenient Temporary Chairman, and he is obviously extending to me some of the same leniency.

The honourable member for Carnarvon supported the Bill. He realised that no additional costs were involved. He felt that the criticism levelled at electrification by the honourable member for Bulimba was unwarranted. The Government opted to dieselise the whole of the State in preference to electrifying a small part of the State.

Although costs have escalated out of all proportion, I am sure that that was the right decision. There is no doubt about it in my mind.

The honourable member for Carnarvon asked a very important question, and one that has caused me a great deal of concern since I have been in this position. That relates to the powers of the Minister under the Act when compared with those given to the Commissioner. It has given the Government parties some concern for a long time.

**Mr. Moore:** We are going to fix that one up.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** As the honourable member for Windsor said, the parliamentary transport committee is concerned about it. It has asked that the matter be considered. I appreciate the remarks of the honourable member for Carnarvon and assure him that we certainly will have a look at it. The workings of any ministerial office are important and should require that the Minister have complete power over his departments. We deliberately built that power into the Metropolitan Transit Authority Act. That is the same type of thing that the honourable member is concerned about now. I am certain that my committee and I will have a look at it in the very near future.

I thank the honourable members for their contributions.

Motion (Mr. Hooper) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

### MINERS' HOMESTEAD LEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Energy) (10.10 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

I now present this Bill to the House for the second reading, but before I proceed to outline the Bill in detail, there are matters that I consider should be mentioned.

I would reiterate that none of the proposed amendments to the Act in any way affect the making of an application for or the granting of a homestead.

I cannot emphasise too strongly that the proposed amendments have no bearing whatsoever on land held as miners' homesteads which is in the process of being transferred or which is being resumed for State purposes, nor do they have any bearing on the

value of land held as homesteads, for rating purposes or for the fixing of capital value on which annual rental is based.

The Bill corrects errors in printing and in spelling. One amendment deals also with the manner of disposing of an application for a miners' homestead perpetual lease when there are any improvements on the vacant Crown land applied for. These improvements remain the property of the person who previously held the area prior to its forfeiture, surrender or termination.

This amendment has been proposed with a view to introducing a fairer method of determining the value of any such improvements, and provided that the warden, before recommending that a condition be imposed that the applicant for the lease pay the value of such improvements to the apparent owner, has to obtain a report and valuation of such improvements and requires the applicant for the homestead and the apparent owner to lodge a valuation or claim.

Subject to a new section, 12A, which it is proposed to introduce, the warden may fix the value of improvements even if any of the parties have not furnished a report and valuation.

The first of the new sections of the Act, section 12A, requires the warden to give notice in writing to the applicant for the lease over vacant Crown land and also to the apparent owner of the improvements on the land being taken up (if there are such improvements) of the value that (subject to objection) he intends to fix. It provides also for time for the lodging of notice of objection and for the grounds thereof.

The warden hears any objection and his decision is final. If no objection is lodged, he fixes the value of the improvements.

The second new section, 19A, deals with vacant Crown land offered for sale as homesteads by auction under section 17 of the Act, which provides for notification in the Queensland Government Gazette of certain land which the Minister may declare open for sale and sets out the value to be paid for any improvements existing on the land.

It provides for the warden to give notice to the apparent owner of any improvements of the value to be paid therefor, for the lodging by the person concerned of a notice of objection and for the time within which such notice shall be lodged.

It provides also for the hearing by the warden of the objection, and for him to determine the value of such improvements. His decision is final.

If an objection is lodged before the advertised date of auction of land on which there are improvements, and such is upheld or the warden has not given his decision, the subject land is withdrawn from auction.

Within a period not exceeding three months, the land may be again auctioned with the value of improvements fixed by the warden, and there is no right of objection in that case.

The majority of the provisions of the two new sections which I have commented on were previously dealt with by regulation. However, both the Committee of Subordinate Legislation and the Solicitor-General have advised me that these provisions should be contained in the Act.

A further new section, 29AB, deals with the recording of certain dealings and changes of status, such as the registration of the release of a memorandum of mortgage, the recording of the marriage of a female lessee, sublessee or mortgagee, the change of name of a lessee, sublessee or mortgagee, or the death of a lessee, sublessee or mortgagee holding as a joint tenant. From 1913 to the present, there has been no provision in the Act for this to be done. These matters have been dealt with administratively.

I feel that I have covered the major points of the proposed amendments and I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (10.15 p.m.): The Opposition has no opposition to the Bill before the House. We accept the Minister's explanation that it corrects errors in printing and spelling in the previous Bill and that it provides a fairer method of determining values on vacant Crown land offered for sale under section 17 of the Act. We also accept the advice of the Committee of Subordinate Legislation and the Solicitor-General that most of the provisions of the two new sections were previously covered by regulation. Also, we accept the assurance that the Bill does not affect the manner of making application for homesteads and the granting of them. We have no opposition to the Bill as explained.

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Energy) (10.16 p.m.), in reply: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his concurrence. Obviously he has read the Bill. It is quite a simple one, just setting out the power the mining warden has for fixing the value of improvements.

Motion (Mr. Camm) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 8, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

The House adjourned at 10.17 p.m.