

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 8 DECEMBER 1976**

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**WEDNESDAY, 8 DECEMBER 1976**

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

**ASSENT TO BILLS**

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr. Speaker:—

- Grain Research Foundation Bill;
- Sugar Experiment Stations Act Amendment Bill;
- Liquor Act Amendment Bill;
- Government Loan Bill.

**PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

**Reports—**

Library Board of Queensland, for the year 1975-76.

Minister for Education and Cultural Activities, for the year 1975.

Health and Medical Services of the State, for the year 1975-76.

Queensland Institute of Medical Research, for the year 1975-76.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

**Orders in Council under—**

River Improvement Trust Act 1940-1971.

Industrial Development Act 1963-1976.

The Rural Training Schools Act of 1965.

Regulation under the Education Act 1964-1974.

Report of the Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of North Queensland for the year 1975-76.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****ARCHER RIVER PASTORAL HOLDING;  
ABORIGINAL LAND FUND COMMISSION**

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (11.5 a.m.): The statutory authority governing the transfer of title to leasehold land in Queensland is contained in section 286 of the Land Act which, *inter alia*, states—

“Subject to this Act, leases and licenses under this Act may, upon application by or on behalf of the lessee or licensee, be transferred to qualified persons with the permission in writing of the Minister. It

shall be in the absolute discretion of the Minister whether he will grant or refuse to grant such permission, save that the Minister shall not permit any transfer which is prohibited by this Act.”

This traditional provision has enabled the successive Governments of Queensland to exercise a rightful control over lawful occupation of land once the initial interest created by the Crown passes from the person who obtained the interest so created to another.

Queensland is a sovereign State, and the administration of its land laws remains wholly the prerogative of the Crown. The question of the proposed acquisition of Archer River Pastoral Holding comes within the ambit of declared Government policy expressed in Cabinet decision of September 1972, which stated—

“The Queensland Government does not view favourably proposals to acquire large areas of additional freehold or leasehold land for development by Aborigines or Aboriginal groups in isolation.”

In the light of this policy the recent development, whereby the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission sought to acquire by transfer Archer River Pastoral Holding, was reported in detail to State Cabinet, whereupon Cabinet said in June 1976—

“1. That Cabinet’s policy regarding Aboriginal reserve lands, as approved in Decision No. 17541 of 4 September, 1972, remain unchanged.

“2. That in accordance with such policy and as it is considered that sufficient land in Queensland is already reserved and available for use and benefit of Aborigines, no consent be given to the transfer of Archer River Pastoral Holding No. 4785 to the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission.”

So, then, the unquestionable situation is that the Queensland Government adheres to the view that the best interests of all the citizens of the State are being properly served in the administration of land law in the State of Queensland and the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission shall stand advised that the Government will not succumb to any external pressures to vary its long and firmly considered policies in the matter of the availability appropriate to the circumstances of land for the purposes of Aborigines in the State of Queensland.

It has been indicated that acquisition of Archer River was for the benefit of the Aurukun Aborigines. The Aurukun Aborigines have had the exclusive use and benefit of the Aurukun reserve totalling some 750 000 hectares since 1904. Whilst it is regarded as one of the best pastoral breeding properties on Cape York Peninsula, it is underdeveloped, understocked and indeed virtually dormant—a lack-lustre enterprise.

No grounds have been submitted to justify extension of this type of administrative malady. The Aboriginal Councils and

Associations Bill initiated by the Whitlam Government and currently being pushed through the Senate by Mr. Viner establishes machinery whereby such a pastoral holding could become Commonwealth property and added to "Aboriginal lands" in the Northern Territory and Western Australia. If this programme extended to North Queensland, it would thus create a total "black State" across the whole of the northern part of Australia, surely apartheid in extreme, and an introduction of the South African Bantustan policy to Australia, a situation which the Queensland Government will not tolerate.

Another relevant facet to the situation is the question of the expenditure of massive amounts of public moneys to acquire cattle properties in the present time of economic adversity, thereby denying for all time the normal right of private enterprise to develop these areas when better times return.

A further factor is the ridiculous situation whereby the Federal-Government-backed Aboriginal Land Fund Commission will spend millions of dollars in the purchase of cattle lands for Aboriginal purposes, whilst at the same time the same Government will not attempt to assist the struggling cattle industry all over Australia.

#### ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER COMMISSION

**Hon. C. A. WHARTON** (Burnett—Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and Fisheries) (11.10 a.m.): I wish to inform honourable members of steps being taken towards the establishment of an Aboriginal and Islander Commission.

The Government's electoral policy expressed a clear intent to establish such a commission as a consultative planning and review authority to aid the Government in formulating policy or policy changes related to the cultural social or economic welfare and advancement of Queensland's Aboriginal and Islander citizens.

There is, of course, in existence at the present time special Aboriginal and Islander welfare laws under which, amongst other things, there is established Aboriginal and Islander Advisory Councils as advisers to me, to my departmental officers and, of course, to the Government in all matters affecting the welfare of the people the councils represent, that is, the residents of the various Aboriginal and Torres Strait island reserves throughout Queensland.

They have given splendid and valuable service recommending many policy and legislative changes over the years. Indeed, the present Acts have grown from such recommendations and I personally would hope to see the advisory council structure continue to voice and advocate the views, opinions and aspirations of the many thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander citizens residing on reserves.

However, the horizons of social welfare need extend well beyond the care and development of reserves and there are many citizens of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestry who are not living on reserves, who have never lived on reserves and who want to have their own particular attitudes and feelings represented and reflected in any Government policy.

There are also large numbers of Queensland citizens whose forefathers came from the Pacific or South Sea islands. They have a singularly distinctive culture and are recognised by the Government as a separate ethnic group who may have special needs within the demands of our broad social structure.

There is also the issue of the present Acts themselves. These are the Aborigines Act 1971-1975 and the Torres Strait Islanders Act 1971-1975. Whilst they do relate mainly to reserves, they provide also for aid to be given any Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander anywhere in Queensland who seeks it. They each, however, contain duration clauses of five years from commencement. This means that, unless continued in whole or in part by proclamation, each Act shall cease to be in force by December 1977. It is, therefore, proper that the Aboriginal and Islander citizens of Queensland, whether living on or off reserves, and including South Sea or Pacific Islanders, be consulted concerning what policies and legislative needs must be met by that time and beyond.

As an immediate step, therefore, the Government will establish an Aboriginal and Islander Commission within the following administrative perimeters:—

1. The commission will initially be established by internal arrangements within my Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement as a special advisory authority to me on policy planning and co-ordination.

2. The commission will comprise four persons to be appointed and representing:

- (i) One Aboriginal member from those persons who habitually reside on an Aboriginal reserve;

- (ii) One Aboriginal member who habitually resides away from an Aboriginal reserve;

- (iii) One Torres Strait Islander member who habitually resides on a Torres Strait island;

- (iv) One member of Pacific Islander ancestry.

3. Applications for membership to the commission will shortly be invited by public advertisement in the metropolitan and country Press.

4. Members will be full-time personnel, who will meet with me from time to time. Secretarial and administrative support services will be provided by the department from within existing staff and resources.

5. The commission will be charged with examining the total State situation with regard to the peoples its members represent and make recommendations to me in matters of legislation, policy planning and co-ordination, etc. and it will have such further powers and responsibilities as may from time to time be assigned to it.

As I indicated earlier, the Aborigines Act 1971-1975 and the Torres Strait Islanders Act 1971-1975 both have duration clauses of five years and those throughout Queensland directly concerned and whom the commissioners will represent, will require to consider what legislation, if any, might be necessary beyond this time. Ensuring the widest possible variety of opinions will be one important aspect of the commission's functions.

### PETITIONS

#### HOSPITAL FOR WYNNUM AREA

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton) presented a petition from 312 electors of Queensland praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take the necessary steps in the current session of Parliament to provide funds for land, planning and initial construction of a hospital in the Wynnum area as a matter of urgency.

Petition read and received.

#### QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**Mr. LOWES** (Brisbane) presented a petition from 42 electors of Queensland praying that the Parliament of Queensland will support the retention of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in perpetuity for the musical and cultural benefit of the citizens of Queensland.

Petition read and received.

### COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

#### SUB JUDICE CONVENTION

**Mr. AHERN** (Landsborough) (11.16 a.m.): I lay on the table of the House the report of the Select Committee of Privileges on the sub judice convention, as requested by resolution of the House on 14 September 1976, and I move that it be printed.

*Whereupon the report was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.*

### CROWN APPOINTMENTS DECLARATORY BILL

#### INITIATION

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill

to declare with respect to the holding of certain appointments under the Crown by existing members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.”

Motion agreed to.

### SUCCESSION AND GIFT DUTIES ABOLITION BILL

#### INITIATION

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to provide for the abolition of the liability to pay duty in respect of certain successions and gifts, to provide for the construction of certain Acts of Queensland in relation to those successions and gifts and for related purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

### MAIN ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### INITIATION

**Hon. R. J. HINZE** (South Coast—Minister for Local Government and Main Roads): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Main Roads Act 1920-1975 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

### ALBERT SHIRE COUNCIL BUDGET ADJUSTMENT BILL

#### THIRD READING

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

### NURSING STUDIES BILL

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Dr. Edwards, read a third time.

### CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, read a third time.

### FISHERIES BILL

#### THIRD READING

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

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND  
ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL  
(No. 2)

THIRD READING

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

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. COMPLAINT LAID AGAINST MISS B. A.  
CAMERON

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

(1) Was a complaint laid against a Miss Barbara Ann Cameron for assault and menacing with a deadly weapon at approximately 5 p.m. on 31 July?

(2) If so, what charges have been laid and, if not, why have the charges and/or the following action been suppressed and at whose request, direction or instruction?

*Answers:—*

(1) Following an incident which occurred on 31 July 1976, allegations were made against and by Barbara Ann Cameron of the commission of certain offences.

(2) The relevant file in the matter was passed to the Crown Law Office for advice. The advice received was to the effect that, in view of all the circumstances including the fact that the matter was the subject of a civil action, the police should not become involved in any way.

2. SALARY AND OVERTIME OF MINISTERIAL  
PUBLIC RELATIONS STAFF

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

For the financial year 1975-76, what was the (a) salary and (b) overtime of each of the staff employed by each Minister on journalism, Press secretarial or public relations work?

*Answer:—*

The detail sought with respect to staff of other Ministers is not available to me. In the year ended 30 June 1976, my Press secretary received a salary of \$15,268.63. He is not paid any overtime or allowance in lieu of overtime.

3. INDUSTRIES IN NEW MINING TOWNS

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

What major industry or industries other than mining are operative in each of the new mining towns that have been erected in Queensland over the last 10 years and what is the employment in these industries?

*Answer:—*

It is customary for mining projects to attract service industries, particularly in the construction and general engineering fields. This has been the pattern of development in the new mining towns that have been established in Queensland over recent years. Although precise figures are not readily available, service industries do provide a reasonable source of alternative employment in mining areas.

4. DUMPING OF BANANAS IN TULLY AREA

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

Were any bananas dumped in the Tully area over the last three months and, if so, how many, when were they dumped and what was the reason?

*Answer:—*

The banana industry has devised a National Banana Marketing Development Scheme, the object of which is to clear bananas in glut situations. Bananas are cleared at the Brisbane Wholesale Market if they do not reach a reserve price of \$2.20 per carton.

Bananas can also be cleared at point of origin in Queensland. This avoids the grower incurring freight and other marketing charges only to see his fruit cleared at the market.

Over the last three months, 1,000 cartons of bananas were cleared in North Queensland. I might add that there were also substantial clearances in New South Wales.

Over the last month most sales of cavendish bananas at the Brisbane Market have been at \$2.20 per carton, the reserve price.

5. STAGE II OF LESLIE DAM PROJECT

**Mr. Ahern** for **Mr. Cory**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Water Resources—

(1) Has the Commonwealth Government formally advised the State of its decision in regard to the request for financial assistance to implement Stage II of the Leslie Dam Project?

(2) In view of informal indications given in recent months and the importance of this project, when was the project approved in principle by the Queensland Government and will the State be able to undertake the project within its own loan funds?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Acting Minister for National Resources has recently advised that the Commonwealth Government no longer has

a programme for evaluation and assistance for State water projects and that he hopes the Queensland Government can include Stage II of the Leslie Dam Project in its own programme of works for implementation as soon as practicable.

(2) Stage II of the Leslie Dam Project was approved in principle by the Queensland Government on 11 September 1972.

The State is heavily committed to complete projects already under construction, but will review the situation before the start of the 1977-78 financial year to see whether the project can be included in its future works programme.

#### 6. SOFTWOOD PLANTATIONS, TUAN, TOOLARA AND COMO

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

(1) What are the total areas of land available for softwood forestry plantations at Tuan, Toolara and Como and what areas are actually taken up with plantations at each of these forest centres?

(2) What has been the annual rate of planting at each of these areas over the last five years?

(3) What is the planned rate of annual planting at these centres, as well as the new area of 37 000 hectares to the north of Maryborough which was recently released for softwood planting?

*Answers:—*

(1) Approximately 68 000 hectares net of plantable land is available on these State Forests but of this some 12 000 hectares in the vicinity of the Como Scarp has been temporarily withheld from planting pending an environmental assessment.

36 400 hectares of plantations have been established in the area to date, comprising—

	hectares
Tuan . . . . .	18 200
Toolara . . . . .	15 600
Como . . . . .	2 600

(2) The average annual rate of planting at each of these centres over the last 5 years has been—

	hectares
Tuan . . . . .	1 460
Toolara . . . . .	1 224
Como . . . . .	299
Total . . . . .	<u>2 983</u>

(3) The level of future plantings in this complex will be largely dependent on the availability or otherwise of continued financial support from the Commonwealth Government under further softwood

agreements. With the reduced level of assistance available this year under the one-year extension of the second softwood agreement, plantings in this area for 1976-77 are expected to fall to approximately 2 200 hectares. Subsequent plantings will be dependent on the level of any future Commonwealth assistance and on the availability of State funds.

The area to the north of Maryborough to which the honourable member refers has yet to be gazetted as State Forest but, when available, would allow plantings to be very substantially increased provided the necessary funds were made available.

#### 7. SOFTWOOD FORESTRY AGREEMENT

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

(1) What is the present situation regarding a softwood forestry agreement with the Commonwealth Government?

(2) What finance will be provided under this agreement and for what period?

(3) What will these funds mean in terms of hectares of forestry?

(4) Is the State Government expected to maintain these plantations out of its own funds and how much per annum per hectare is spent on maintenance of softwood plantations?

(5) How long will it be before the first thinnings are available for processing and when is it expected that the plantation will be finally cut out?

*Answers:—*

(1) The normal five-year term of the second softwood forestry agreement between the States and the Commonwealth expired on 30 June last. Pending completion of consideration of a possible third agreement, the Commonwealth Government has agreed to extend the previous agreement for a further 12 months to 30 June, 1977, but at a reduced level of financial assistance.

(2) Under this one-year extension a total of \$6,000,000 is to be made available in loans to the States, of which Queensland will receive \$1,469,000.

(3) This level of assistance should enable the planting of 3 104 hectares of plantation additional to that financed from State sources.

(4) No. Previous agreements have provided for new plantings and also for maintenance of areas previously planted with assistance under the scheme. It is hoped that the Commonwealth Government will continue to recognise its responsibility

to provide the funds necessary for maintenance of areas already planted under the agreement. Maintenance costs of softwood plantings vary widely with area, species and age of the plantation so that it is not possible to provide a meaningful average figure for this operation.

(5) The age at which merchantable thinning of a softwood plantation can commence depends on the species planted and on the markets available. Where a pulpwood market exists, thinning of slash pine in southern coastal Queensland can commence as early as age 12 years but commencement can be delayed to approximately age 15 where a sawlog market only is available, or to 19 years in species such as hoop pine with a slower rate of growth.

Similarly, the age of final clearfelling is dependent on markets and growth rates. It is expected, however, that most plantations of slash pine on the coastal lowlands of Queensland will be clearfelled at about 45 years of age and hoop pine at age 55 to 60 years. Plantations producing mainly pulpwood may be clearfelled at an earlier age.

#### 8. BOARD OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

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

(1) Has the Board of Advanced Education complete autonomy in certain of its functions and, if so, in which areas does it exist?

(2) How can the Government of the day ensure that its policy will be implemented under these circumstances?

(3) What legislation would have to be amended to ensure that the Board of Advanced Education becomes subject to Government control in all matters?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Board of Advanced Education has the explicit functions and responsibilities stated in section 51B of the Education Act. These include, in summary, the following:—

(a) to make reports and recommendations to the Minister on developments to meet the needs of the State, on programmes of capital and recurrent expenditure proposed by councils of colleges of advanced education, and on salaries payable to staff of colleges and conditions of employment;

(b) to confer and collaborate with the Commonwealth Commission on Advanced Education and other relevant agencies;

(c) to co-ordinate fields of study and accredit awards in advanced education;

(d) to approve annual budgets and plans, specifications and acceptance of tenders for capital projects submitted by councils of colleges of advanced education.

The Act indicates the responsibilities for advanced education resting on the Minister, the board and the college councils, and provides a comprehensive system of accountability to Parliament not only in financial matters but also in the education programmes conducted by the colleges.

The Act provides for a balanced system of functions and responsibilities among the Minister, the board and the colleges in advanced education. In general terms, the Board of Advanced Education is responsible for relationships with the State Government through the Minister, for relationship with the Commonwealth Government through the Commission on Advanced Education, for the broader policy issues in advanced education, the co-ordination and accreditation of courses, and over-all financing and budgetary control.

The composition and methods of appointment of members of the board and the college councils, the membership of committees and the system of course assessment involve, in all, some 400 people drawn from many sectors in the community. In this way, there exists an extensive network of involvement by and accountability to the community. In fact, the advanced education sector in this State is characterised by a degree of parliamentary and community accountability probably unequalled by any other sector of education anywhere in Australia.

(2) Present provisions appear eminently appropriate.

(3) See answer to (2).

#### 9. STOCKING WATER STORAGES WITH FISH

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

Was the proposal to stock water storages with juvenile barramundi successful and, if not, does his department intend to again investigate stocking such storages with foreign fish species?

*Answer:—*

Recently completed trials have demonstrated that a proposal to stock water storage impoundments with juvenile barramundi collected from coastal wetlands is neither a feasible nor economic proposition. There are no suitable alternative native species offering; consequently further consideration must now be given to an imported fish.

The Texas Fish and Game Commission has had some experience with the introduction of Nile perch into the State of Texas and I am having this investigated.

10. INVESTIGATIONS INTO DISPUTE  
BETWEEN MISS B. A. CAMERON AND  
MR. R. SPARKES

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

(1) Further to his answers to my questions on 7 December—did the president of the National Party, Mr. Bob Sparkes, involve himself in a police investigation by Warwick and Toowoomba police concerning a dispute over ownership of a pure-bred Arab Indian Silque mare in September or August this year?

(2) Did Mr. Sparkes intervene to prevent criminal charges from being laid against a woman known as Cameron concerning the dispute over ownership of the horse?

(3) Did Mr. Sparkes instruct the Toowoomba police to resolve the situation as quickly as possible and to get the horse back to the woman known as Cameron?

(4) Was pressure put on Inspector Menz of Warwick C.I.B. or any other police officer to drop charges against Miss Cameron?

(5) Was a ministerial file opened on this matter and, if so, was that file opened at the behest of Mr. Sparkes?

(6) If not, who initiated the opening of a ministerial file on this matter?

(7) Will the Minister investigate the involvement of Mr. Sparkes with a view to having him charged with a breach of section 543, 140, 132, 121 or any other section of the Criminal Code in that he attempted to prevent or obstruct the course of justice or interfered with a police officer while in the course of his duty?

(8) What was the result of the police investigation into this matter and were charges dropped against Miss Cameron?

(9) Will the Minister investigate this matter to see whether a breach of section 92 of the Criminal Code has taken place and whether anyone exercised any arbitrary or prejudicial acts interfering with the rights of others?

*Answers:—*

- (1) No.
- (2) No.
- (3) No.

(4) No. The Crown Law advice received was to the effect that prosecution action by police should not be undertaken.

(5 and 6) A ministerial file was opened on 19 July 1976, when the then private secretary to my predecessor addressed an inquiry on the subject to the Commissioner of Police. The person at whose behest such a file was commenced is unknown to me and no notation is contained on papers in my office.

(7) See information supplied above. As stated in my answer to the honourable member yesterday, if he has evidence of the commission of any offence I request him to furnish me with such evidence.

(8) Inquiries clearly indicate this was a matter for civil litigation. See also answer to (4).

(9) Unless the honourable member has evidence to support such an investigation, I do not intend wasting public moneys.

I regret that the A.L.P. is so viciously pursuing its policy of attack on private citizens under privilege in this House through snide allegations, innuendo and rumour-mongering. This policy was evidenced by its deplorable and unsuccessful attack last week on Mr. Syd Schubert. This attack on Mr. Sparkes and that on Mr. Schubert strongly support reports that the A.L.P. has embarked on a smear campaign of character assassination as a lead-up to the next State election.

11. OCEAN-DIVING DEATH AT MOORE REEF  
OFF CAIRNS

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

(1) Is he aware of the circumstances surrounding the recent fatality in an ocean-diving incident which occurred at Moore Reef, 30 km off Cairns, on the week-end of 27-28 November?

(2) Will any form of marine inquiry be held in addition to the coronial or any other inquiry that may be held?

(3) If not, will he undertake to have an investigatory committee set up, including experts who are actually experienced and qualified in diving, to inquire into and make recommendations regarding (a) qualification and standards for diving instructors, (b) the need for stringent examination and tests for both instructors and divers, (c) the control of numbers of divers allowed under one qualified instructor at one time, (d) the use and need of resuscitators on diving safaris, etc., (e) the control, issue and use of certificates of competency for divers and instructors, (f) the controls in purchasing deep-sea diving and scuba equipment by



amateurs and (g) the need for any other regulations to control faulty or inadequate equipment, its supervision and regular examination?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) I am advised that the incident to which the honourable member refers concerns a person who was a passenger on a commercial vessel subject to the provisions of the Marine Act. The Marine Board has called for a report on the matter.

12. MINING LEASES NEAR MT. SURPRISE

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

(1) Have large areas on O'Brien's and Lancewood Creeks been pegged out as machine-mining leases near Mt. Surprise?

(2) Have objections been lodged and/or heard by the mining warden at Mareeba and, if so, what is the decision?

(3) Has the department called on the machine operators to carry out any form of environmental impact study, as other mining companies are required to do?

(4) Will he give consideration to having an area from Spring Creek to Six Mile Creek proclaimed as a gem-field for the exclusive use of small miners, tourists and gem fossickers?

*Answers:—*

(1) There are no mining lease applications over any part of the 19 square miles set aside by me in 1971 for claim tenure only, which area includes O'Brien's and Lancewood Creeks. This area has a potential for tin-mining as well as gem-hunting.

It is assumed the honourable member is referring to some recent applications for claims, which have been lodged with the warden. The honourable member's attention is drawn to the Mining Act for the distinction between a claim and a lease.

(2) Objections have been received by the warden to some of the applications; some claims have been registered; others remain to be determined.

(3) No; it is not the practice of the department to request environmental impact studies over areas subject to application for claims.

(4) Following representations by the honourable members for Mourilyan, Cook and Barron River, this matter is already under consideration. A geological report is to be furnished to provide a basis for determining whether any of this area should be reserved for hand miners, tourists and fossickers.

13. TRAFFIC SPEED LIMIT OUTSIDE MORAYFIELD STATE SCHOOL

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

(1) Will he reduce the speed limit outside Morayfield State School from 80 km/h to 60 km/h, as school buses use this area for turning and there is danger of an accident?

(2) As previous approaches to the Main Roads Department have proved fruitless, will he take action before the start of the next school year?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) I will arrange for the district engineer for this area to discuss the matter with the Caboolture Shire Council.

14. DEMAINING OF MORAYFIELD-ROCKSBERG ROAD, CABOOLTURE

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

Does the Main Roads Department propose to demain the Morayfield to Rocksberg Road in the Shire of Caboolture and, if so, for what reason?

*Answer:—*

This road will not be deained for its whole length but only the last six kilometres. In any case, the shire has 30 days to lodge an objection. Generally it is not possible to increase the total length of gazetted roads, and the Neurum Road for 11 kilometres is being accepted as a gazetted road. Over all this is a net gain of five kilometres, which is very reasonable considering the general shortage of road funds.

15. REDUCTION OF CANE FARM PEAK, PARISH OF TAWVALE

**Mr. Katter**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Water Resources—

(1) Is he aware that a cane farm comprising portions 134 and 135, Parish of Tawvale, has been destroyed as an economic unit with production down now to 800 tonnes from its allocated peak and once annual production of 2 600 tonnes.

(2) Is he further aware that this destruction has been the result of flooding caused by a levy bank and other constructions and acts by the river trust?

(3) Will he immediately provide this family, at no expense to them, with alternative land, upon which they can grow their assignment, as otherwise the action by the trust can be regarded only as theft?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) This property has been the subject of earlier representations by the Minister for Mines and Energy.

The river improvement work which affects portions 134 and 135, Parish of Tawvale, is being done under the provisions of the River Improvement Trust Act by the Proserpine Shire River Improvement Trust. The trust is an autonomous body and has the responsibility for making decisions on the planning of river improvement works in its area.

It is understood that the trust is giving consideration to resuming certain lands in the area as part of its current programme of flood-mitigation works, and the landholder concerned would be well advised to discuss his position with the trust.

The question of substitution land is also a matter for discussion between the trust and the landholder concerned.

16. STATE GRANT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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

Will he assure the people of Queensland that a State grant, as given to local government last year, will be given again this year and will he deny scurrilous reports to the effect that the State grant, which each local government has budgeted for, will not be made?

**Mr. HINZE:** I do not recall the honourable member's giving the name of the person who started these scurrilous rumours in his area.

**Mr. Katter:** Gleeson, the A.L.P. candidate, I think it was.

**Mr. HINZE:** Well, the prepared reply indicates that Gleeson must be a nuthead. It is as follows:—

*Answer:—*

As stated by the Honourable the Deputy Premier and Treasurer in reply to a question on 2 December, an amount of \$5,000,000 is provided in the Budget for the current year for special grants to local authorities, and it is intended that the distribution of the funds will be made as early as possible in the new year. However, a specific date cannot be nominated. Also, it must be stressed that the amount that each local authority may receive will not necessarily be the same amount as that local authority received last year, or be the amount that the local authority may have estimated for 1976-77 for budget purposes.

17. DISCRIMINATION IN QUANTITY MARKETING OF L.P. GAS

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

(1) Is he aware that the company marketing L.P. gas has a list of people who buy more than eight cylinders per year and that the price to those persons on the list is \$21, whilst those not on the list have to pay \$26?

(2) If so, can the Government take action to change this situation, which means that the small consumer's high price subsidises the discount rate allowed for the bigger consumers?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) The matter to which the honourable member's question refers is one for the consideration of the Minister for Mines and Energy.

18. OPTIONS ON HOUSING COMMISSION RENTAL HOMES

**Mrs. Kyburz**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

As it was stated in the annual report of the Queensland Housing Commission that a surprising number of people elect to remain in substandard housing at high rental rather than take up the options provided by the commission, what options are offered to these applicants and are any numbers available to indicate how many people refuse to help themselves?

*Answer:—*

The options the commission offers are low-cost suburban rental homes of good standard and the possibility of purchase on attractive terms with interest as low as 5½ per cent, nominal deposits and substantial loans.

Detailed figures of rejection rates are not kept. The situation is not peculiar to Queensland, but is common in all States. The conclusion to be drawn is that people prefer the life-style they have and when faced with a possible change elect to stay as they are.

I am interested in some current research studies on the subject and perhaps in a year or two may be able to explain the psychological reasons.

19. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION, WOODRIDGE POLICE STATION

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

As immediate relief is necessary, what is the present situation concerning increased office accommodation at the Woodridge Police Station?

*Answer:—*

I have requested the Department of Works to provide modular accommodation on an urgent basis and to carry out associated alterations to the existing building. I am hopeful that this work will proceed at a very early date.

20. EAR-PIERCING

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

As the custom of having one's ears pierced has become extremely popular and many untrained personnel in department stores are performing this minor operation with very few precautions, what are the special procedures to be observed in ear-piercing?

*Answer:—*

There is no specific legislation under my jurisdiction in relation to ear-piercing. No ill effects of the present procedures have been drawn to my notice, but should the honourable member have any details that she thinks should be referred to me, I assure her that I will have the matter investigated.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

FIRE AT PITTSWORTH HIGH SCHOOL

**Mr. ELLIOTT**: I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: Is he aware of the fire at the Pittsworth High School last night when five classrooms were burnt out, and but for the outstanding action of the fire brigade more would have been destroyed? Will he give me an assurance that all steps will be taken to ensure that facilities are provided for the commencement of the new school year in 1977?

**Mr. LEE**: I am aware that a fire occurred in the Pittsworth school last night. Already we have men available to move onto the site so that the honourable member's request can be acceded to. Before we can start any cleaning up, there has to be a police investigation. That will take place today. After that investigation we will be moving in an endeavour to have the classrooms repaired or replaced for the new school year.

ILLEGAL EXPORT OF BIRDS FROM QUEENSLAND

**Mr. POWELL**: I ask the Premier: Is he aware that many thousands of Australian parrots are being illegally caught and exported at great profit from the southern part of Queensland and will he take urgent steps to have enacted as expeditiously as possible legislation providing for the apprehension of offenders?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN**: Over recent days I was greatly disturbed to learn that there is a huge illegal traffic in rare, valuable and pretty birds from Queensland to southern States, particularly to Melbourne and Adelaide, and to overseas countries. Last week outside Kingaroy the police arrested a transport operator who had a lot of rare, valuable and pretty birds hidden in a big tool box under his truck. On further inquiries I learned that every week an estimated 20,000 birds are taken from the south-eastern corner of the State to the southern capitals and to overseas countries.

I have discussed this matter with the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service (Hon. Ken Tomkins) and later today he is introducing legislation that will give his officers the power to arrest people who are caught with birds in their possession and to impose fines upon them. It is a matter of grave concern that such a large number of birds are being stolen and illegally exported. Severe action will be taken immediately.

WAGES AND PRICES FREEZE, AND INCOME TAX CUTS

**Mr. HALES**: I ask the Premier: Has he seen proposals by Mr. Bob Hawke in which he has stated that he would support a wages and prices freeze in exchange for income tax cuts? Is that not the same proposal that he as Premier of Queensland proposed at the Premiers' Conference some time ago, when Mr. Whitlam called it "Mr. Petersen's strange economic theory"? Does he consider that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Burns) and the A.L.P. will now reverse their former stand and finally support his proposals to restore the economy?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN**: In reply to the last part of that question—if it is advocated by Mr. Hawke, I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition will support it. Mr. Hawke has been coming out quite clearly in support of the policy that I have enunciated at Premiers' Conferences over a number of years—firstly to Mr. Whitlam and then to Mr. Fraser after he became Prime Minister. My policy was that there must be a reduction or freezing of income tax, sales tax and some other areas of taxation to make it easier for people to manage and to provide a greater incentive.

An Opposition Member interjected.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN**: I am glad to hear the honourable member interject. I am quite sure that he, too, will support this policy. I cannot visualise that he would claim that taxes are not too severe, that they should be retained and that the burden is not too great. I am sure that he supports me and that everybody else does. I am quite sure

that the Commonwealth ultimately will have to carry out such a policy before we get back to a sound economic footing.

#### IMPORTATION OF NEW ZEALAND MEAT

**Mr. GLASSON:** I ask the Premier: Is he aware of reports that Thomas Borthwick & Sons is importing certain cuts of prime meat from New Zealand because of the reported short supply in this country during a period of massive oversupply of cattle for slaughter? If he is aware of such reports, will he declare to the House his feelings on the matter?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I saw the Press report, and I take it that it is accurate, that a certain meat company—I think it is Thomas Borthwick & Sons—is importing meat from New Zealand on particular occasions.

**Mr. Burns:** Every Tuesday.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Every Tuesday, is it?

I think it is despicable and I have nothing but contempt for a company that undertakes this sort of action when the beef industry in Queensland is in such dire straits. I will not accept that that company has to import meat from New Zealand because our meat is not good enough or is not of a high enough quality. It is completely ridiculous and the people who have cattle ought to take this into account when they decide where they will sell their cattle.

#### LABOR APPEAL FOR FUNDS IN "NATION REVIEW"

**Mr. LANE:** In asking the Premier a question, I draw his attention to a large advertisement which appears in "Nation Review" this week bearing a photograph of the Leader of the Opposition and appealing for funds. This advertisement is placed among other advertisements for prostitutes, homosexuals, massage parlours and the like and is in a paper that is noted for the publication of pornographic and obscene material. The advertisement calls for funds on the basis that people should donate money towards the fight against the extreme Right-wing policies of the Premier. Does the Premier feel that this appeal will get any response from the public?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Evidently the advertisement appears where it ought to appear. As it appears among the other advertisements to which the honourable member referred, perhaps it will appeal to certain Labor supporters. That is the standard that has been formulated and encouraged by the Labor Party generally. That is

where it looks for its support not only financially but also electorally. I do not expect that the A.L.P. will receive any greater support than it has now with so few honourable members opposite. Until that party raises its standards, ideals and policies, I do not think it will get much support either monetarily or in any other way.

#### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR VICTIMS OF TORRENS CREEK TORNADO

**Mr. KATTER:** I ask the Premier: Is there any small fund that can be drawn on to help the few isolated people who suffered personal loss in the flash tornado which wrought total havoc and widespread destruction in the small township of Torrens Creek, particularly one railway fettle and his family who have lost almost all of their personal possessions and to whom even \$200 would be of immeasurable assistance? Would he ensure that all necessary repairs to the three Government houses that have been seriously damaged will be carried out immediately?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Earlier this morning, at breakfast-time, the honourable member informed me of the tragedy and hardship that occurred in the storm at Torrens Creek. If he brings forward the details of what has happened, I, together with the Treasurer, will have a look to see what can be done to assist the people as quickly as possible.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! By agreement, the time allotted for questions has now expired.

#### MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

##### PLIGHT OF PRIMARY PRODUCERS

**Mr. HARTWIG (Callide) (12 noon):** I rise to speak on a very important subject and, in so doing, desire to make a report to the House on the plight of the beef cattle industry and primary producers in general.

The plight of the beef cattle industry was reflected to a large extent in the recent formation of the Cattlemen's Union, which held its first annual conference on a nationwide basis in Rockhampton last week-end. The general mood of cattlemen at that conference was very nasty indeed, but they had very good reason to be in such a mood. It is nearly two years since I called a meeting at Yeppoon at which the Federal Minister for Primary Industry (Mr. Sinclair), the Premier and other notables addressed cattlemen on the problems of the beef cattle industry.

Unfortunately today the beef cattle industry is facing many problems that have been magnified by lack of action by the Federal

Government. I have to say that because I believe that cattlemen today are facing proposed increases in interest rates, shire rates, commission rates (from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to 5 per cent), fuel costs, farm machinery and motor vehicle costs, education and medical expenses, general freight rates and rail and air transport costs. Whilst wages have risen approximately 200 per cent over the last three years, the price of meat in that same period has decreased by over 100 per cent—from \$44 to \$45 a hundred lb. for first-quality ox to a maximum price today of \$22 to \$23.

What has been done in an attempt to overcome this problem? I am pleased to be able to state that the Queensland Government has formed a beef committee, with which I have had close association, and has submitted a minimum floor-price scheme for acceptance throughout the Commonwealth. In the interest of primary producers, particularly beef cattlemen, I trust that this scheme, or one similar to it, will be accepted.

I have constantly advocated a moratorium on interest rates for primary producers. These also are a burden that has to be borne by the landowners and beef cattlemen every six months. Let us take a look at the other things that I have suggested. I have advocated rebates on rural ratings and lower freight rates for cattle, grain and fodder. Above all, I have constantly and vigorously advocated the cessation of imports, particularly of meat products, to this country. Today meat pies worth approximately \$280,000 are being imported annually from Britain and Canada. Tinned meat worth \$32,000,000 is being brought in from Argentina, Brazil and other countries in which there is foot and mouth disease. Pigmcats worth \$3,500,000 and a considerable amount of fresh meat are being imported from New Zealand. In fact, last week butcher shops in Sydney were advertising New Zealand rump for sale.

Let us look also at what is happening in the importation of primary produce. This country is surely becoming a nation that imports more goods than it exports. Let us take a look at meat preparation. I propose to quote and compare import figures for the four months ended October 1975 and the four months ended October 1976. Meat and meat products have risen from \$622,000 to \$933,000, up 50 per cent; dairy products have risen from \$5,200,000 to \$6,600,000, up 30 per cent; fish and fish preparations have risen from \$18,000,000 to \$28,000,000, up 50-odd per cent; and fruit and vegetables have risen from \$16,000,000 to \$21,000,000, up 30 per cent.

If we look at the importation of textile yarn, fabrics, made-up articles and related products, we see that in the four months ended October 1975 we imported goods valued at \$161,000,000, and in the corresponding period in 1976 the figure had jumped to \$206,000,000. Surely this is indicative of what is going on in this country today.

Have we priced ourselves off the market?

I want to quote the case of Mrs. Margaret Ferguson of Red Hill, Calliope, who is indebted to the bank. This case was mentioned in "Queensland Country Life". She sent 35 head of cattle to the Gracemere sale yards recently. Her net return after deducting freight and commission was \$3.75, or 10c a head. It is time that the Federal Government acted to restrict the importation of beef and beef products which can be produced in this country. I believe that the Federal Government must interest itself in the general welfare of all primary producers, not just beef and dairy producers. I believe also that we must do something about interest rates, because these people who, up till two or three years ago, had an overdraft against their assets have suddenly wakened to the fact that their overdraft has become an unrepayable debt. It is for that reason alone that we must do something to assist these people. I suggest that this Government make vigorous representations to the Federal Government to give relief before it is too late because there are hundreds of millions of dollars tied up in the beef industry in this State and in this nation. Although only a handful of people are involved, they are very, very important in providing the lifeblood of this great State and nation.

#### GOVERNMENT BY CABINET OR THE EXECUTIVE

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (12.8 p.m.): On behalf of the Opposition I wish to express our grave concern at the use of what is called Executive or Cabinet Government to alter major agreements between the State of Queensland and foreign mining companies, thus extending the rights of those companies to exploit our national resources. I refer specifically to the Queensland Government Gazette Extraordinary No. 59 published on 9 November 1976. This Gazette varies the agreement between the Queensland Government—on behalf of the people of Queensland—and two foreign companies, Utah Development Company and Mitsubishi Development Pty. Ltd., which was given the force of law by the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968. I believe and I am sure the Labor Party believes, as, I think do most members in this Chamber, that agreements granting rights to companies covering up to 1,092 million tonnes of coking coal should only be granted after full debate in the community and in this Parliament.

I know that people will say, "Well, you have 14 days in which to object. You can debate the regulations." But that type of debate is limited to two hours and is restricted to the regulations themselves. I think we ought to lay down a principle that if we are making arrangements to hand over the control of a large amount of coal—in this case it could eventually be 1,092 million

tonnes of coking coal that could be affected—then it should be done under legislation debated in this Chamber where the Minister can be asked to explain why we are taking this step. We can then satisfy ourselves that everything is fair and above board and that the people's assets are being protected. I believe the people are entitled to a full disclosure of Government decisions on matters involving thousands of millions of dollars. It is not good enough to say that by publishing a seven-page Government gazette, including a copy of the alterations, the Government is informing the public.

The Gazette indicates that the major alterations are being made to mining agreements between the Government, on the one hand, and, on the other, Utah (one of our major companies now in the light of its profits announced in the past few days) and Mitsubishi. Very few people read the Government Gazette, which I think is understandable, and those who do read it then have to get a copy of the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act of 1968 and compare it with the Gazette in order to ascertain what the present agreement is altering, adding or amending. Under these circumstances, even if the public can be given an assurance that the alterations have been checked, it is important that the matter be debated and questions asked about it in Parliament.

The Gazette covering the alterations provides the public with no reasons for the changes that have been made. They are simply straight changes; no explanations are given. To me, it is a classic example of Government by Cabinet.

**Mr. Müller:** What are the alterations?

**Mr. BURNS:** I am going to refer to them now. The old agreement provided limits on the quantity of coking coal that Utah and Mitsubishi could mine from the special coal-mining leases and export from the State. It stated that the interest held by Utah and Mitsubishi in the operations were: 85 per cent Utah; 15 per cent Mitsubishi.

Utah now wants to transfer a 4.75 per cent share of its interest to the A.M.P. Society and a 4 per cent share to Utah Mining Australia Limited, known as UMAL, and Mitsubishi wants to transfer a 3 per cent share of its interest to the A.M.P. No-one can object to that. It is quite fair and above-board. We have been arguing consistently that we want more Australian equity, so I am not worried about that point and I do not think any other honourable member would be worried about it. These transfers are only part of what is being done, because the Gazette goes further and provides that these four companies—that is, A.M.P., UMAL, Utah Development and Mitsubishi—shall be allowed to increase the amount of

coking coal to be taken from the lease reserves by 1 per cent for every increase of 1 per cent in Australian equity.

I asked the Minister a question in this Chamber in relation to that particular Gazette, part of which was—

“What is the total recoverable reserves of coking coal on this field?”

The answer was “. . . at least 1 092 million tonnes”. One per cent of that, of course, is 10 920 000 tonnes, which will be the increase each time the Australian equity increases by 1 per cent.

Although the increase in Australian equity is welcome, I wonder whether Utah or Mitsubishi or someone else said that this was the only way in which they would give us a share in the companies exploiting our natural resources. Were we blackmailed? Did they say to us, “We will let another 1 per cent of Australians own shares; but, in the meantime, you have to give us 1 per cent of the reserves”?

I remember the Minister saying on a number of occasions in the House, “We are not going to leave a big hole in the ground. We have made certain that there are certain reserves, and we have written certain restrictions into the Act to protect this coal for the future. These companies are not going to be allowed to go in and take all the good coal out and leave nothing but a hole in the ground.”

**Mr. Miller:** Because of the recent devaluation, do you agree that the royalty paid by these companies should be reviewed?

**Mr. BURNS:** It is a windfall pick-up, and I think that this State should share in it. I do not think that the companies should reap all the benefit.

The Gazette also provides on page 3 that at the time the transfers to A.M.P. and UMAL are registered, Queensland will accept that the Australian equity will be 20 per cent and that these 1 per cent increases in the quantity of coal will be taken from the reserves on mining leases. So, in future, each 1 per cent increase in Australian equity will increase the opportunity of the companies to take 10 920 000 tonnes of coal.

**Mr. Lane** interjected.

**Mr. BURNS:** If the honourable member is not interested in Australia's asset, I would suggest to him—

**Mr. Lane:** The agreement is written in American dollars. Don't you even know that? Why don't you wake up, instead of talking off the top of your skull?

**Mr. BURNS:** I suggest that the honourable member ought to be a little bit concerned about the people of Australia and the way in which their assets are being dealt with.

**Mr. Lane:** Ridiculous generalisations.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order!

**Mr. BURNS:** Other than rolling a few drunks in the park, the honourable member's biggest—

**Mr. Lane** interjected.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I have asked the honourable member for Merthyr to come to order.

**Mr. BURNS:** The poor old drunk-roller has to use that sort of roaring voice to try to stop my discussing what is in fact a major problem for this State.

Let us go a little further, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Part of what appears in the Gazette makes it very clear that some of the original agreements are being varied to allow these companies not only to mine the coal in the way provided in the Act, but also to vary the thickness of seam previously allowed. I am referring to new subclause (2) of clause 5 of Part III. Previously a 5 ft. thickness of seam was allowed; the companies can now go below 5 ft. That provision is written into what appears in the Gazette. They can now go into areas that we were told had been protected by previous agreements.

In addition, new subclause (2) of clause 5 of Part III also allows the extension of open-cut mining to depths below 200 ft. That is there for everyone to read. On page 6 of the agreement it is stated clearly that, in future, open-cut mining will be allowed below 200 ft.

So what the Government has said by regulation, without debate in this Parliament, is that each time Utah Development is prepared to transfer 1 per cent of its equity to its Australian company UMAL, Queensland will allow the partners to take 10 920 000 additional tonnes of coal out of the ground. In other words, the Government is not worrying about reserves for the future. With an extra 80 per cent to transfer from 20 per cent to 100 per cent the Government can give away 800 000 000 tonnes of coal without this Parliament debating it and without it ever being advertised in the Press that it is occurring. I don't believe that that is the way it should be done.

**Mr. Miller:** Is there a time factor?

**Mr. BURNS:** There is a period in which the companies have to notify the Minister. There is a six-month period written in the Gazette. I suggest that the honourable member read it because it is worth while reading.

**Mr. Miller:** How many times a year?

**Mr. BURNS:** There is no restriction. There is a restriction, of course, in the original agreement about the number of

tonnes a year. The point about it is that this extra 10 920 000 tonnes can be covered each time by regulation. I don't even know that it has to be done again. After we allow this regulation to go unchallenged, we may be placed in the position where we will not be consulted again. The Minister will be notified that they have improved the Australian equity by 1 per cent. Under the proposal the Minister is then required to investigate it, and he can then allow the companies to extend the amount of coking coal they can mine. Having done that, they are allowed to export it under the agreement.

I believe that Queensland is becoming renowned for its Executive forms of Government. Under this regulation the natural assets of the country are being given away. For a number of years, this coal has been known to be there. Modern technology has allowed the new mining companies to open-cut mine it and make their massive profits. We are suggesting that there ought to be some control. The public ought to know what is happening to Queensland coal. If a person does not read special Gazette No. 59 and does not see a copy of the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act, so that one can be compared with the other, he would be flat out understanding that after tomorrow, when the time for debating these regulations will have expired, the Government of the day is able to give away 10 920 000 tonnes of coal for every 1 per cent increase in Australian equity.

There are a number of questions we would like answered. To what extent will the Government examine the beneficial or real ownership of shares in such a purchasing company? Will the Government ensure that such shares are not held by holding companies, trustees, or other persons or legal entities on behalf of a foreign company?

(Time expired.)

#### TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS IN WESTERN AREAS

**Mr. BERTONI** (Mt. Isa) (12.17 p.m.): I should like to bring to the notice of the House the inadequacy of telephone communications in western areas. Recently a few radio telephones in the Mt. Isa electorate were confiscated by a Telecom inspector, and certain people were fined, because of complaints received from Telecom in Canberra. Once again we see a complete disregard for the problems of the people who live in the West. In Australia we seem to have two sets of rules—one for those who live in the cities with its modern means of communication; a person can pick up a telephone and talk as long as he likes for 10c—and one for those who live in western areas on pastoral properties or on missions, who have to operate under a different type of communication system. Usually in western areas the method of communication is double-band or single-band radio based on a certain area such as

in my electorate, the Royal Flying Doctor Service under the call sign of VJL. Transmission is made through the Royal Flying Doctor Service base, and the message is then passed on to Telecom for delivery. Transmissions can be made only at certain hours. In my area the permitted time is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. After that the radio system can be used only for emergency calls for medical attention. There is no means of communication between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. daily and from 5 p.m. Friday to 8 a.m. Monday. We are approaching the wet season, when road communications will be cut and it will be impossible to bring in aircraft. During the wet season radio communication is the only means of contact with the outside world. The Commonwealth Government should be doing more to assist the people in my area.

In a manual setting out the conditions governing the licensing and operation of controlled stations and associated outpost stations in Australia I notice that by 31 December 1977 all two-band radio equipment has to be phased out and single-band equipment installed in its place. I am not against the installation of single-band equipment, but I protest at the fact that every station will have to change over to single-band equipment by that date, at a cost of from \$700 to \$2,000 a set. At least 1,500 sets, portable or fixed, are on the School of the Air network associated with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and those sets will have to be either altered or discarded. As the Government has decided on the installation of single-band equipment it should provide financial assistance, by way of either subsidy or reduced prices, to the people involved.

The new single-band sets can be used on the radio telephonic subscriber system, which is possibly the best system that can be installed in western areas. It is similar to the O.T.C. system. The Government should look into the possibility of using that system and of establishing in Mt. Isa a special station so that people can become accustomed to that system. It is envisaged that the single-band system will be connected to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which will have two separate frequencies. But this will mean that there will be no communication at night unless a special switch through to the post office can be provided.

The Commonwealth Government will be paying limited subsidies on the installation of extra frequencies in the Royal Flying Doctor Service. It is expected that the service will be required to pay \$5,000 towards the cost of adding to the system. On top of this, a call on the single-band system is estimated to cost 50 per cent more than the normal three-minute trunk-line call that is available to city subscribers. This is not right. Telephone costs throughout Australia should be uniform. It is wrong to penalise people who live in the West to meet the added costs incurred in the installation of this equipment.

The radio telephone system has certain drawbacks, one of which is that only one person can speak at a time. This is similar to the systems used on board ship and in outposts. Anyone who uses that system knows that he is required to make a declaration regarding the secrecy of radio communication and that what is said over the system is not to be revealed.

The system uses two frequencies, one for calling up the base—it might be 011—the other for having the call answered and on which the conversation is conducted.

Problems confronting people in the West do not seem to be understood by those in other parts of the State. The pioneers of the West should be given certain concessions and privileges. However, most people seem to think that anyone who lives in the West is a fool and that he should shift and live in the cities. Most members of Parliament seem to fail to recognise the extent of these problems. They seem to be interested in the voting strength rather than in the interests of the people of the West.

I sincerely hope that members of Parliament will take a deeper interest in anything relating to communications in the West. Communications are the life-blood of everyone living in the West. It is the one means by which people can talk to one another and feel that they have not been forgotten completely. In times of emergency—there is a wet coming up now—some stations will be without any means of communication for nearly three months.

I instance the Doomagee Mission, which just recently had some problems. The silly part about the whole system is that from Mt. Isa a person is able to communicate with other areas as long as he uses a portable set and moves two miles out of town. Isn't that most ridiculous? If a person goes two miles out of town, he can talk legally with any station at all, but he cannot do it in the centre of Mt. Isa, because he is near a telephone system. If it is felt that that is the proper method of operating, I would never believe it. The Government should take the realistic view that people living out West would make only the necessary telephone calls. Whether a person is based in Mt. Isa or any other place near a telephone exchange would not make much difference to the operation. We should be giving a service and a convenience to the people who live in western areas.

#### THE PROBLEM OF YOUTHFUL UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Mrs. KYBURZ (Salisbury) (12.26 p.m.): I rise today to discuss the problem of youthful unemployment and the education system. As schools have broken up and as so many young people are hopefully attempting to join the work-force, this is a particularly fortuitous time to discuss this subject.



I am greatly annoyed by some Press releases that criticise the Federal Government's decision not to pay unemployment benefits over the holidays. I personally believe that that decision was extremely wise. It is time we started considering what our education system is aiming at.

I do not believe that it is the responsibility of schools to actually train young people for employment; rather is it their responsibility to prepare them to be trained. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure the training of their youth. If they do not have the capacity to do that, perhaps we should be looking at what we are asking of the parents these days. Parents must ensure that their youths are actively seeking jobs; it is their responsibility and nobody else's.

The overriding factor we have discovered from the inquiry into education is that everyone in the community believes that our education system today lacks discipline—personal discipline as well as group discipline. Today's education aims to help our young people become creative, self-motivated and innovated individuals. There is no doubt about that. However, whilst doing that, what discipline are we not engendering in our young people? It is all very well to be self-motivated, but it has to be realised that we all work within a group, that we are in fact part of a social pattern and that no man, child or youth is an island to himself. Something is to be said for streaming in schools, because after all it prepares young people to work within a group.

I am worried about the pre-school system as it now operates. I can see that in 20 years' time, whilst we will have self-motivated, innovated people, we will also have people who are completely lacking in personal discipline. The pre-school system is something aligned to creative play and little more. Obviously the pre-school system is filling a gap in intellectual and emotional preparedness before school, but what are we losing in it? Pre-schools should be built on a completely non-political basis. They should be built selectively, and there should be a means test (either emotional or social) for entry. It is not that children should not be able to enter them as of right but some areas have pre-schools that jolly well should not have them—areas where there are sufficient kindergartens for young children to go to. After all, pre-schools are not child-minding centres. They are, as I said, a gap in the emotional and intellectual preparedness for school.

Over the past few weeks we have seen a great deal in the Press about youth not being able to find jobs, and there is no doubt that there is a great deal of difficulty in finding them. I am appalled at times that people do not quibble at paying \$800 or \$900 for a colour television set, which after all is nothing but a pure luxury that one

could certainly live without, and yet they hesitate to spend up to \$250 on a three-month secretarial course for their daughters. I just do not see the relativity between those two things. I am concerned that we are moving quite quickly towards what I call a miasmic welfare State where people are still allowing their initiatives to be cut off and are not prepared to work for themselves and help themselves.

I believe, however, that it is now up to employers to make an effort to have jobs available for the youth who actively seek employment. I think that now more than ever—and this is a vast statement coming from me—we have to consider that some women in the work-force should not be there. The fact that they are there for their own motivation is entirely their own business. But there is no doubt that young people have to find jobs if they are going to continue in a life of personal initiative.

A recent survey shows that bosses prefer reliability of older workers and that of all employers questioned 52 per cent found that the young have come from school unprepared for their jobs. As I said, I do not believe it is the responsibility of the schools to prepare young people for their jobs. It used to be and it still is the employers' responsibility and nobody's else's to train young people.

If a person starts working at Darrell Lea she does not know what selling or packing chocolates is all about. I use that as an example because I spent three Christmas holidays packing chocolates for Darrell Lea and it took me a very short time to learn what to do, apart from learning how to refrain from eating so many chocolates.

The reasons given by employers for school-leavers not being prepared for work include poor personal discipline, poor grasp of educational skills and inability to appreciate the need for team effort. This boils down to precisely what I am saying—that employers want young people who display personal initiative and self-discipline.

I am particularly pleased that the Federal Government has introduced the Community Youth Support Scheme, which aims to encourage community action towards the provision of supportive programmes and services to the unemployed youth. This scheme has not received nearly enough publicity. It will enable areas within the community to provide supportive assistance for young people and will enable them to gain the necessary skills, and there is no doubt that there are skills attached to job-finding. Under the scheme financial assistance is available towards the provision of a range of programmes which would help to keep unemployed youth oriented to work and would improve their ability to apply for jobs and obtain employment. I think more needs to be told to the community about this scheme because it will be a group effort.

I refer to an answer given in the Federal House by Senator Margaret Guilfoyle to a question about this problem on 3 November. She advised that a circular would be sent to all school-leavers who were applying for unemployment benefits. The fact that the department does not accept students on vacation as being unemployed or as being eligible for unemployment benefits is an extremely wise criterion.

The circular letter that so many people are receiving reads—

"If you intend to resume full-time studies, it will not be possible for you to be paid unemployment benefit during the vacation. Should it be your intention to not take up any further form of full-time education or training, you should advise the Department to this effect . . .

"In addition to providing information so that the Department can decide whether you are a student on vacation or whether you aim to become a member of the workforce, you"

should state why you want unemployment benefits.

It is time that we realised where the money comes from for unemployment benefits, commonly known as the dole, which is a ghastly word. There is not a bottomless pit. We have to start realising, as must young people and anyone else who has criticised the decision of the Federal Government, that it is tax money and that taxpayers are tired of shelling out. The holidays last only six or seven weeks and that is a short time in which to find a job. However, it is entirely unreasonable to expect any Government to pay unemployment benefits to young people who may or may not in fact be unemployed. There is no doubt that unemployment benefits are necessary for older people but I very much doubt their worth for 15 and 16-year-olds who are, after all, only on holidays. I cannot see that it is the Government's responsibility to pay them unemployment benefits over the holidays.

#### DEFENCE OF CHURCH LEADERS AND ACTION FOR WORLD DEVELOPMENT

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (12.36 p.m.): My matter of public interest is a continuation of a subject that I discussed in this Chamber some weeks ago following the unjust attack made by the honourable member for Toowong on the clergy of Brisbane, the World Council of Churches and Action for World Development. I am prompted to speak this morning by the great indignation expressed in the community during the last fortnight over this matter. Dr. Noel Preston, Rev. Bush and other clergy in the community feel very strongly about this very unjustified attack by the honourable member for Toowong.

They wonder where he obtained his information and why he did not prove what he said in this House about the integrity of these gentlemen.

I can assure you, Mr. Hewitt, that not only among the clergy but among the general community the reaction to the honourable member's statements has been very strong indeed. He also denigrated the vigil held in the city at that time. For his information—I feel he must already know it—neither the World Council of Churches nor A.W.D. organised it. It was the result of widespread concern by many Christians about integrity in government and the values of our society.

It is deplorable that slander and smear have been peddled by some politicians and extremists in this Parliament and in certain inspired letters to the Press. This was done, of course, simply to divert attention from the real issues that are worrying the community at the present time.

Mr. Gygar: Mr. Dean—

Mr. DEAN: I have only 10 minutes in which to speak, so I have no time to answer interjections.

It is particularly wrong that A.W.D. and the World Council of Churches should be used as a whipping-horse by some members of the Government and of the general public because suddenly it is becoming evident that certain Christian churches, in particular some of their leaders, will not tolerate social injustices and the abuse of power. Indeed, they would be neglecting their duty if they sat by and watched what was going on in the community at the moment and instigated by this Government.

When these critics refer to A.W.D., they are referring to a body of Christian opinion that has widespread and growing support. The honourable member's attack on the World Council of Churches will not, I am sure, do him any good in the long run. What does the World Council of Churches stand for? It is a fellowship of more than 250 churches in all continents. Its membership includes the major churches in the eastern and western traditions, with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church. With this church, however, it maintains fraternal relationships, as it does with a number of other smaller Christian communities not of its membership. The World Council is dedicated to the restoration of unity in the Christian church through the renewal of all its members.

The reaction to the attack by the honourable member for Toowong was very wide indeed. At a meeting of the Methodist Conference Standing Committee on Monday, 7 November, after a discussion of the statements made in Parliament concerning the Rev. Dr. Noel Preston and A.W.D., some resolutions were carried. I quote only one—

"We regret and reject unjustified and erroneous attacks made in Parliament on ministers of religion and other people of acknowledged integrity and good repute."

Similarly, the Presbyterian Committee on Christian Unity supports the A.W.D. It said—

“Since 1973 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland has commended to the support of church members the work of Action for World Development, a churches’ agency established under the aegis of the Australian Council of Churches and the National Episcopal Conference of the Roman Catholic Church.”

The Church of England Synod adopts a similar attitude. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can understand the revulsion of the community at the derogatory remarks made by the honourable member for Toowong about these gentlemen and the churches they represent.

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** Do you realise—

**Mr. DEAN:** The Premier wants to take up my time and I am not going to let him do that.

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** What about Communist headquarters in Melbourne?

**Mr. DEAN:** There was no proof produced here about Communist influence.

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen** interjected.

**Mr. DEAN:** Is the Premier prepared to say that these gentlemen are connected with the Communist Party or are aiding or abetting the Communist Party?

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** A.W.D. has got Communist headquarters in its offices in Melbourne and in Adelaide.

**Mr. DEAN:** The Archbishops of Brisbane will be happy to hear it. The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace has condemned the continuing attacks on the people working for Action for World Development. Are they all Communists, Communist supporters or Communist fellow-travellers?

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** I wouldn’t have my office in the same office as the Communist Party.

**Mr. DEAN:** The Roman Catholic Archdiocesan Pastoral Council of Brisbane has expressed support for Action for World Development.

**Mr. Burns:** What about the Fascist Party?

**Mr. DEAN:** If the Premier is prepared to condemn those Christians, I am not prepared to take it. My leader has just put his finger right on the spot; it is the Fascist influence in the community, the real extreme Right-wing influence, that is attacking the World Council of Churches today. The

church leaders who have been vilified in this House are prepared to go and work among the Communists; they will not run away from them. They do not believe in running away from the enemy; they believe in going among their ranks. Nothing is solved by running away. All these people, all these organisations and all these churches cannot be wrong. But suddenly they have become Communist sympathisers, according to the Premier and the honourable member for Toowong. Anyway, time will tell. It is so easy to rise in this place where we have complete protection and say anything we like, but these gentlemen I am protecting here this morning do not have the right or the power to enter Parliament House and defend their names.

I challenge the Premier to call them before the Bar of the House so they can answer the charges laid against them by the honourable member for Toowong. I can assure him that Dr. Noel Preston and Father Pascoe will be very happy to appear before the Bar of the House. They will not be afraid to front up to the Bar of the House and answer these charges which have been made in such an unjust and cowardly manner. They are men of great integrity, and so I feel it is incumbent upon me as a citizen and as a member of Parliament to act as their spokesman here this morning in continuing this debate, because it was really and truly a cowardly attack upon them. I have a copy of the speech of the honourable member for Toowong. He said—

“We are asked to believe that the A.W.D. clerics represent the churches. I wonder do they. There is Dr. Noel Preston, whose attachment to Left-wing causes here is well known . . .”

That is a nice thing to say.

**Mr. Porter:** It’s true.

**Mr. DEAN:** Say it outside.

**Mr. Porter:** I have done so, and I will be happy to say it again.

**Mr. DEAN:** I have not seen evidence that the honourable member has said it outside. He continued—

“Then there is Father Pascoe. He will be remembered as speaking at the Holy Spirit Hall in 1974, urging exactly the same causes and on the same platform as Geoff Goulet . . .”

I do not know who he is. Then the honourable member carried his vilification further and referred to the Reverend Ray Bush of the Presbyterian Church. He said—

“At these meetings he tells people privately—he will not say it publicly for publication—‘You know, Jesus was a Communist.’”

**Mr. Porter:** Are you telling me he is not a Left-winger? He admits it. You are behind the times.

**Mr. DEAN:** It really disgusts me. I only wish I had more time to develop my argument. I have known some of these gentlemen virtually all of my life, and I have followed their careers very closely.

**Mr. Porter:** And they are all of your political colour.

**Mr. DEAN:** The honourable member is not only smearing them; he is also smearing the churches to which they belong and their congregations. That is what he is doing—smearing the whole lot of them. He is not crediting with any intelligence the congregations of the churches over which these gentlemen preside when he suggests that they would not know if they were Communists.

I shall leave it at that. I express utter disgust and revulsion on behalf of the gentlemen whose names I have mentioned this morning, and the honourable member for Toowong should rise in this Chamber and apologise to them.

Finally, I appeal to the Premier to call the gentlemen before the Bar of the House and allow them to answer the charges that have been made against them.

#### SAFETY DURING CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAY PERIOD

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Minister for Health) (12.46 p.m.): I rise this morning on what I consider a most vital matter of public interest and one in which I wish to involve all honourable members. I urge all members to use their influence in their electorates to put across the message of safety during this Christmas and New Year holiday period. The Division of Health Education in my department is conducting an awareness campaign among adults and children throughout the State, and I hope that all honourable members will reinforce this campaign as they tour their electorates. Let us be absolutely frank. Christmas and New Year could prove to be among the blackest on record unless all Queenslanders make a determined effort not to let this happen.

According to official statistics, more fatal road accidents happen on Saturday than any other day of the week, and both Christmas Day and New Year's Day will fall on Saturday. An appeal at this time is not only relevant but important, as last month 59 people died on our roads—a rise of nearly 50 per cent compared with the corresponding period last year.

But a safety-awareness campaign touches not only on road safety but also safety in the water, in the sun, camping and in

and around the home. Accidental drownings have doubled in the last five years. Drowning is one of many safety problems that take numerous lives during the holiday period, and it indicates the need for a positive accident-awareness campaign during Christmas and the New Year. Ninety-seven people drowned last year, and 33 in the first quarter of this year.

From this week, Brisbane-based health education officers are visiting about 150 caravan parks from Coolangatta to Hervey Bay to bring the Government's safety message to caravan park owners and residents. They will distribute thousands of pamphlets on how to survive in water, fire dangers in tents and caravans, marine stingers, first aid hints, rescue breathing and the dangers of sunbaking. Community health officers in Rockhampton and Townsville will extend the campaign in their area of control.

The task is by no means that of the health education officers alone. Parents must teach their children safety rules and survival tactics in water. These include swimming within one's own depth and ability, and not swimming alone.

With the school holidays starting next week, children can be expected on the road in greater numbers. Because of this, people must be conscious that children will be out and about at all hours of the day and motorists must be wary of them.

The Government urges parents to explain to children the dangers associated with the holiday period. These include playing on rocky overhangs or sandy cliffs and digging tunnels or caves in sandhills.

Another problem facing the Health Department and the Government is the incidence of skin cancer and skin diseases in this State. A good suntan is almost every Australian's dream. But let us not turn it into a nightmare. We should sunbathe, not sunbake. The safe time for a tan is before 10 in the morning and after half-past 2 in the afternoon. Start with a 10 to 15 minute exposure and gradually increase it each day. Sunburn creams will be handy. Fair-haired or freckled people should wear hats and shirts. Infants can be exposed to the sun, but only for a few minutes. It is vital that children should be protected because it takes several years before skin cancer manifests itself.

Surf life-savers treat more than 3,000 people each year for sunburn, cuts and bruises. I sincerely hope this number can be lowered. In fact I am confident the number can be reduced if people are reminded of these dangers. The number of children who receive cut feet because of the dangerous abuse of bottles and glass is absolutely incredible.

An average of 800 serious rescues are carried out by life-savers each year, and unless people begin to wake up to the danger,

the help they expect can come too late. It is important that we as a Government and the elected members of this Parliament urge people to bathe only at patrolled beaches and between the flags. Children should be reminded not to wander off alone. Most drownings occur through people bathing in secluded and unsupervised areas. It is essential that people have a knowledge of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. First-aid associations, the National Heart Foundation and other bodies have given mouth-to-mouth resuscitation lectures throughout the State this year.

People going boating should make sure that life-jackets for everyone are in the boat before sailing off. The boat should not be overloaded or taken out in bad weather. Young children should not be allowed to go out in boats or canoes alone.

People on holidays should be sure that food is not contaminated. I believe that the pamphlets we have produced will assist in this direction. Other holiday hazards are candles or kerosene lanterns in caravans. People should make sure that gas-operated equipment does not leak and that all taps are turned off immediately after use.

I am sure that some honourable members will think that I am saying a lot of simple things, but it is unbelievable how many simple matters cause death, particularly over holiday periods.

Young children should never be left alone in a caravan. Because of the confined space in caravans and tents, extra care should be taken to keep matches, detergents, medicines and fuel well out of their reach. The commonest cause of death of children is accident as a result of carelessness.

Particular care should be taken when using gas, spirit burners and open fires because children are more liable to scalds and burns in the relaxed holiday atmosphere.

Starting later this month a film crew from the Division of Health Education will conduct public screenings in parks and council open areas along the total coast from Coolangatta to Hervey Bay. The films will include the hazards of hitch-hiking, boating safety, modern beach wear and attitudes to correct sunbathing, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and road safety.

I appreciate the support of local councils in taking part in the campaign, which is a community project highlighting the need for an awareness of the dangers and acting to overcome them.

Information on holiday hazards and how to cope with them is freely available from my department. I have arranged for copies to be delivered to every honourable member this morning for use in his electorate office. Further copies will be available.

If as a result of these efforts this year we can save the life of one child or one adult in this State, then our campaign will have been worth while. Let us all work to make this a safe holiday period for all Queenslanders.

#### INTERNATIONAL OPAL PTY. LTD.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (12.53 p.m.): I rise to speak on a matter of vital importance in view of certain information supplied to me. It pertains to a company known as International Opal Pty. Ltd. I hope that the Minister for Justice will take particular note of my remarks because they are vital to the people of Queensland. Reports have been forthcoming from Sydney that this company has fleeced Australians in New South Wales and Queensland of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

I have been told about a report from the Consumer Protection Division of the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office which has been sent to Australian authorities. I do not know whether a copy of it has been sent to Corporate Affairs here, but it is a matter that the Minister should look at very carefully. Australia has been warned in that report about the insidious fraud of the company's operations. The company gets its victims to pay \$6,850 for opal-grinding machinery. In turn the people who enter into this on a subcontracting basis lose money because they are unable to cut the impossibly high number of opals required under the contract.

The information supplied indicates that the company has fleeced people in California of hundreds of thousands of dollars and that it is now operating in New South Wales and Queensland. A thought is that it is registered in Queensland. I ask the Minister to find out whether International Opal Pty. Ltd. is registered in Queensland. I would like to know whether the directors are John Donald Morrison, Donald William McGregor, Kevin Keefe, and Walter Sydney Chamberlain. We have a right to know exactly what is going on here.

We have heard so much talk about white-collar crime in Queensland and we have heard the Minister for Justice say that he will do something about it. I believe that he is at least trying to do something about it. However, stringent restrictions are called for not only on firms that operate in Australia and in Queensland but also on those from overseas that come here and make huge rip-offs. Problems have arisen with Dare to be Great, with pyramid selling, with house-cladding groups and with direct selling groups—all of which have come from America. They employ high-pressure sales techniques and rip off hundreds of thousands of dollars.

A lot of the information that I have been given could be hearsay, but I am told that it has been passed on from America to the Australian authorities. I want to know whether these firms are operating in Queensland and are registered in Queensland.

We have been told that they have taken hundreds of thousands of dollars from ordinary people. The Leader of the Opposition said that he thought he saw a recent advertisement inviting women and ordinary people

to enter into a contract to buy this machinery and to undertake to cut opals. On the surface, that sounds all right, but if the Californian authorities are correct we need to take some action to protect the people. Someone with a few thousand dollars that he wants to invest might see this offer as one way of earning money. However, under the contract that he enters into he stands to make no profit whatever and, on top of that, to lose his investment.

I intended to raise this matter this morning by way of a question, but as there was not the opportunity to do so I now ask the Minister for Justice whether the company that I have named is operating in Queensland, whether it is registered in Queensland and whether the persons I have named are involved. Has he been warned by the authorities, either Australian or American, of this company's activities?

It is already reported that the company stands to make a profit of nearly \$2,500,000 unless its operations are immediately brought to a halt. This State has the necessary law to enable it to overcome this problem and to close down the company's operations. The company laws are quite tough, but they are not implemented. I ask the Minister for Justice to investigate this matter immediately and to tell us what is going on. I want him to do something to put an end to the operations of these white-collar crooks.

#### BEEF CATTLE INDUSTRY

**Mr. GLASSON** (Gregory) (12.57 p.m.): In the remaining few minutes I want to elaborate on the points made by the honourable member for Callide concerning the cattle industry. Regulations have been introduced to restrict the sale of cattle from my area. At present the cattle industry is faced with high road and rail freights, amounting in my area to approximately \$13 a head on cattle consigned to Brisbane. I am pleased to see that the Minister for Primary Industries is taking steps to safeguard the future of the cattle industry. Nevertheless from 31 December new regulations will allow cattlemen in my area to sell their cattle only to the meat companies. This will eliminate nearly all competition.

Last week's prices at Cannon Hill per pound and per kilo of cow and bullock meat show that the margin is an average of 5c on bullock beef and 4c on cow beef. On a 700 kg bull that represents a profit of \$28 to \$30. The implementation of the regulations, together with freight costs, will entail an additional cost of \$30, thereby wiping out any profit that might be obtained.

The logical thing to do would be to conduct all slaughter sales in western centres, such as Quilpie. It is on the fringe of the area inside the barrier fence and is the ideal centre for kill-only sales. These regulations

will result in the closure of the yards at Quilpie and will force three agents out of the town. The main effect will be on Quilpie, but Winton, which draws large numbers of sale cattle from Quilpie, and, to a lesser extent, Longreach and Cunnamulla will also be affected.

If a buyer is taken out to look at a mob of mixed cattle in the paddock, he might be interested only in the dear beef portion of the mob and totally uninterested in the cow beef and yearling beef. What happens to the producer? He is forced to take whatever price the meat company offers him. He will be told when he will be able to forward his stock to market. The whole concept of competition and supply and demand has been lost. I might add that it is this State's prime beef that we are talking about. As I have said on many occasions, the best natural fattening area in Queensland is in the channel country. I request that serious consideration be given to revoking these regulations until some more positive steps are taken.

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

### GOVERNORS' PENSIONS BILL

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (2.15 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

I was very happy, of course, that the Leader of the Opposition and members generally accepted the principle of the Bill and what it means.

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba) (2.16 p.m.): I quite understand what the Premier has in mind in this Bill. As the Leader of the Opposition said in the introductory debate, we support the principle that Governors, once they have held that high office, should not have to go back into the work-force. Opposition members support that principle completely. We also understand the reason why there is no need for us to look after people who have been appointed from the British Isles (Imperial appointments), who because of their standing have other pension arrangements. After all, their term of office in Australia as Governor is only for a limited period—five years, 10 years or whatever it may be.

However, I am rather concerned about the use of particular words in the Bill. I ask the Premier why the words "born in Australia" have been used. Without going into details, I point out that both the Premier and I would be excluded because neither of us was born in Australia, not that I would ever aspire to the position of Governor. Whether the Premier would or not is for him

to decide. I am serious on this point—though perhaps not as it relates to the Premier and me. Our time is probably past. However, thousands and thousands of good young people in this nation of ours today were born outside Australia. They came here with their parents. By using that phrase the Government is excluding them, if they ever attained the high office of Governor, from the pension arrangement envisaged in the Bill.

I am not particularly keen on amending Bills to suit the individual once it is found that he has been excluded through some lack of thought, defect in drafting or something else. Therefore I am suggesting to the Premier that the Bill be amended. We do not have the numbers to amend it. However, I could achieve exactly the same result by having his officers consider using the term that the Governor must be an Australian citizen of some period or standing. After all, people of 21 or 22 years, whether male or female, are not appointed to the position. It is usually someone of mature age and, because of that, we do not want them to work again in the normal work-force after they have completed their term of office.

By using such a phrase as that or, say, "lived in Australia all his adult life", we would show some concern for the children of migrants who have made their home here and reared and educated their children here. After all, their children could be elected to our Parliament and hold the high office of chief public servant, yet we exclude them from the provisions of this Bill if they attain the office of Governor. They would be refused this pension entitlement purely because of those words "born in Australia".

There could be another circumstance (and I know of such a case) of a young family travelling overseas and the wife delivering a child while out of Australia. Strictly speaking, according to this Bill, that child would be excluded from the pension provision of this Bill, yet its parents and grandparents were Australians in the full sense of the word.

**Mr. Aikens:** The Government would bring down an amending Bill to cover that.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I am saying that I do not like the idea of bringing down amending Bills to meet individual cases. Let us put this one right. I am not opposed to what the Premier is trying to do, if I correctly understand the speech he made at the introductory stage. I suggest that this is the time to amend the clause. Progress could be reported for a short space of time to allow the Premier's officers to look at it. As far as I am concerned, there need be no further debate on the matter. I repeat that the use of the word "born" twice in clause 2 excludes all children born outside this nation of ours.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (2.21 p.m.): The underlying principle of this Bill is all wrong. It is based on snobbery and

anything based on snobbery is anathema to me. We have two groups of employees. The fattest and best paid of all receive a pension. I would have no objection if they were included in some superannuation scheme. Judges of both the District Courts and the Supreme Court receive a pension. They do not pay a cent into the pension scheme or fund. There is no superannuation fund for them. When they retire after giving whatever service they are pleased to give in whatever way they are pleased to give it, they go off according to their terms of office on 30, 40, 50 or 60 per cent of the salaries they received when they finished serving in that capacity. This is all wrong.

I suppose it is true to say that a Supreme Court judge pays the same income tax as any other person receiving the same salary unless he diddles his income tax—and some of them would be pretty good at that because they came from the ranks of barristers who are good at any fiddling that goes on. At least he does pay income tax. Judges face up to their share of financial responsibilities for the running of the State and the Commonwealth.

Governors pay no income tax. The Governor's salary is completely free of income tax or any other charge made by the Crown. The Crown cannot tax the Crown. Whilst I have been in this Parliament I have seen Governors spring, shall I say, from being very lowly paid people. When I came into this Parliament Sir Leslie Wilson was the Governor of the State. He received £3,000 or \$6,000 a year and I think another \$500 a year as the salary for his aide-de-camp—and nothing else. Now, the salaries of everybody whom the Governor employs are paid. I do not know what the Governor's office costs per year; probably it is the best part of \$250,000. The point I am making is that the Governor pays no income tax. His salary is completely free of all the charges and taxation that are imposed on every other citizen of this State. Because of that I see no reason at all why he should be paid any pension.

As a matter of fact, if it were not for the hoo-ha being engaged in by the A.L.P. about the Governor's salary and a few other things, I would call for a division on the second reading of this Bill. Nevertheless, I want to place on record that I oppose this Bill. It is based on snobbery, which is anathema to me, and it is wrong in principle.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (2.24 p.m.), in reply: I appreciate the remarks of the two speakers. I do not agree with my good and learned friend from North Queensland that the measure is based on snobbery. It is part of our constitutional way of life, and we have been fortunate in the Governors whom we have had over the years.

**Mr. Aikens:** Why don't you embrace them in a superannuation scheme to which they contribute money?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The same principle applies to our judges. Perhaps there is some justification for that suggestion. I do not think that now is the appropriate time to take it up.

I agree with the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and his suggestion about a small amendment. Perhaps we are not seeing quite far enough into the future by suggesting that only people born in Australia should be entitled to a pension. As he indicated, it would preclude both him and me from a pension if either of us ever became Governor, and that might be a tragedy. I am going to ask my Parliamentary Counsel to draft an amendment to cover that. Perhaps we should deal with the second reading as such and present the amendment in Committee.

Motion (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

## SUPERANNUATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (2.36 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

When introducing the Bill I stated the main features of the proposed amendments. I also indicated that a number of amendments were needed to facilitate administration of the two Acts.

The important provisions mentioned in my first reading were—

- (i) that widow's pensions be increased;
- (ii) that children's benefit be doubled;
- (iii) that contributors' pensions be calculated on the basis of a two-year final average salary rather than the present three-year final average salary;
- (iv) that the waiting time for a contributor on sick leave without pay to qualify for incapacity benefit be reduced from two months to two weeks; and
- (v) that the interest rate be increased to 6½ per cent per annum to meet the increase in benefits already mentioned.

As I previously have made known to honourable members, the object of this Bill is to improve the State Service Superannuation Scheme within the limitation of the cost burden which the Government can reasonably be expected to shoulder, particularly in the present economic climate. I believe the amendments detailed in the Bill now before the House will benefit as many members and their dependants as possible and still keep the cost to the Crown within reasonable limits.

The Leader of the Opposition indicated in his reply that he fully supported the improvements that will accrue to members of the scheme as a result of the Bill. He further remarked that female rates of contribution

should be reviewed. This is a matter that is marked down for review in conjunction with other issues raised on behalf of female contributors.

The statement that a substantial number of public servants have either no membership or do not have full benefits is a rather extravagant claim. I can assure the honourable members present that the numbers are very very few indeed. This also is a matter that has been earmarked for further consideration.

Regarding the financing of the Consumer Price Index increases, so far as I am aware, the majority of Government superannuation schemes in Australia apportion the charge between the members and the employer, which is the method adopted in the Queensland scheme.

The honourable member for Isis expressed disappointment that optional retirement without loss of benefits at age 60 was not included in the Bill. This also is one of a number of matters which have been deferred for further investigation and report.

As I have previously remarked, the introduction of this legislation will provide some real increases in the rates of benefits for public servants, and I await the comments of honourable members during the second-reading debate.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (2.29 p.m.): As we said at the introductory stage of the Bill, we have no opposition to it.

I welcome the assurance that consideration has been given to the position of women in the Public Service who are required to make larger contributions under the superannuation scheme than male public servants. The Premier's answer to my suggestion that there is a small number of public servants who either have no benefits or have part benefits seems to me to indicate even more forcefully that we ought to be able to give that small number the opportunity to join the fund.

The idea of the fund was to benefit its members. Those people who missed the deadline or who did not take out their full entitlements for some reason ought to be given the opportunity to ensure that when they retire, if they have made their payments, they receive their full benefits. As I say, we have no opposition to the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 51, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, by leave, read a third time.



CROWN APPOINTMENTS  
DECLARATORY BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (2.33 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to declare with respect to the holding of certain appointments under the Crown by existing members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.”

The principles of the Bill are to declare that certain Crown appointments are not to be taken as offices or places of profit under the Crown. As I have at different times been accused by honourable members opposite of having certain interests and so on—they have always been quite wrong and false, as honourable members would know—I want to make it quite clear that this Bill has absolutely nothing to do with me or anyone associated with me in any shape or form.

Subsection (1) of section 5 of the Officials in Parliament Act 1896–1971 provides in effect that any person holding any office or place of profit under the Crown or having certain pensions from the Crown should not be capable of being elected or, if elected, shall not be capable of sitting or voting as a member of the Assembly. However, the section goes on in subsection (2) to provide that such persons may be elected but the effect is to vacate the particular office held at the time of the election. We all know that down through the years there has been a degree of uncertainty about the meaning of the term “office or place of profit”. The term is a most vague one and such limited authorities as there are have not been very helpful in giving clear expression to its extent. However, there are authorities which do give it a very wide and, in fact, startling application in that it has been held that where fees are attached to an office and the appointment to the office is by the Crown or a Minister of the Crown, the appointee is the holder of an office of profit within the meaning of the section, even if such fees are not accepted. It is an extraordinary situation.

Occasions have arisen in recent times, as honourable members are aware, when a special Bill has had to be brought into the House because the position of a member has been placed in jeopardy under this particular section—for instance, the position of my friend and colleague Mr. Eric Deeral, the honourable member for Cook. A number of other Bills have been introduced for different reasons during my time in this Chamber—Bills relating to the late Vince Jones, Ray Smith and others.

**Mr. Jones:** One at the beginning of the session, and one at the end of the session.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Yes. The situation is that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the other honourable member are not receiving fees as members of the Senate of the University of Queensland at the moment. But who knows what will happen? Next week the Senate might introduce a rule or regulation that enables members to be paid. Even if members do not accept the fee, they may still be in a similar position.

**Mr. Marginson:** When you say “the other honourable member”, do you mean the honourable member for Toowong?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Yes, my good friend and colleague the honourable member for Toowong. I would not like my colleague or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to be placed in a difficult position simply because the senate might decree that members of the senate be paid a fee, or to be placed in that situation even if they do not accept a fee. The Government wants to clean all these matters up.

**Mr. Jones:** I think you are bracketing those two members unnecessarily.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Well, they are in the tin, too, as well as everybody else, or they could very easily be.

**Mr. Jones:** I think that is a red herring.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I could take it much further than that if the honourable member wishes me to. As I said, similar situations have arisen from time to time. Many times during my 30 years in Parliament special Bills have had to be introduced to cover certain positions.

Of course, it is not intended that circumstances, standards or requirements will be changed in any shape or form, but these cases do arise. Members of hospitals boards and other boards have been appointed with the approval of the Government and have quite unwittingly accepted a fee. Honourable members will recall questions being asked recently in relation to the Minister for Survey and Valuation. Other cases may well arise in which people have unwittingly accepted appointments in good faith to boards, committees and various statutory organisations with the approval of the Government and, indeed, the Parliament.

It has been considered advisable to put at rest any fears that such members have as to the validity of their continuing as members of Parliament. I wish to make it quite clear that, in so doing, there is no intention of abrogating any principle that may be implicit in section 5 of the Officials in Parliament Act. In fact, I have asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General to examine the position with a view to introducing legislation in the new year designed to put the matter in a proper and more realistic form than presently exists.

The present Bill is designed solely to clarify the position of existing members who may, in one way or another, be in some jeopardy, or be thought to be in some jeopardy, because of any bona fide acceptance of an appointment or who have been given any authority to perform any functions. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

**Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (2.39 p.m.):** It is not my intention to reply to the Premier on all matters that he raised concerning this legislation. The honourable member for Archerfield will be replying to most of them.

I enter the debate because of an article that I read in a newspaper today which suggested that the Bill was coming before the Parliament and that a Government member and a back-bench member of the Opposition would be covered by it. For the record, I point out that what the Premier said indicates clearly that I was the member of the Opposition referred to and that the honourable member for Toowong was the member of the Government. I state for the benefit of the Committee and anyone else who is interested that I have not received any financial reimbursement, expenses, fees or anything else as a member of the senate of the University of Queensland. I want to make that clear because certain things have been said and certain reports made about this.

Let us take the position with regard to the appointment to the senate, and let us make it very clear where we all stand. This Parliament passed the University of Queensland Act Amendment Act 1973, No. 74, which reconstituted the senate. Because of the interest of the State Government, irrespective of its political colour, in university education this Parliament decided on the initiative of the Government that the senate should consist of a newly designated set of people. Among those it appointed were 11 persons, "two of whom shall be members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, appointed by the Governor in Council."

**Mr. Lickiss:** There is nothing wrong with that.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I know there is nothing wrong with it. I supported it. That is section 6. At a later stage I was approached by the then Minister for Education and asked if I would care to be a nominee. I agreed. I believe that the same procedure applied to the other nominee, but he can speak for himself, as I have no doubt he will. It is already covered by an Act of Parliament. I hope that every time we put someone on a board we do not have to start worrying about the position of that person appointed by the Governor in Council in conformity with an Act of Parliament. The Act did not say that any 11 people could be nominated by the Crown. It provided that two of them were to be members of the Legislative Assembly. The Government does not carry out the terms of its own Act.

**Mr. Aikens:** Are you paid?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** No.

**Mr. Aikens:** What is all the fuss about?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** The Premier mentioned my name in his introduction.

**Mr. Knox:** Does it say that by accepting that office you are prejudiced?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** No, of course it doesn't. Any suggestion that anyone has made, including the Deputy Premier and Leader of the Liberal Party, that my position and the position of the honourable member for Toowong were in jeopardy to the extent of our losing our seat in this Chamber is complete nonsense. Such a suggestion was made for purposes other than to try to protect Mr. Porter and me. I believe the legal interpretation would be that we are fully protected by the Act, even if the senate at some future date decided to pay money. Whether or not I stayed on the senate once money was paid would be a decision I would make at the appropriate time. At the present time there is no money. It is an interesting position to hold and I thoroughly enjoy it, but no-one can say that I am getting anything out of it other than personal satisfaction.

**Mr. Lickiss:** It is also to protect you from the fact that you resumed as a member of the Education Department after you were elected to Parliament.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I didn't resume.

**Mr. Lickiss:** You were advised and you went and put your resignation in after.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** To know that information the honourable gentleman would have to look at records that would be confidential. I don't want to pursue the point. It was never raised in this Chamber.

**Mr. Lickiss:** That's right. It could be raised.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** What? I didn't go back to work. No time-book shows anything at that time. As for doing a job, I was the only person in Queensland at that time who could correct about four instruction papers. That I did in my time—my own time! I know that the honourable gentleman still carries a little bit of a grudge because I beat him in that 1957 election when he was the Liberal candidate. That is why he raises it here. I don't think I would be breaking a confidence in saying that being beaten on that occasion was perhaps the best thing that happened to him. If he had won the seat he would have lost it three years later, and would not have had the opportunity of coming in as the member for what is considered to be a blue-ribbon seat. Don't let us start going back into the past. Now

that the honourable gentleman has said that, I ask how many other members in this Chamber have had their private education file and any other private file when they were employees of this State made available to other members to look at?

**Mr. LICKISS:** I rise to a point of order. I have not sighted any private file at all. I happen to know from people who were down there that Mr. Houston was contacted on the Monday after he had been elected to Parliament and asked whether he knew it could be an office of profit under the Crown, and he was told he ought to beat it and put in his resignation.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. Marginson** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The member for Wolston should understand that when I am asked to adjudicate on a point of order I will not tolerate interjections. He should also know that it is an ethic of Parliament that when the presiding officer is on his feet silence is maintained. The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has given an explanation, and I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to accept it.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I will accept his explanation, Mr. Hewitt, but I would not say that I agree with it. That is a different matter altogether. However, the point is of no consequence, so I do not want to labour it. The important thing is that I have been in Parliament ever since and I think I helped a few people pass their final examinations. I have no regrets at all on that score.

I can remember that the late Cec Carey, a former member of this Parliament, was also a member of the Trotting Board. He had tremendous knowledge of trotting and in the early stages represented the industry on the Gold Coast. No-one queried his appointment to the board. I do not know whether he received any money for holding that position.

My final point is that if the Government is starting to do some cleaning up it should clean up everything and ensure that appointments to boards created by the Government are looked at in a different light from other matters that might be raised in this debate. As the Premier has mentioned my name, I want to make my position clear.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (2.47 p.m.): I am particularly pleased that this issue has been raised legislatively. I have been raising it for the past 30 years. Of course, because in the past all the A.L.P. barristers in this House were in on the same putrid racket, I did not receive one modicum of support from the Labor Party. With its men enjoying that putrid racket, it had nothing to say about it.

The Premier mentioned some members of this House who, as barristers, accepted briefs from the Crown. Some of them made a tremendous amount of money every year by way of fees paid to them by the Crown while they were members of Parliament. Names that come readily to mind are Copley, Connolly, Smith—what a little beauty Smith was!—Bennett and Roberts. If I were to name all of them, I would exhaust the time allotted to me. A host of members of this House picked up thousands of dollars by way of legal fees paid to them as barristers acting on behalf of the Crown. The only two barristers who, during my term of office, did not take part in this racket and did not get on the gravy train were the present senior puisne judge, Sir Charles Wanstall, and Fred Paterson.

From Great Britain we have inherited two putrid institutions. The first is the university, which is far worse than the other. It is so putrid that it stinks to high heaven, yet no Government has the guts to do anything about it. The other is the legal and judicial system. Whilst we have knocked a few little bits of paint off the outside of that system, we have not cleansed it.

Today we are talking about the rotten, putrid, stinking racket involving members of the Queensland Parliament who, in addition to receiving their parliamentary salary, rake in as barristers hundreds of thousands of dollars per year by way of fees for representing the Crown not only in legal cases but also in judgments and opinions.

The most astonishing feature is that only barristers are exempt from the inhibition applying to offices of profit under the Crown. The law provides that the moment a member of this Parliament accepts 1c as payment for any job he does for the Crown his seat is automatically declared vacant. I have tried to have many barristers' seats declared vacant automatically, but I didn't get anywhere because, as I said, until now the A.L.P. has been right behind this putrid, stinking racket.

We have had solicitors in this Chamber. We have one now. If the honourable member for Brisbane did what the honourable member for Ashgrove has been doing since he came into this Parliament, the Brisbane seat would have automatically been declared vacant the moment he accepted 1c in payment as expenses for any legal services performed for the Crown. Any other member of this Assembly, irrespective of his trade, profession or calling, who had done one cent's worth of work for the Crown would have had his seat automatically declared vacant.

In 1950, my old mate Arthur Coburn, who had been my opponent in the elections of 1944 and 1947, was elected as the member for the new seat of Burdekin. He was elected on a Saturday. The figures went up on Saturday night. Although he

was obviously an easy winner, being an honest man, he thought that he could not leave his little school—I forget the name of it for the moment—and allow the kids to carry on until a new teacher was appointed. He went back to that school on the Monday. He said, "I'll be all right until the poll is officially declared." I heard of it and I rang him on the following Tuesday or Wednesday, I think. I said, "Arthur, get out of that school as quickly as you can. Get away from it. The Labor Party will fit you if you take one cent in salary for teaching at that school." Arthur Coburn took my advice and he got out of the school. He left the kiddies there on their own until another teacher was sent down. He would have been fitted, too. The Labor Party would have fitted him with it, despite the fact that Labor barristers in this House were picking up thousands of dollars every year.

We heard from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition something that I think should have been cleaned up. We fought for years to get direct representatives from this Parliament on the senate of the Queensland University and what passes for the senate of the James Cook University. The two people appointed as the direct representatives of this Parliament on the senate of the Queensland University are the honourable member for Bulimba and the honourable member for Toowong. They do not get one cent for serving their term as representatives of this Parliament. If they did, their seats could be declared vacant. They might get a drink of gin, a cucumber sandwich or something like that, but I do not regard that as constituting an office of profit under the Crown.

Talking about rackets, I invite honourable members to get out to the university and see the rackets and rorts that are being worked out there. No-one has any idea what goes on at a university or a college of advanced education until he makes some inquiries into it.

The whole putrid thing is this: nobody employs a barrister. We know, of course, that they rake in thousands and thousands of dollars a year for doing practically nothing—but nobody pays them. They are not employed by anybody. If anyone cares to look at the back of a barrister's gown, he will see in between his shoulders a little pocket. A matchbox could be put in it, if it was squeezed in. The client is supposed to sneak up behind him after a case and place his donation in that little pocket. I told Colin Bennett when he was a member of this Parliament that when he was called to the Bar in Brisbane he had that little pocket taken out and a sugar bag sewn in!

All barristers are the same. What a rotten bit of putrid dissimulation that is: nobody pays a barrister. He is not employed by anyone. Barristers can do anything they

like. I have seen a barrister in the Supreme Court in North Queensland fall down drunk in the body of the court during the progress of a case—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Unless that barrister was a member of this Legislative Assembly, the honourable member's comments are hardly relevant.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Mr. Hewitt, he might have been. You did not give me a chance to get to that point. He might have been.

All the judge could do was adjourn the court. Of course, the payments for what they call refreshers and all of that would have gone on all the time.

Barristers can even sell their clients out. I have no doubt that some of them who have been members of this Assembly, taking both their salary and the fees they earned, would have sold their clients out. A barrister is under no obligation to represent a person, even though he might pay him—and he doesn't pay him. Don't think I am silly in saying that, Mr. Hewitt. That is what the barristers say: nobody pays them. When a person wants to brief a barrister—and the same applies to barristers who are members of this Assembly—he does not pay him. A solicitor arranges that. Sometimes the solicitor slices off a bit of the fee for himself. That is what is called dichotomy.

Cases have gone to the court when clients have paid a solicitor a substantial sum as a brief fee for a barrister and the solicitor has hung onto quite a lot of it for himself. When the case got to court, it was ruled that the client could not get his money back from the solicitor; he had paid the solicitor and what happened between the solicitor and the barrister was a matter for the court.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I would be pleased if the honourable member would address his remarks to the Bill.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I am; my word I am.

This is the whole putrid position. We know that barristers can do anything. Recently in Townsville three prominent barristers—some of them might or might not have been members of this Assembly—raked in thousands of dollars a year in fees from the Crown. They went to the Magistrates Court in Townsville and created a disgraceful exhibition. All the magistrate could say to them very kindly and avuncularly was, "Be quiet, boys." The point is, Mr. Hewitt, that if you, I, or anybody else had been responsible for half that disturbance or loutism in the court, we would have been arrested and sent to gaol for contempt of court.

It is about time we did something about it. I intend to vote against the Bill. I will divide the Committee if nobody else does, because I think that this issue should be

brought to a head. I see no reason why barrister members of this Parliament should remain in the outrageously privileged position that they have enjoyed for years. They can be elected to this Assembly and even become Ministers of the Crown and I have no doubt that even a Minister of the Crown could go along and accept brief fees and refreshers and all of the other payments from the Crown to represent it in court. It is manifestly unjust and manifestly inequitable. It is something we inherited from Great Britain and we should have the courage and the temerity to do something about it.

At last we have reached a certain position. I do not know whether it was you, Mr. Hewitt, who said that time has always vindicated me. It is so sapient that you could have said it because you are noted for your sapient remarks. I am being vindicated now. I have fought for over 30 years for the right of every member of this Parliament to be placed on the same footing as barrister members of this Parliament. I do not care on what footing we are all placed. I do not care whether none of us can accept an office of profit under the Crown or can do no work for the Crown.

I am not going to embarrass the honourable member for Cairns, but he is a very fine amateur gardener, and deservedly so. If he said one day, "I am not doing anything; it is raining up North. I will get a job on the gardening staff at Parliament House and pick up a few dollars," and if he earned any money, as he would, his seat would be declared vacant immediately because he would have taken money from the Crown for work he did for the Crown.

The honourable member for Ashgrove and any other barrister who happens to be a member of this Parliament can put out their hands for thousands of dollars a year. They can be paid it and, because of this putrid tradition that barristers are a class apart from anybody else, nothing can be done about it.

On this occasion I understand that the honourable member for Ashgrove acted as a Crown prosecutor. I do not know very much about the law though I would know more about it than anyone else in this Chamber and more than 95 per cent of lawyers, and I know that before a person can represent the Crown as a Crown prosecutor he has to receive a commission; he has to be asked specifically to do it and certain rules and regulations are set down.

I did not realise that any barrister member of this Parliament would be so gullible or so stupid or would be so contemptuous of the laws of this Parliament as to act as a Crown prosecutor. Scores of them have acted as counsel for this, that and something else. They have appeared before the High Court, the Full Court and have given judgments and rulings. They have reaped a

tremendous amount of money from doing those things. But this is the first time that a member of Parliament has received thousands of dollars from the Crown for legal services rendered as a Crown prosecutor. It took that incident alone to put a bomb under the tails of the members of the A.L.P.

That was the only bomb that was ever detonated. They have sat there in absolutely craven silence all the years that I have been in this House, and they have seen and have known of A.L.P. members of this House who have reaped thousands and thousands of dollars as counsel for the Crown and for various instrumentalities in various cases and they have done nothing about it. They haven't had the guts to do something about it, if I may use the vulgar vernacular. The letters A.L.P. stand not for the Australian Labor Party but, as we all know, for the Academics and Lawyers' Party. Because no member of the A.L.P. has ever acted as a Crown prosecutor, of course, they have never been prepared to say anything about it. But the moment somebody else acts as a Crown Prosecutor, they move.

What is the difference? What is the difference between acting as a Crown prosecutor, taking thousands of dollars in fees from the Crown, and acting as counsel for the Crown, taking thousands of dollars in fees from the Crown as its counsel in court in a capacity other than that of Crown prosecutor? It is all so hypocritical, it is all so dissimulatory to me; I think it stinks to high heaven. If we do not clean it up now, we are not worthy of being called the representatives of the ordinary people. Let us make one rule for all; either allow every member of this House to accept fees from the Crown for services rendered to the Crown or stop every member of this House from accepting fees from the Crown for services rendered to the Crown. If we are going to perpetuate this putrid, stinking system of stopping every other member of this House from accepting fees from the Crown for services rendered to the Crown and of exempting only the barristers who are members of this House, we are not worthy of the term politicians; we are not worthy of the term ordinary men.

**Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (3.2 p.m.):** I think that there is very little value for any of us in considering this matter on party-political lines. What we are involved with here is a simple matter of principle. I must say that I regard the introduction of this form of enabling Bill as somewhat distasteful under the circumstances. I am quite sure that the Premier does not enjoy the role that he plays in this, either, because no matter what is said to suggest that many members quite innocently have had the validity of their places in the House put into question, I think it is impossible to ignore the very simple fact that the Bill appears almost immediately after the role of a member has been brought into public prominence. I am sure that this is how the public will regard it.

So this is where I come into the act. Like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, when I find myself as a member of the senate of the University of Queensland tending to be regarded as one who is threatened by this prohibition on holding offices of profit under the Crown, I find it not only distasteful but more than embarrassing.

**Mr. Aikens:** How much does the university pay the honourable member for South Brisbane as a lecturer at the university?

**Mr. PORTER:** I have no idea. That is in a different category, and that is his own concern. I want to make it quite clear that as far as I am concerned I believe that the role of somebody who accepts an appointment to perform a public service at no benefit whatever—indeed, as Mr. Houston will know, at the expense of considerable personal wear and tear and inconvenience—this is in no way comparable with the parliamentary member who is paid for rendering professional services on behalf of the Crown. I do not think that we do any service to all of us collectively by trying to lump them together.

With the member for Bulimba, I was appointed by the Government to the university senate. We get nothing at all for it; nor would I want it, seek it, or ever accept it. Instead, we attend meetings which are not wildly exciting, running from 5.30 p.m. to midnight, quite often, and we give what service we can on numerous senate committees. To say that in any sense this totally non-paid service is some sort of office of profit under the Crown or can be equated to work done on behalf of the Crown is absolute nonsense. If legal opinion is that it is comparable, and apparently this is the way in which the Bill is framed, I think it will only strengthen the conclusion of many people that the law is an ass, and it is an ass to think this.

Let me say that I am one of those people—and there are many of us in this Chamber; the overwhelming majority of us—who have never received any payment, fee, or any other form of remuneration from the Crown for services rendered anywhere at any time outside my normal parliamentary work and its fixed emoluments. I just do not approve of the practice of people who are parliamentary members doing things for the Crown, and I certainly do not want anything said or done in this place that tends to suggest I am in that category. Rather than put through an enabling Bill to validate payments already made, although I suppose this is necessary, I think it would make much better sense if all of us in future accepted as a proper principle for this Government and future Governments that fees for other than parliamentary work or any payments beyond parliamentary emoluments should neither be offered to members nor accepted by them.

No matter what the practice may have been in years past, and all Governments have been culpable in this regard, I do not think

it should be allowed to continue in this day and age. We members of Parliament are very open to critical cynicism at the best of times. People are always willing to believe the worst of us, and I think we should be extremely careful not to so act as to create the worst of times for ourselves in terms of public evaluation of our role. Of course I will not vote against the Bill, although the honourable member for Townsville South suggested that he will divide the House, but I regret the necessity for the Bill's appearance.

I certainly would not have spoken on it but for the suggestion that in some strange way it is being introduced to help me; that I am a beneficiary of it. I want to vigorously establish that I do not regard myself as a beneficiary of it. I do not want its protection; I am quite certain I do not need the dubious protection that the Bill as it is will provide for me. But above all, I do not intend to be used as a smokescreen or a stalking-horse to obscure any other purpose of the Bill. The Bill should stand on its own requirements. I see no reason in the world why it should not.

For my part, the Officials in Parliament Act is quite clear, and it would need a very convoluted mind to suggest it is not clear, because section 5 (1) says, "Any person holding any office or place of profit under the Crown . . ." Anybody who suggests it means that any person holding any office is in danger of being embargoed from holding a seat is, I think, deliberately misreading the words. Quite obviously, it means any person holding any office of profit or place of profit, because if it did not mean an office of profit, what in heaven's name would be the purpose of allowing it into an Act? If the purpose was not to ensure that somebody was not getting a payment which might prevent that member of Parliament from properly discharging his duty as a parliamentary member, then, of course, there would be no embargo at all. As I say, a piece of legal advice suggests a grey area here. In my mind, as I said before, this will only confirm in the public mind that the law tends to get very asinine at times, and we in this House who make laws should be very careful that we do not get swept along by this so-called expert legal opinion into making asses of ourselves at the same time. I would say without doubt that where an office is no more than a service carrying no rewards, either real or in kind, then there cannot possibly be a suggestion that it comes into the category into which those who accept fees may fall.

I say, finally, that I regret the introduction of the Bill. I am sure the Premier does not enjoy his task in putting it through the Committee, and I know that many here, even though they are not in any possible way involved in this so-called legal grey area, feel much the same about it as I do. It will be much better for all of us in future if we act

so as to avoid these enabling, white-washing Bills, and ensure that nobody in any category is given any professional work on behalf of the Crown that requires extra-parliamentary payment at any time.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER** (Archerfield) (3.10 p.m.): Let me say at the outset that I find it passing strange to be in agreement with the honourable member for Toowong. It is well known in this Chamber that I represent the progressive forces in the community and the honourable member for Toowong represents the extreme reactionary forces in the community. Let me say that I, too, on behalf of the Opposition view with disgust and surprise the introduction of this enabling Bill to protect a shyster lawyer.

This session opened with a Bill introduced in great haste by the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads to get the member for Cook off the hook. Now we have a Bill introduced in the dying stages of this session designed to get a much bigger fish in the person of the Minister for Survey and Valuation off the hook. Why, in the dying hours of this session of Parliament, is this Bill before us?

**Mr. Campbell** interjected.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** The Minister is only a light-weight. He is an old man, and I do not want to waste time talking to a Minister who is in his dotage.

I am not a legal eagle, but obviously the Minister for Survey and Valuation has similar deficiencies in that regard. It is quite obvious that he was the devil's advocate in the case of Senator Mal Colston. Today, with the same inconsistency, he is attempting to defend himself. As I have said previously in this Chamber, if he defends himself in the manner in which he tried to defend the crooks in the building societies, he will defend himself very badly indeed.

Under our law, we need new legislation to protect the Minister for Survey and Valuation and that is why the Bill is being introduced today. He was not satisfied with his parliamentary salary and his parliamentary expenses; he needed something more. He became, with inadequacies already obvious in this Parliament, a Crown prosecutor with the necessary commission.

**Mr. Campbell:** What about Col Bennett?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Col Bennett is a member of the National Party. He is no concern of mine.

**Mr. Campbell:** He was a member of the Labor Party.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** He is a member of the National Party.

Temporarily or otherwise, to lawfully fulfil his office the member for Ashgrove took the money involved and was listed in a report tabled in this Chamber last week by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General for having done so. Let him deny that.

**Mr. Byrne:** Why are you reading that?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Go back to sleep! Do not provoke me.

As I was saying, since 1973 the member for Ashgrove has been engaged in an office of profit under the Crown and has received lucrative profits and considerable sums of money for services rendered to the Crown. His desire for personal gain was such that on 17 March this year, during the current session of the 41st Parliament of Queensland, he absented himself from this Chamber and, in doing so, abandoned the representation of his electorate. The exercise of his office of profit enabled the member to draw two salaries for 17 March.

It is quite interesting to note that I asked two questions in this Chamber of the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General. He deliberately avoided answering the first one, which asked whether the honourable member for Ashgrove had held two offices of profit under the Crown on 17 March, St. Patrick's Day—Glory be to God!—both of which were under the public purse, from which he was quite prepared to filch.

The proposed Bill attempts to legitimise Mr. Greenwood's taking of money under the counter. Clearly no Bill can hope to remove the duplicity and deceit of a man who dips twice daily into the public purse. The Minister for Survey and Valuation is a barrister at law—according to recent reports, he is still a barrister at law—who should know better than anyone the legal implications of his financial actions as a member of Parliament. His ability as a lawyer and as an aspiring Attorney-General must now clearly be in doubt. I think we all know that that is the position he desires in this Assembly. As a matter of fact, it was rather surprising to me that the honourable member for Ashgrove, after serving a short term in this Assembly, was promoted to Cabinet over long-serving members of Parliament with exceptional ability—men such as the honourable member for Chatsworth.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! That has nothing to do with the motion under consideration.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** His ability as an aspiring Attorney-General, as I said, must now clearly be in doubt. Just a year ago he acted as the devil's advocate, posing as a prosecutor in this Parliament, against Senator Mal Colston. Today honourable members are asked to rush legislation through this Assembly to protect him in his newly discovered role as the devil's receiver—this

member of Parliament who breached gratuity provisions that have prevailed for more than 100 years to line his pockets at public expense by \$20 to \$40 a week in addition to his parliamentary salary.

The honourable member for Cook committed what might be described as a minor indiscretion. There is some excuse for him because, as we all know, he is back in the dream-time; but there is no excuse for the honourable member for Ashgrove. He is a learned man and a barrister-at-law. He knew what he was doing, but he thought he could pull the wool over the eyes of the members of the Opposition. But of course he has not done so. Now he is on the hook, so the Premier has introduced this Bill to try to get him off the hook.

**Mr. Frawley:** The honourable member for Cook is going to point the bone at you.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I'm gone!

We now have the supposedly knowledgeable lawyer from Ashgrove in a major offence. It is a major offence. If justice were done his seat would be declared vacant and there would be a by-election for the seat of Ashgrove. Of course, we all know that this Government does not believe in justice.

I want to know where this abbreviation, prostitution and deceit of accepted parliamentary ethics for Government members will end. We have had Ministers of the Crown take preferential shares in Comalco. The Premier sought taxation redemption for gains made on an oil share transaction that was condemned by the High Court of Australia. In the next year will we be forced to pass another 60 or 70 Bills to allow members opposite in the Liberal and National Parties to keep their voracious appetites and monetary ambitions within the laws that have prevailed in Queensland for more than 100 years? The Opposition believes that in his answer to a question from me the Minister misled the House when he said that exemption existed.

**Mr. LICKISS:** I rise to a point of order. As a Minister of the Crown I take exception to the honourable member saying that I misled the House. It is offensive to me and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member will withdraw that statement.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I withdraw it. The question is in "Hansard", and honourable members can draw their own conclusions.

I ask the Minister for Justice now to show the precedent and to show the authority. If this century-old precedent existed, why was it necessary to push a special Bill

through this Parliament in 1964 in relation to Percy Raymund Smith, a then member of the Liberal Party?

**Mr. Lickiss:** That was because he was appointed Deputy Judge Advocate General.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Did he accept two salaries?

**Mr. Lickiss:** That was because he was appointed Deputy Judge Advocate General.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** But did he accept two salaries?

**Mr. Lickiss:** I am not aware of whether he accepted two salaries or not.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** If he accepted two salaries, in my opinion it was still wrong.

If this precedent existed, why is this legislation necessary today? It is a fact of life that almost every leading lawyer around Queensland believes that the Minister for Survey and Valuation has breached the trust placed in him by the people of Ashgrove and Queensland.

Looking at the papers tabled in the House we can see how payments to him from the Crown have skyrocketed since he was elected to Parliament. In 1970 he received a mere \$114.05. Since his election to this Parliament the rip-off from public funds has amounted to \$14,834.60.

**Mr. Greenwood:** Those figures are wrong.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Let the Minister deny them. I wouldn't believe anything he said. He's a shyster.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member will withdraw that remark.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I withdraw it.

In 1973 paper 346 showed that he received \$805. In 1974, the year he became a member of Parliament, paper 434 revealed that he received \$1,447.50. In 1975, after his first year in Parliament, he received \$6,109.60.

**Mr. Greenwood** interjected.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Those are the figures I have got.

**Mr. GREENWOOD:** I rise to a point of order. Those figures relate to fees paid to my brother, who is also of counsel and who also did Crown work. They do not all relate to me. The honourable member can be pardoned for his error in attributing them to me instead of to my brother. I assure him that those figures are quite wrong.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! All I can do under those circumstances is ask the honourable member to accept that explanation from the Minister.



**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** As a supposed gentleman and scholar I will accept it.

If that did occur it would certainly be a handsome kick-back arising out of his new-found position as a Government member. If he denies it, I will have to accept it. If I asked him how much he made, he wouldn't tell me. Because that man was servile to the Treasurer and former Attorney-General, he rewarded his toadiness by supplying him with briefs at up to \$300 a grab. I would like to hear the Minister for Survey and Valuation deny that when he speaks. The Government buys his votes. While Mr. Greenwood touts for prosecution briefs he is clearly under the patronage of his masters, who dole out the lucrative and sordid largess. Even more despicable is the fact that, while he parades around the courts as the poor man's prosecutor, in this Tory Government he deserts his constituents, absents himself from this Parliament and abandons his electorate for the sake of filthy lucre. He is known in certain political circles as Billy Bunter. In my youth I read Billy Bunter comics, and from my recollection he was a juvenile rogue, but he was honest; he was a mythical kid who certainly never depraved a Parliament.

In answer to my questions the Attorney-General alleged that, by some judicial magic, barristers are exempt from the office of profit laws of this State. If that is so, I agree with the honourable member for Townsville South that legislation should be introduced to prevent barristers from occupying seats in Parliament.

**Mr. Aikens:** Why didn't you support me over the last 30 years instead of waiting till now?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I have not been here for the past 30 years. At any rate, it is not a case of my supporting the member for Townsville South; rather it is the member for Townsville South supporting me. This Bill is being introduced as the result of questions that I asked in this Parliament.

Over the past 12 months the Opposition has achieved two firsts. One is the cleaning up of the building societies in Queensland; the other is the prevention of shysters taking advantage of our weak laws by holding offices of profit under the Crown.

**Mr. Katter:** Do you refer to bankruptcy as cleaning up? You are bankrupt, and I thought that might be what you meant.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** What an inane comment! All I can say to the honourable member is that it is quite obvious he fell off his father's camel when he was a baby.

The principle behind these laws is the prevention of dishonesty and patronage. Since my questions were asked in the House, my office has been inundated with telephone

calls from lawyers across the State, none of whom, I might add, agree with the Attorney-General's supposed exemption for barristers in Queensland.

I have cited authorities showing that a simple poundkeeper holds under the impounding Act an office of profit under the Crown and that a member of a rabbit board who is entitled to receive only travelling expenses also holds an office of profit under the Crown. If an Order in Council granting a barrister a Queen's commission to present and prosecute indictments before the Supreme Court of Queensland is correct, what is an office of profit under the Crown? I should like the Premier, in his reply, to define what he considers to be an office of profit under the Crown.

In answer to a question asked by me, the Attorney-General indicated that under section 5 of the Officials in Parliament Act Mr. Greenwood's office of profit may have been vacated on the day of his election to Parliament.

**Mr. Lickiss:** You can read the Act yourself.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Apparently the Attorney-General can't. I might have to give him some coaching in reading the Act.

If that is so, will the Attorney-General institute criminal proceedings against Mr. Greenwood pursuant to sections 96 and 97 of the Criminal Code for the false assumption of authority and impersonating Crown officers by purporting to present indictments on behalf of the Crown, which is an offence under the Criminal Code? I will be very interested to hear the Premier's remarks in reply.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (3.24 p.m.), in reply: The comments made by the various speakers have been most interesting. I appreciate the statements made by the honourable members for Toowong and Bulimba as to their position. Not once have I suggested that these two members have needed protection such as this. All I said was that if the university senate should at some time decide to pay fees to its members, they might be said to be holding certain appointments.

One authority says that, where fees are attached to an office and the appointment to the office is by the Crown or a Minister of the Crown, the appointee is the holder of an office of profit within the meaning of the section even if such fees are not accepted. That is all I said. I know that the honourable member for Toowong realises that. In the early days, before some honourable members were even born, I gave away my salary on about four occasions and in spite of that I had to pay tax on it. The same principle applies. The honourable members

for Toowong and Bulimba have given much of their time to serving on the university senate without payment or remuneration. I only drew attention to the possibility of a different circumstance arising. This whole exercise is one to clear the air where there is a great deal of uncertainty as to what applies in certain areas under certain circumstances. That is all we seek to do.

I say to the honourable member who has just spoken and called the Honourable Minister a shyster that I do not know anybody in this place who fits that definition better than the honourable member himself. He is probably one of the greatest shysters to have entered the Parliament in the 30 years I have been here. The way he talks and the way he operates, he is completely unjust and completely unfair, and, of course, his allegations are completely untrue. That is the way in which he conducts himself. He likes to attack people and he tries to make out that there is something very criminal about the circumstances covered by the Bill. This is a system that has been in operation almost since the beginning of time.

**Mr. Aikens:** It is wrong, and there is no reason—

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I could agree. In some respects, I do not think myself that it should apply. I think this draws attention to it. A custom has been established. Other legal men in the past have been doing just this sort of thing.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Why was it moved today in caucus that this Bill not be introduced?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** In the case that the honourable member referred to, the matters involved three cases that necessitated his being away from this House for two hours. That is quite different from what the honourable member implied. He made a great song and dance about those things. To keep the record straight, I have mentioned that aspect.

I hope, Mr. Hewitt, that the Bill will clarify a lot of areas that are unclear and uncertain at the moment. That is why I have introduced it. I hope that it will resolve the situation.

**Mr. Aikens:** Don't you think you should put every member of Parliament on the same basis, one way or the other?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I think that this is the general attitude and the general requirement, but there are circumstances, because of tradition and so on, when people are quite unaware of possible consequences. For example, in the instance of the honourable member for Cook, nobody ever thought of it. The honourable member for Cairns didn't realise that that was the position. What about Medibank and other things we are

involved in? To what extent could it be said of each of us that we are holding an office of profit under the Crown? There are a lot of grey areas at the moment. We want to resolve those areas. I am quite sure that every member is honourable in that regard.

Question—That the motion (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 47

Alison	Lee
Armstrong	Lester
Bjelke-Petersen	Lickiss
Bourke	Lockwood
Brown	Lowes
Byrne	McKechnie
Camm	Miller
Campbell	Muller
Deeral	Neal
Edwards	Newbery
Elliott	Porter
Gibbs	Powell
Glasson	Row
Greenwood	Scott-Young
Gunn	Simpson
Gygar	Small
Herbert	Tenni
Hinze	Tomkins
Hooper, M. D.	Wharton
Katter	Young
Kaus	
Knox	<i>Tellers:</i>
Kyburz	Ahern
Lamont	Moore
Lane	

NOES, 10

Aikens	Melloy
Burns	Wright
Dean	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hooper, K. J.	Marginson
Houston	Yewdale
Jones	

PAIR:

Chinchen	Prest
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Resolved in the affirmative.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, read a first time.

## SUCCESSION AND GIFT DUTIES ABOLITION BILL

### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (3.39 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to provide for the abolition of the liability to pay duty in respect of certain successions and gifts, to provide for the construction of certain Acts of Queensland in relation to those successions and gifts and for related purposes.”

This Bill, of course, fulfils one of my Government's many election promises.

It is part of our over-all programme to reduce the general burden of taxation. It will give a substantial measure of relief

in an area of the law which has not been given enough attention in recent times. Over recent years I have been one who has spoken of the necessity to make it easy for people to live and take pressure off people for the costs and requirements of Government.

The Bill will completely abolish succession duties payable on and from 1 January 1977.

**Mr. Houston:** We will not divide on this one.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I do not think that honourable members opposite will divide on this. If any honourable members want to oppose the measure, of course we can make provision for them, and they can still pay duties as they did in the past if they so wish.

**Mr. Houston:** Don't use that type of threat; that's unbecoming.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I can quite appreciate that from the honourable member. He will probably speak for the Bill on the one hand, and against it on the other, and still want it.

Like all measures in the field of taxation relief, we have to have a cut-off date and, in this case, it is 1 January. I am pleased that Queensland has once again taken the lead in this field. It is interesting to note that we in Queensland enjoy the lowest State and local authority taxation in Australia. Latest statistics reveal that we pay an average of \$197.65 per head of population. This compares with New South Wales with some \$290.31 per head of population, which is a few cents ahead of Victoria.

All members know that death duties commenced as a means of preventing huge accumulations of inherited wealth. However, in recent years, its imposition has hit chiefly at the middle-income people, and, indeed, those primary producers who receive some of the lowest incomes in the nation. Most of the really wealthy people manage to find legal methods to avoid death duties and, of course, the people who really carry the burden of this tax today are the ordinary run-of-the-mill folk—those with a car, a house, life savings, some small investments, superannuation, etc. This was not the idea of death duties at all.

The tax was actually introduced in an era when direct income taxes were virtually nothing when compared with the levels we face today. That is another very important aspect in relation to the abolition of succession duties. The advance in workers' wages and conditions this century has probably had more to do with redistributing income than has the effect of death duties. My Government does not see any point in continuing in this futile exercise—one which just does not achieve what it set out to do.

I just cannot go along with a tax that causes such untold hardship and anxiety, especially for elderly people and those in income brackets it was never meant to affect. I have seen so much tragedy and hardship, particularly since becoming Premier, caused by succession duties that I came to the resolution that they should be abolished. It has been the policy of the Liberal and National Parties for a long time, but it has always been postponed because of a "today is not the day" type of attitude. Now my resolution has come to fruition.

I will now outline for honourable members exactly what the Bill will do in respect of succession and gift duties:

#### SUCCESSION DUTY

What are generally called "death duties" are duties payable in respect of the property or benefits to which a person succeeds or becomes entitled to upon the death of another. The entitlement of the person who thus succeeds is referred to as a "succession" and it is in respect of each succession that the duties to which attention is now being directed have been paid.

Every succession sooner or later vests in possession in the person entitled to the property or benefits; that is, that person becomes absolutely entitled to the enjoyment of the property or benefits to the exclusion of any other adverse interest. Vesting in possession may occur at the death that gives rise to the succession or it may occur at some period, certain or uncertain, after such death.

Under section 20 of the existing Succession Duties Act 1892-1975, succession duty becomes payable when the successor becomes entitled in possession to his succession. Although in certain circumstances payment of duty may be deferred or postponed, nevertheless the liability to pay duty arises when the succession vests in possession.

It is not proposed to interfere with any liability incurred in respect of succession duty before 1 January 1977, but it is proposed to abolish liability to pay duty in respect of successions that vest in possession on or after 1 January 1977.

#### GIFT DUTY

Gift duty is payable in respect of a gift that exceeds \$10,000 or in respect of a number of gifts made over a period of three years in all by the same donor to the same or any other donee where the aggregate of those gifts exceeds \$10,000.

Gift duty becomes payable on the making of the gift or, where in respect of a gift duty becomes payable by reason of the making of a subsequent gift, on the making of the subsequent gift. A particular gift, therefore, is significant in two ways—

(a) is it a gift that in itself attracts gift duty; and

(b) is it a gift that when taken into account with other gifts aggregates a value that attracts gift duty?

It is proposed to abolish the liability to pay gift duty in respect of a gift made on or after 1 January 1977 and it is proposed to provide that such a gift shall not be taken into consideration for the purpose of assessing gift duty or determining a rate of gift duty with respect to gifts made before that date.

Again, it is not proposed to interfere with a liability to gift duty already incurred by any person before 1 January 1977. However, if a person has prior to that date made one or more gifts that in the aggregate do not attract gift duty he will not incur a liability to gift duty by reason of any gift he may make on or after 1 January 1977.

This is a measure that I am sure will be welcomed by the people of this State; indeed, it will be welcomed by many people in other States. Yesterday I had a conversation by telephone with a very wealthy businessman in Sydney who said that he had some millions of dollars to invest in Queensland and that he would be transferring his operations and activities and his residence to Queensland as soon as this Bill becomes law. He said also that, as a consequence of its becoming law, hundreds of thousands of other people would come to Queensland. We have received many inquiries and many letters from influential people and others about the date from which the law will come into operation. They have indicated their desire and intention to come to Queensland not only because of the benefits they will receive in relation to assets that they have built up by hard work over the years but also because of the many other benefits that accrue from living in Queensland, a State that has given a high standard of living and prosperity to many people.

I have very much pleasure indeed in bringing the Bill before the Committee.

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba) (3.49 p.m.): I do not think that anyone would oppose the idea of endeavouring to remove both succession duty and gift duty from our Statute Book. However, over the years Governments of all political colours have found it necessary to impose this form of taxation, which has contributed greatly to the financial stability of various Governments.

Last year the Government of Queensland received \$26,800,000 from succession and gift duties, and that, in anyone's language, is not a small amount. This year, even allowing for the fact that 1 January 1977 will be the cut-off point, the Government still expects to receive \$25,500,000—again a substantial sum of money. What is concerning some people is this: if \$25,500,000

is suddenly cut off from the State's revenue, where will the replacement amount come from?

No-one expects inflation to be wiped out overnight, and \$25,000,000 today would need to be in the vicinity of \$30,000,000 next year. Many people are wondering what other form of State taxation is going to be increased to compensate for the loss of that amount. Is it going to mean an increase in taxation to perhaps some of the very people who are being relieved of the obligation to pay succession duty and gift duty? If it means increasing taxation in other fields and putting a greater burden on those who cannot afford to contribute to Consolidate Revenue, this move will have to be looked at again. It could prove to be very unwise to take the full step of eliminating the source of \$25,000,000 to \$30,000,000 all at once.

As to succession duty, I agree with the Premier that in most cases a person's assets have been built up from earnings on which taxation has already been paid. If the assets left by a deceased person were obtained as a result of saving money received in wages, salaries, company payments or some other form of personal endeavour, say, in primary industries, as long as taxation has been paid on those earnings it would be wrong in principle to have the double tax of succession duty. Unfortunately we do not have in any legislation on the Statute Book a means of getting at those people who obtain a large amount of money through no effort on their part.

Apart from the idea of obtaining money for the Government, one of the reasons succession duty was introduced in the first place was that people were obtaining money in large amounts by capital gain. They were getting value on something that they had not contributed towards. In today's modern society there are people who obtain money by succession from others who are virtually unknown to them. Certainly they might be relatives but they are relatives they had discarded many years previously.

Present-day laws allow people who have been injured at work or on the road to receive enormous sums. Some of the judgements being handed down are in the order of \$100,000. If such an injured person did not live very long after the payment was made, the money could easily be left to somebody else who had no real connection with the person who made the bequest. It might be just a case of the money having to go somewhere. Such a person would receive a wind-fall without making any contribution to the State at all. The worry is that an alternative source for the money has to be found, and it might be obtained from people who can ill afford to pay it.

If the Government eliminates succession duty, the elimination of gift duty is a natural follow-on. If gift duty were not eliminated, there would be an imbalance. After all, succession is virtually a gift from a deceased person to a living person, whereas

gift duty is a gift from one living person to another living person. I agree that if the Government is going to do something about the one, it has to do something about the other. Perhaps there is the greatest justification for the abolition of gift duty. After all, the person who is making a gift is passing over money to another of his choice while he is still living. A person making a gift does so consciously; he says, in effect, "I want so-and-so to have this gift." Property passed on by way of succession, on the other hand, could go to a relation who has shown no interest at all in the deceased.

We do not oppose this legislation. We do, however, ask the Government to watch the position very closely. If we find that this Bill relieves the burden on one section of the community and loads it onto another section in another form of taxation in the next Budget, we will certainly have something to say about it. I am pleased to see the Treasurer in the Chamber. I assure him that if we find that such a loading does occur we will strenuously oppose any increase in whatever form the taxation may take.

**Mr. GIBBS (Albert) (3.56 p.m.):** I have much pleasure in speaking to this Bill, which will abolish certain succession duties and gift duty. I suppose no-one thought this would ever happen in Queensland; but here it is. Today is the day in the history of this State on which the Government has shown itself to be big enough and to have sufficient intestinal fortitude to proceed with the abolition of these duties.

Succession duty is a tax that affects each one of us and our families. It can have a shattering effect on people, yet many persons know very little about it. Death duties are a tax not on the dead, but on the living. They are a tax not only on the high-income earner but also on the low and middle-income earner. It is a wonderful thing that the Premier has brought forward this Bill to abolish certain succession and gift duties.

As an illustration of the effect on people of this duty, I mention the case of a 60-year-old lady, an invalid pensioner, whose mother had recently passed away leaving her home to her daughter. The home was built of fibro and was on a 16-perch block of land. When valued it attracted duty of \$845. Imagine the plight of this 60-year-old invalid pensioner. She simply did not have the money to pay that tax. After I had made a submission to the Treasurer, this lady was told that the duty would be made a charge on the estate until she either sold the home or passed it on to another person. She has no living relatives, so I have no doubt that the home will be passed on to a charitable organisation, which will then have to pay the duty. Whether or not it attracts interest, I do not know. That case highlights the plight of a person who is called upon to pay this duty. This pensioner's income was only \$82.40 a fortnight, so it is obvious that she had no hope whatever of paying the duty.

Death duties hit a broad cross-section of the community; very few people escape them. At one time they were imposed only on the rich, but now everyone, including the pensioner, is required to pay them. If the total value of a deceased person's assets exceeds \$6,000—even by one cent—they attract death duties.

Some persons have claimed that only wealthy persons—the Westerners and company managers—fall victim to this duty. Far from it. Anyone at all who owns a home, whether it be in the West or in Brisbane, falls victim to it.

Death duties were imposed first in 1694 to help meet the cost of the war waged by Britain against France. Gradually they rose, largely as the result of the financial stress of several wars, but it was not until 1853 that real property was subject to death tax. Whilst the main social and political objective of death duty was to provide a more equal distribution of wealth, at the same time it was significant as a revenue device. The social and economic environment of that time justified death duties in England, where there were the very rich and the very poor. The rich remained rich and the poor remained poor. That is not so in Australia today, and that is the reason why this Government has made such a tremendous move forward by abolishing this iniquitous tax.

Australia today is completely different. Our social structure and economy are different. A very small proportion of our population could be regarded as wealthy. The large proportion of our population must be regarded as middle-income earners, and even the low-income earners have a relatively high standard of living. A person needs only to own a little block of land, a house, furniture and a car—he might do without to save for all those things and eventually build up an estate—and then those assets are wiped out when he dies.

I know that we abolished death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse. When a person died before the end of his normal life span—say, in his 40s—the abolition of spouse-to-spouse duty certainly helped the wife. However, it does not help people in their 60s. We know that the ratio of deaths of men to women over the age of 65 is somewhere around 8 to 1. Under those circumstances, succession duty must be regarded as discriminating against the women of Queensland. They are the ones left behind to cope with the problems. Certainly we did something to help them when we freed from death duties estates passing from spouse to spouse. However, once the estate passes down through the rest of the family, tremendous problems occur.

It is fairly common these days for a family's income to be in joint names, but not the furniture and all the odds and ends—the boat, motor-car and so on.

Insurance policies of a tremendous size have been taken out to meet this situation. Recently one for \$750,000 was taken out on one person. Several policies of \$1,000,000 each have been written to cover death duties, both State and Federal. What we have to remember is that the Federal duty still exists. People have to be careful to organise their affairs so that their beneficiaries are not crippled by Federal duties. Now, however, insurance companies in Queensland will have the opportunity to sell policies for a genuine cause—that is, for a person's general well-being after he has retired. It will not now be purely to cater for death duties and thus go straight into the Government coffers. That will be one of the beneficial factors resulting from this legislation.

In the case of business partners, they combine their assets, and on the death of one the property and stock cannot be sold without a loss to the business. In many cases all of the assets of the farm have to be sold to meet death duties. The surviving partner finishes up with a farm with nothing on it. How does he or she manage then? How is a cash flow generated? The survivor does not get any sympathy from the bank manager. The bank cannot keep the business going. Under those circumstances, many enterprises, both large and small, have had to be sold. Over the years, many businesses have been auctioned to cover death duties.

It is pleasing to see that the commitment to death duties will be minimised and that beneficiaries will have to meet only Federal duties. The other States in Australia should get going and show sufficient intestinal fortitude to abolish their death duties, too, and then subsequently force the Federal Government, whichever party is in power, to do the same at that level. We would then have a taxation principle of, "Pay while you are alive, not after you are dead." The present system just destroys everything that has been built up by the testator. Under Queensland's laws, death duties from spouse to spouse are now abolished. However, in the over-all position, that amendment has achieved very little.

Gift duty is another tax that has presented the people of Queensland with a tremendous problem. The only answer is to abolish death duties altogether. That is the only answer to all these problems. In Australia we tax death twice. The State we live in collects duty and then the Federal Government steps in and takes a second slice. Two valuations of property have to be made—one at the State level and one at the Federal level. Two returns have to be lodged and two payments made.

A person's estate is valued as at the time of death, not at the price at which it was purchased. Interest must be paid to the State on death duties that are not paid after six months. That is another problem; possibly people are paying interest to the bank

and interest to the Government. Because there has not been enough study made of it, it has got out of hand over the years. Perhaps people have been able to manage in really good times but I do not think that they would be able to cope with the present situation much longer. Estates would be completely destroyed.

Inflation has been one of the greatest problems over the last few years. It has pushed the values of properties into artificially high brackets. Inflation has eroded the position of people on fixed incomes. A widower or a widow now finds that after paying death duties there is not enough left to ensure that he or she can live comfortably in the remaining years. Anticipation of the possibility of having to pay death duties influences our economic behaviour. Some people are adopting the attitude that it is not worth working and saving and leaving a large estate when a significant proportion of it will end up as taxation revenue.

This affects businesses and properties of all types. Because death duties are levied as a lump sum and not on an annual basis as taxation is, they have a major effect on business and economy. The loss of capital of a business as the result of payment of death duties can force the business to close down.

Often death duties have an adverse effect on rural industries, which have been the backbone of this country. Certainly mining is coming into its own and is playing a significant role in our economy. Without those two industries, where would the remainder of Australia be? It would be an interesting exercise to trace consumer goods from their origin to the consumer in order to discover the importance of this whole set-up. I wonder how many people really know where the bottle of milk comes from or how much trouble it is to place an egg in a shop.

**Mr. Moore:** Or how to get milk from a cow?

**Mr. GIBBS:** I do not think the honourable member would know much about it.

**Mr. Houston:** The Liberals and the Nationals again. They are always into one another.

**Mr. GIBBS:** I am quite sure that the honourable member for Windsor has done a lot in other ways in this State. He is a practical man and will certainly support this Bill on behalf of the people in his electorate. The Labor boys are having 20c each way. The Federal Labor Government was going to alter the system slightly, but it was also going to up the ante. That is Labor policy. The Labor boys here today are not game to stand up and be counted. They are not game to support the Canberra mob of their political colour. They are having 20c each way. This duty affects the people in their electorates just as it does those in mine.

It affects every person who owns a house in every street in the areas they represent. Let us be nice and clean on this issue.

**Mr. Houston:** You should be getting stuck into Bob Moore, not us.

**Mr. GIBBS:** He is a very good member. He has done his job very well.

Big companies do not pay death duties. Death duties are paid by the fellows who worked their guts out for the big companies and saved a few dollars to get a house or a week-ender. They deserved it for their efforts for the companies and the community. Companies do not pay death duties. Management with any sense sets up trusts if the company is not exempt as a public company, and overcomes the problem in that way. Many small people cannot do this. This Bill will help small people more than anyone else.

Stocks and shares are valued for death duty purposes in some very peculiar ways. Owners of scrip think they are secure but often they have to pay high death duties on shares that are not worth anywhere near the value placed on them.

**Mr. Moore:** They are valued at the date of death and when they are sold they might be worth nothing.

**Mr. GIBBS:** That is correct.

It is rather strange that, being born in Victoria, I always had a yen to live in Queensland. In my young days I saw several men destroyed by the payment of death duties. When I was about 15 my father told me what a miserable form of taxation this was. Ever since then I have had a yen to assist in abolishing death duties. Here I am in Queensland in 1976, when a Bill is going through, and I have had some part in helping to wipe out these duties in Queensland. I hope that the rest of the States adopt this legislation. I would like to congratulate the Premier for his forcefulness in setting this process into motion and the Government for finally giving its full backing to abolition of this duty.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (4.11 p.m.): I have spoken on a couple of previous occasions on probate and succession duties. Today I would like to congratulate the Government, the Premier and the Treasurer on the move for gradually phasing out this iniquitous tax.

When one looks at the amount of money that the Queensland Government has received from taxation altogether, it received in 1971-72 in round figures \$19,000,000 and in 1974-75 \$35,000,000 from death duties, succession duties and probate. This revenue will not cease immediately; it will take probably two to three years before no returns are received from estates as some are still being processed.

**A Government Member:** It could be five years for some.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** It could be quite easily. It would be some time if interstate and overseas property is involved as it will be found there will be a considerable delay. Sometimes the greatest delay comes from the Federal sphere, which is notorious for its slowness in the finalisation of interstate and multi-State estates.

It was interesting to see that in the 1973 Report on Death Duties of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Government Operations, Senators Lawrie, Cotton and Guilfoyle (in a dissenting report) recommended—

“The Federal Government should vacate the field of death taxation including the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.”

Their second recommendation was—

“The States should examine the possibilities of gradually reducing their death taxes with the view to eventual abolition.”

This has happened in this State before all other States.

South Australia has made a half-hearted attempt at it. That State's income this year probably will be reduced by some \$4,000,000, but everyone still will pay a probate fee of 50c for every \$200 in the estate. South Australia has a most complex method of assessing the tax payable; it varies according to the kinship—from grandparents to dependants and brothers and sisters. This method will create a lot of trouble and heartburning and, because of its complexity, will not lead to the speedy finalisation of any estate. It is interesting to note that the South Australian Taxpayers' Association says that it is a completely and unnecessarily complicated procedure. I do not need to remind honourable members that South Australia has a Labor Government, and it does not like giving anything away.

In New South Wales, which has again returned to the fold of Labor, Mr. Wran proposed to cut death duties and probate and succession duties, but when he had another look at it, he decided to be less generous in the execution of his electoral promises. Last year New South Wales received about \$82,000,000 from probate and succession duties. So it can be seen that it is fairly big business in New South Wales when compared with our figures as it is a much larger State with larger holdings. New South Wales intends to reduce this tax but only with spouses and on a sliding scale.

Western Australia has not done very much about the tax. Its exemption applies only to spouses.

Tasmania is still looking at the possibility of abolition of death duties.

It is interesting to note that in New South Wales Mr. Wran said that the State would lose somewhere between \$25,000,000 and

\$35,000,000 by abolishing death duties between spouses, but he was quite certain that by closing loop-holes in the legislation the State would gain about \$20,000,000. So he is going to give relief to the people on the one hand and take it away from them with the other through very tight administrative procedures and the closing up of any legal loop-holes that may exist at the moment.

The Federal Government also has relaxed its succession duty laws, but by no means as generously as Queensland. It has given a complete exemption from tax on estates up to \$90,000 which pass from spouse to spouse, and if the estate is \$50,000 or less no tax is payable whatsoever.

I consider that Queensland has led the way and has shown great wisdom in introducing this legislation. Admittedly as the honourable member for Windsor said, there will be a loss of income as it is phased out over the next five years, but we will have a flow of money into this State from people seeking to invest their money wisely and safely where it will not be dissipated by this iniquitous tax. We will also have the problem of replacing this lost income without imposing further hardship. It is all very well giving the populace relief from one form of hardship, but then we have to make up that loss, usually by imposing another iniquitous tax.

I have a few suggestions about how we could do this without squeezing the ordinary man in the street and our hard-working primary producers. A lot of this lost income could be regained through an increase in mineral royalties. Utah and other companies have just announced large profits. We could also vary our land taxes. Queenslanders are not very heavily taxed on land compared with other States. We could also increase taxes on entertainment and luxury goods. Apart from the increased income that could be achieved by those means, I think we can count on a greater capital inflow from other States which will provide us with greater prosperity.

I would like to congratulate the Government, the Premier and the Treasurer on this magnificent piece of legislation. We have led Australia in it, and I hope the Federal Government will look at this legislation and learn from it.

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (4.18 p.m.): I am happy to join in the debate and support the Bill. As all honourable members are aware, it has long been the Government's policy, supported by both parties, to abolish death duties in this State. They are a form of taxation which effectively deprives a person's beneficiaries of part of the fruits of his life's labour and efforts. They are a most unpopular, and in the minds of many an iniquitous tax.

They are also a source of revenue to the State, and against this background, at a time of some uncertainty in the economy

and stringency in the State's finances, the decision to proceed with the abolition of this revenue measure was not one that could be taken lightly. As I mentioned in the Financial Statement, we are now proceeding to do this. In taking this second and final step—spouse-to-spouse bequests were exempted from succession duties last year—the Government has looked at its effects over the total spectrum. It has taken into account the short and the long-term advantages to the individuals concerned and the prospective benefits to the economy of the State generally, and weighed them against the obvious short-term disadvantage, namely, the loss of immediate revenue. The decision has been taken, and the passage of this Bill will put Queensland in the vanguard—the leader in the field.

I have every confidence that the absence of death duties in this State will encourage our own citizens to invest in this State in preference to speculating elsewhere where the immediate prospects might seem to them to be more lucrative. I believe it will encourage private investment from outside the State in business, real estate and capital development. It will bring business people to this State with their resources, both in terms of money and expertise in their particular fields of endeavour.

These are very major and important considerations, but the one which to my mind will be regarded by all compassionate people as at least equally important is that it will remove from individuals the fear, and, in many cases, the fact, of a financial burden that hits them at a time of severe emotional stress and social readjustment. For this reason alone, I believe that every honourable member in this Assembly will support the Bill.

It is worthy of mention—in fact, it should be mentioned—that the full impact of this measure on the State Budget will not be felt for some time—probably not until the early stages of the next financial year. This, of course, arises from the time lag between the date of death and the final assessment of duties and grant of probate.

I have noticed that some people outside this State have tried to claim the Queensland has given away \$25,000,000 in death duties this financial year. That is not so. The effect is quite minimal.

**Mr. Houston:** Who said that?

**Mr. KNOX:** People in the Federal Parliament and many other people said that Queensland was giving this amount of money away in one year. That is not correct. The transition period during which it could be expected that revenues will decline progressively will enable the Government to adjust to and plan for the time when funds from this source will not be available to the general revenue pool.



I believe that this adjustment can be achieved without significant effects on the Government's services or the pockets of the citizens of this State, and I hope we will all welcome the measure.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (4.22 p.m.), in reply: I appreciate the remarks that have been made by my colleague the Deputy Premier and other honourable members. As the honourable member for Albert said, this is an historic day, but perhaps not many people appreciate that fact. No other State in Australia has been game enough or prepared to venture into a field such as this and take the decision that this Government has taken. I use this opportunity to extend an invitation to people from other States to come to Queensland, where tremendous benefits will be available to them not only in this area but also in many others.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition expressed some concern that other forms of taxation were contemplated to compensate for the loss of revenue in this direction. That obviously is completely incorrect, because the Government (and the Treasurer has made this quite clear) is out to reduce taxes—gift duty, pay-roll tax, land tax, rail freights—in many areas that are of vital importance to people in the current economic climate. We have set out to help people. We have shown in a practical way that we practice what we preach by endeavouring to make it easier for people to live and to provide them with greater incentives. No other form of taxation is contemplated, and the honourable gentleman's suggestion is ridiculous.

It is the Government's hope that the growth of the State will compensate for and largely meet the cost of the benefits that people will receive in this direction. As a Government, we have to realise that it is necessary for us to live within our means, just as individuals have to live within their means. I place on record that I believe that the Treasurer is a man of ability who will ensure that we do that and guide the financial affairs of the State in the correct manner, as Sir Gordon Chalk did while he was Treasurer.

It is true, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, that \$26,000,000 is a large amount of money. But what of the hardships that succession duty caused to many people? As the honourable member for Albert said, many people were unable to extricate themselves from the unfortunate position in which they were placed.

The honourable member for Bulimba mention that some people who benefit from wills have never contributed anything to the estates. What if they haven't? In most cases people have contributed a great deal. Not only they but their families and families before them have contributed.

My grandparents, my parents, my son, my daughters, my sister and I have all worked to build up our property to what it is today. As I indicated clearly, because of the viciousness of this tax, I have long since vacated the field of being a large owner. Because of the financial problems confronting them, most people just cannot do that. Small business people, top public servants and primary producers have been hit hard. This is the area in which we are going to bring about a tremendous sense of relief and give greater enjoyment to people in the later years of their life. Naturally, with my colleague the Treasurer and other members of the Government, I have tremendous pleasure in announcing to the State, the nation and the world that we don't believe in this type of tax, and we won't continue it any longer.

Motion (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, read a first time.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS COMMISSION BILL

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (4.28 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

The debate at the introductory stage ranged fairly widely, and most of the issues raised were covered in reply. One of the issues constantly raised was the extent of the data that will be required by the commission, and pleas were made for this to be not burdensome. I would ask honourable members to appreciate that the job of the commission will be a very onerous and responsible one, and it will require sufficient data to enable it to make the wisest possible decision. I can assure honourable members, however, that the commission will be made aware of their representations that the data requested will not be more than will be needed for that purpose.

Another issue raised was the criteria on which the commission will operate in recommending the distribution of grants. Put briefly, the commission will take to account the relative revenue-raising capacity of each local authority compared with other local authorities and the relative cost of providing the services of local government in its particular area.

Another question was whether Queensland would be disadvantaged by having the sewerage and water supply undertakings excluded from the calculations. Quite clearly, because in most other States these functions are performed by independent boards, we cannot

expect the distribution of the local authority grants from the Commonwealth to the various States to include consideration for water supply and sewerage.

I would point out also that water supply and sewerage undertakings in Queensland have been heavily subsidised in their capital expenditures by the State. As far as their operating budgets are concerned, they are in a balanced position. They are for the purpose of the Grants Commission grants regarded as commercial undertakings, and this in all the circumstances is understandable.

Another point raised by the member for Cooroora was whether special consideration will be given by the commission to special disabilities in particular areas. He was referring specifically to the additional expense caused to the shires in the coastal areas because of their special tourist expenditures.

It is expected that the commission will be taking to account all these specific difficulties, whether it be additional expenditure caused by tourism, whether it be shortfalls in income caused by industry in the shire that is dependent upon the vagaries of the weather, whether it be the effects of heavy wet weather and heat on roads and other assets, and so on.

It is also expected that the commission will take to account any special benefits that accrue to the shire from such special expenditure efforts. For example, the tourist industry brings much added wealth to the coastal shires and all the expenses of the shires on tourist facilities are not necessarily therefore unrecouped. I am not sure, therefore, whether the net result will be a debit or a credit for the council, but this will be something for the commission to determine. The short answer to the query is, however, yes, the commission is expected to take all these special problems and benefits to account.

The composition of the commission was queried by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who sought representatives on the commission from elected aldermen and councillors. The Government has deliberately steered away from providing for commissioners who will represent anybody or any interest. The Government desires that the most qualified persons be appointed to the commission because of their expertise and impartiality and not because they represent a shire, a city or any special group. It may be, however, that the best person chosen is an alderman or councillor, but it will not be because he is an alderman or councillor of a certain shire that he is chosen.

Another major point made was the timing of the announcements of the decisions of the commission so that councils will be in a position to incorporate the grants in their current year's budget.

I recognise the difficulties for councils in late advice of the amount of their funds and I know the commission will be moving

to have this advice in the hands of the Government in time for inclusion in the council's budgets. However, because of the uncertainties now as to when it will be known what total funds will be available to the commission and other administrative matters, I cannot provide any guarantees as to timing at this stage. However, I repeat that I appreciate the problems of the councils in this regard and I know that the commissioners will also. I will ensure that the views expressed by the members will be made known in due course to the commissioners. I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba) (4.33 p.m.): The Opposition accepts the principle of a Local Government Grants Commission. It is a matter now of waiting to see whether it works. We hope that it will. However, because of the large area and low population of some local authorities, I can foresee certain problems arising. It is possible that the commission might come to the conclusion that the number of local authorities in Queensland should be reduced and that better use can be made of equipment purchased by local authorities to carry out their work. The cost of running local authorities is becoming so high that no council can afford to allow capital assets in the form of machinery to lie idle for lengthy periods. I hope that the commission will look at the use of capital assets.

As to my query concerning the appointment of aldermen to the commission—I raised that matter with the Minister who introduced the Bill because the former Leader of the Liberal Party clearly stated at election rallies that local authorities would have direct representation on the Local Government Grants Commission. Surely that means representation by councillors or aldermen.

It was said then; but whether it was said in the context of a binding statement or just as a general statement about allowing general representation on the basis of experience, only he knows. However, I am sure that the public as a whole—and local authorities and aldermen and councillors—accepted that they were to be given direct representation. I mention it because of the difference between what was said and what we find in the Bill. Basically, I believe it will be a matter of seeing how the Bill operates and then reserving judgment for 12 months.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Kaus, Mansfield, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 24, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Knox, by leave, read a third time.

CITY OF BRISBANE ACT AND  
ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. R. J. HINZE** (South Coast—Minister for Local Government and Main Roads) (4.39 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

As I mentioned in my introductory speech, the purpose of this Bill is to empower the Brisbane City Council to exhibit at a place other than the city hall copies of ordinances, town-planning applications and other documents which by law are required to be placed on public exhibition. This power has been requested by the council, since the staff of most departments of the council have recently been transferred from offices in the city hall to the Brisbane Administration Centre adjoining the city hall. The Bill was favourably received upon its introduction.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (4.40 p.m.): We have no opposition to the Bill. As the Minister said, it has been introduced at the request of the Brisbane council to allow it to display the ordinances in the Administration Centre, which is handy to the city hall.

Motion (Mr. Hinze) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Kaus, Mansfield, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 11, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Hinze, by leave, read a third time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
SUPERANNUATION ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. R. J. HINZE** (South Coast—Minister for Local Government and Main Roads) (4.43 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

As I explained at the introductory stage, this is a very short measure to empower the Governor in Council from time to time to extend the term of appointment of members of the Local Government Superannuation Board.

As I pointed out previously, there are under consideration at present certain proposals for modifications of the existing scheme and it is considered desirable that the present board should remain in existence until the matter of these modifications is settled.

The Bill was favourably received upon its introduction.

**Mr. MARGINSON** (Wolston) (4.44 p.m.): Having had a look at the Bill this morning, we now realise what is in it. We agree with the proposal.

I notice, however, that it does not allow for only one extension of six months in the term of these members of the superannuation board. Under the Bill their term can be extended every six months for quite a long time if the Government so wishes.

I notice, too, something that is not in the Bill. The Government has been inclined to limit the age of members of boards, such as ambulance and hospital boards. It has not been done under this Bill. I am not suggesting that I agree with it, but I notice that it is not included.

Motion (Mr. Hinze) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Kaus, Mansfield, in the chair)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Hinze, by leave, read a third time.

MAIN ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Kaus, Mansfield, in the chair)

**Hon. R. J. HINZE** (South Coast—Minister for Local Government and Main Roads) (4.47 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Main Roads Act 1920–1975 in certain particulars.”

This Bill is a simple measure to empower the Commissioner of Main Roads to borrow moneys by way of debenture. The commissioner already has power to borrow from the Treasury. The proposed Bill seeks to insert new sections, 27A–27G, in the Main Roads Act, to authorise the commissioner to borrow by sale of debentures, apart from any State loan funds that may be made available to him. It is a relatively short Bill.

The authority it proposes is considered to be necessary because available road construction and maintenance funds are not sufficient to meet today's basic road needs. I know from the numerous representations made to me that honourable members will support me in this view. Access to these additional funds, as appropriate, would afford greater flexibility to develop more viable works programmes.

The legislation proposed is similar to that already incorporated in other State Acts, such as the State and Regional Planning and

Development, Public Works Organization and Environmental Control Act, the Metropolitan Transit Authority Act, and the Industrial Development Act.

Honourable members will note that the proposed borrowings would, by the legislation, be subject to prior negotiation and approval. In each case, the commissioner would first be required to seek and receive the sanction of the Honourable the Treasurer. Then, should the Honourable the Treasurer agree to such a proposal, the authority of the Governor in Council would have to be obtained. This authority would be by way of Order in Council, which would set out in respect of each such borrowing, the amount, purpose, currency, interest payable, terms and conditions, etcetera. The legislation would provide for the guaranteeing of such borrowing under the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act.

I believe there is an indisputable need for the commissioner to have access to additional road funds, and it's in this light that I commend this Bill to the committee.

**Mr. MARGINSON (Wolston) (4.50 p.m.):** I remember reading in the Press a few months ago that the Minister made a statement that Queensland has the worst roads in Australia. I think that was the headline of the report.

**Mr. Hinze:** The worst roads in the world.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** The worst roads in the world?

**Mr. Hinze:** Yes.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** That we had the worst roads in the world. When he made that statement, of course, I am sure that he was throwing some of the blame onto the previous Labor Government in Canberra.

**Mr. Hinze:** All of it.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** But the position has not improved one bit, although we have had an anti-Labor Government now for 12 months, less a few days. I know that the Minister has been complaining that we cannot get funds from Canberra to do what we should do with respect to our main roads, and this measure is, apparently, one way of overcoming that problem, provided, of course, that we do not overborrow, which would make it even worse for the people who have to repay the borrowings. I hope it is not envisaged that we will have to pay higher and still higher motor vehicle registration fees, although I fear there will be some repercussions in that direction.

While I am on my feet, I want to commend the Minister for his attempt to get slow vehicles, particularly the heavy transports on our main roads, to keep to the left. I think one of the most glaring examples of this

breach, as it were, is on the highway between Ipswich and Brisbane, although it happens wherever a weighbridge station is situated. Coming down from Ipswich, particularly in the mornings, we regularly see large trucks racing each other to the weighbridge to try to get a bit further up in the queue. I believe this also occurs at night-time. I commend the Minister for attempting to at least have these people keep in the left-hand lane.

**Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (4.52 p.m.):** I have just a few comments to make on this Bill. I understand from the Minister its main purpose is to enable borrowings by the Main Roads Department to increase the amount and scope of the work it is able to do in this State. One could speak at great length about the problems we have with our main roads, because a Bill like this covers the general financial situation, but it is not my intention to hold the Committee up for too long on that aspect.

I am very gratified that in recent days the Minister has announced that something is being done at long last about the Rocleigh Bridge. It is good to see that his political colleague in Canberra, Mr. Peter Nixon, has now reached the stage which poor old Charlie Jones—who was much maligned by the Minister—had reached on this project some 18 months ago. The Federal Government has once again included this bridge in its highway programme. It was ready to roll some 18 months ago as far as finance was concerned, but it was discovered that the planning had not been completed by the Queensland Main Roads Department because of problems associated with the model study.

**Mr. Hinze:** You know that's not true. You know we had to carry out a study.

**Mr. CASEY:** I do not want to be diverted, but if the Minister wants to talk about the study, I can give its full history. I can tell how the model lay completely idle out at Rocklea for some six or seven months. Because of problems within the department, absolutely no work was being carried out on it and then when work began on the model, lo and behold, it was found that the wrong figures had been sent down from Mackay by the department and everything had to be done again. So it is probably better that we do not fully discuss the study of the Rocleigh Bridge.

Needless to say, things are under way now and I hope the Minister continues to press for the expeditious completion of the bridge. One never knows, by the time it is built—probably in three years' time—he might again be game to come up to Mackay and talk to the people about it.

While talking about finance, I sincerely hope that the Minister does use this additional finance to overcome a really big problem I have noted in Main Roads work in recent times in Queensland, and that is that jobs are being drawn out longer and longer.

Because insufficient finance is allocated, a job that would normally be completed in six months or 12 months takes about three years to complete and in many respects becomes uneconomical. I hope that the Minister will use the additional finance at his disposal to ensure that once an allocation is made to a particular job, work will begin quickly and the job will be completed in a reasonable period and not cause undue disruption. I have in mind particularly the upgrading of highways, and I ask him to ensure that that work is carried out economically and that the best value is obtained for the money allocated.

The other point I wish to make is that I hope the Minister intends to use this additional finance—and I ask him to indicate whether this is his intention—for main roads work over the length and breadth of the State, not spend all of it on the freeway system here in Brisbane. People in provincial cities and country areas in Queensland face tremendous problems with roads, which are their only means of access to civilisation and which they use in conducting their business affairs and trade generally. They become very dissatisfied when they see large sums of money allocated for the provision of freeways in Brisbane and for four-lane highways to places such as the Gold Coast. Observers have commented on the funds that have been allocated for these purposes since the Minister took over the Main Roads Department. I do not blame him for his attitude, but I remind him that Queensland is a very big State and that there are problems in many other areas.

**An Honourable Member:** He knows about the ones in Belyando.

**Mr. CASEY:** The Minister probably will be going back to Belyando again if Mr. Lester keeps after him like a little fox-terrier.

I trust that this additional money will be used not to finance freeway work but to provide better roads in the areas of Queensland in which they are most needed.

**Mr. YEWDAL** (Rockhampton North) (4.58 p.m.): I wish to make only a few points. I am a little concerned about what has taken place recently in Rockhampton, particularly in my own electorate, where a road transportation study has been undertaken. My general understanding was that the recommendations were to be implemented in three phases, each phase taking about seven years. Quite a lot of work was to be carried out, including the construction of a new bridge over the Fitzroy River.

Although I appreciate the economic problems associated with the development, I wish to stress the human problems that arise from the implementation of the recommendations of a road transportation study, particularly those arising from the purchase or resumption of properties. I have had some experience with individuals, and I am aware

that some people in a particular area in Rockhampton were advised during the early stages of the study that their homes would have to be shifted back considerably or resumed by the Main Roads Department and removed completely. They are now being told by the Mayor of Rockhampton (Alderman Pilbeam), on behalf of the local authority, that their homes are not going to be shifted, that the road will not go through there.

I do not blame the officers of the Main Roads Department in Rockhampton, because they may not be at fault with what is going to happen so far into the future, but the people involved are concerned about the value of their homes and repairing or renovating them. They are asking why they should spend any money on maintenance or repairs when in fact the houses are to be removed or shifted back and will then have to be renovated, reblocked or restumped, as the case may be. I realise that the Minister may not be able to give me specific answers on this, but in the very near future I do intend to contact his office in Brisbane or his local officers in Rockhampton, probably Commissioner Paul O'Keeffe, to try to get some definite answers on the road transportation study as it affects the constituents in my electorate.

Recently a rather large gathering discussed the many problems associated with school crossings throughout Queensland, in particular in the North Rockhampton area where a number of schools are situated. One pertinent point that came out of that discussion at the C.I.A.E. offices concerned the two white lines that used to be painted across streets to indicate a pedestrian crossing. It was pointed out that they do not carry any validity now and do not actually indicate a pedestrian crossing. Many of the lines have faded and local authorities are not renewing the paint, but pedestrians are continuing to use those areas as pedestrian crossings. In the main motorists still recognise the pedestrian's right on these crossings, but I wonder what would happen if a serious accident occurred on one of them. There would be an argument as to whether pedestrians have a right of way in between the two white lines. We were told by an officer of the Minister's department that those areas no longer carry the legal coverage they had for many years in the past. This matter arose out of a discussion about crossings for school-children adjacent to schools. It was argued that school patrols could be used but that the Education Department was generally responsible for the manning and control of those crossings.

The Minister recently made a statement in the Chamber about the issue of registration stickers and number plates. I believe he made reference to the South Coast and said that a facility would be provided in that area in the very near future. For some considerable time I have been agitating both

publicly and through the Minister's office for the distribution of registration stickers and number plates from Rockhampton to Gladstone, Mt. Morgan, Emu Park and Yeppoon. I believe that I have put up a valid argument. The Minister has made some promises that this facility will be provided in certain places throughout the State. It would be a nice Christmas present for people in Central Queensland if the Minister could make some definite statement on this matter. I am sure it would take a lot of worry and concern from many motorists in Central Queensland, particularly elderly people. I have spent a lot of time ringing the department in Brisbane. The very courteous staff have always assisted me, but we still continue to have problems with stickers and the notification for registration.

Those points are of particular concern to me and my electorate, and I ask the Minister to have those matters considered or, if possible, to give me some answers in his reply.

**Mr. JENSEN** (Bundaberg) (5.4 p.m.): I support what the honourable member for Mackay said about borrowing money that could be used for freeways. Two years ago the then Minister said that the road from the Bundaberg airport to the hospital would be completed in 1977. But then he ran out of money. I hope the present Minister is borrowing some money to complete that road, and also to get on with the Burnett traffic bridge. The former Minister promised that, too, but he changed portfolios.

When I was in Japan with the Minister for Health we found that almost every freeway was a toll road. In many cases the toll had been imposed before the freeway was built.

**Mr. Frawley:** You never paid a cent.

**Mr. JENSEN:** No; we got it on the cheap. The honourable member didn't pay, either.

As I said, some of those tolls were put on before the freeway was even started. That money helped to build the freeways in Japan.

In Singapore, cars carrying only one passenger are not allowed into the heart of the city at certain times of the morning. At those times only cars carrying at least four passengers are allowed into the inner-city zone. Motorists can, on the payment of \$3 a week, be given a sticker showing that the money has been paid. Even taxis are prevented from entering that zone before 10.15 in the morning, unless the proprietors pay the \$3. This practice prevents the busy city streets from becoming overcrowded during the morning and afternoon peak periods.

Nothing like that is done in Queensland. In certain parts of New South Wales, however, motorists are encouraged to share the

use of their vehicles so that a number of motorists club together and use their vehicles in rotation. In Brisbane it is necessary for a radio station, such as 4KQ, to advise motorists of the less congested routes into the city. I would not be game to drive in Brisbane again. On any occasion that I travel by taxi between the city and the airport, I find it impossible to count the high number of vehicles containing only one or two persons. Approximately 80 per cent of cars in Brisbane are occupied by only one or two persons. Yet millions of dollars are spent on the construction of freeways in Brisbane instead of on the provision of a greater number of buses. The Government is borrowing money for the construction of freeways for the people of Brisbane. And, as I say, most vehicles in Brisbane are occupied by only one or two persons.

Why doesn't the Government borrow money to complete road-works in country areas. The Minister for Mines and Energy promised that the road to which I referred earlier would be constructed, but it has not been built. I would ask the Minister for Main Roads to ascertain the present position.

In the past, the Federal Government has been blamed for the lack of funds for road-works. Let the Queensland Government blame the present Federal Government for the present lack of funds. I want to know what will be done about the construction of that highway. I also want a definite answer on the new traffic bridge in Bundaberg and the re-routing of traffic over that bridge instead of having it pass through the main city area.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (5.8 p.m.): I rise to speak to this Bill because I think it is time that this Parliament reviewed the State Government's policy on the development of main roads throughout Queensland. That comment from a country or provincial member might sound a little bit parochial; nevertheless, I think it is time that something was done about roads in country and provincial areas. The policy pursued by the State Government is certainly pro-metropolitan, and this point was well made by the member for Bundaberg. It has spent a tremendous amount of money on freeways. It is not long ago that the president of the Local Government Association criticised this Minister, saying that much of the money set aside by the Commonwealth Government for the development of roads in Queensland was spent not on country areas but on Brisbane.

Central Queensland is receiving a very shabby deal in the construction of main roads.

**An Honourable Member** interjected.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** The Capricorn Highway certainly needs repair and upgrading.

**Mr. Katter:** There is a very high accident rate on that road.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** An extremely high accident rate. School-bus drivers have complained that it is an extremely dangerous road. It has very poor shoulders and, with the huge volume of traffic it carries, it must call for immediate consideration. But it is not the only one; it is one of many.

I can remember the honourable member for Callide stressing the need to upgrade the road from Rockhampton to Yeppoon. Nothing has been done about it. Numerous accidents occur on that road, yet all the Minister tells us is that he has no money. Recently the member for Callide told me that the Main Roads Department was embarking on a works programme covering a distance of 1.6 miles. As the total distance involved is 23 miles, it cannot be claimed that the department is doing much about it.

I have made representations to the Minister about Yeppen Crossing, on which the Minister had the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education carry out studies. Models were made and a certain amount of money was spent on an investigation into this very important crossing. The area of Gracemere cannot develop until the problem at the Yeppen Crossing is overcome. Year after year in the wet season motorists are unable to travel west. The people who live in that area cannot get to work. The children who go to high school cannot get to high school. This is surely another matter that should receive the highest priority.

There is need for another bridge over the Fitzroy River in the centre of Rockhampton. Again, an investigation has been carried out. Recently the Minister said to me that he believed this was an urgent matter and that something would be done when money became available. I think he said that he hoped something might be done in the next couple of years. However, the model has been completed and the investigations have been carried out. Maps have been drawn. But nothing has been done in fact to overcome the difficulty. Anybody who tries to cross the bridge from North Rockhampton to South Rockhampton or vice versa at any time between 4.30 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. faces a very difficult task. If one accident occurs on the bridge, everybody is held up for a long period.

**Mr. Jensen:** It's the same in Bundaberg.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I am sure it is. It is the same in many other areas.

I believe that the money is available. The money has been available to provide roads in the Brisbane area, to the North Coast and to the Gold Coast. The Government never seems to have any troubles there in building four-lane and five-lane highways.

**Mr. Ahern** interjected.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Perhaps the Member for Landsborough has a few comments, but I have travelled from Nambour to here in

pretty good time, and some of the roads we have in our region could not be compared with that road.

I come back to the needs in our area. We have made repeated representations. The previous member for Rockhampton, Alderman Pilbeam, made representations about these problems. He was defeated in 1969, so that is how long the matter goes back. Still nothing has been done. It seems that it does not matter how many times we rise and speak on the issue; it depends on whether or not we are from Brisbane. I say that with all due respect to my own colleagues and others who live in the Brisbane area. Those in the areas outside Brisbane just cannot seem to get what is needed. I am starting to wonder where the priorities of this Government really lie.

**Mr. Casey:** Freeways.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** That seems to be so. Is the Government acting on the basis of benefit to the greater number of people? Surely that is wrong. Railways were not built on that basis. Governments realised the importance of roads to open up country areas and to develop the provincial cities. They also realised that there is a greater preponderance of people using the roads today for transporting their goods—but that is not given emphasis these days.

It is time that this Government reviewed its total policy, threw off the idea of being totally pro-metropolitan and rearranged its priorities to cater for country areas. As one of the members for Central Queensland, I believe that the Government ought to start there. We have numerous problems that will not be overcome unless the Minister and his Government do something about them.

There is the Denison Street railway line, too. I realise that in principle it has nothing really to do with the Department of Main Roads, but in effect it does. It cuts across the main north-south route through Rockhampton. Thousands and thousands of vehicles have to stop unnecessarily because of the presence of the railway line in Denison Street and the "Stop" signs associated with it. I know that I need to talk to the Minister for Transport on this; but I am sure that if the Minister for Main Roads was concerned he would do something about it.

One could go on and talk of all the different problems. There is the Drummond Range. A deputation was organised by the Chamber of Commerce. It even arranged a safari over the Drummond Range. A lot of promises were made, but nothing has been done. We have had election promises after election promises, but nothing has been achieved. The Government has to take into account not only the advantage to those who use the roads, but also the economic advantage to the community. Imagine the number of people who would be employed

and the money injected into our local economy if the Government decided to spend more on our roads. I ask the Minister to seriously consider this matter. It is of great importance to us.

Finally, I refer to one point raised by the honourable member for Rockhampton North. I totally agree with him. It relates to pedestrian crossings. We go to the police about it and say, "What is the rule?" They say, "It is not up to us, really. It is the city council." The city council says, "It is not really up to us. It is the Main Roads Department." The problem is passed back and forth between the police and the schools. We just do not seem to get anywhere. It is a real problem. We do not want young people being killed as they leave school or go to school. We need a forthright and exacting policy on school crossings. We are told that the Main Roads Department will agree to a pedestrian crossing only if the schools themselves provide children to police the crossing. Personally, I do not agree with that idea. I do not believe that children should be in the middle of the road at peak hours to assist other children in crossing a street safely. Surely we need to have some system whereby the lines are clearly marked. The drivers of vehicles must give way to the children. Children's lives are at stake.

I raise these points in some haste, but I believe they are important. As the Minister considers his programme for the forthcoming year, I ask him to have a darned good look at Central Queensland.

**Mr. DEAN** (Sandgate) (5.15 p.m.): It was not my intention to speak to this Bill.

**Mr. Hinze:** Why don't you thank me for the Deagon bypass?

**Mr. DEAN:** I ask the Minister to give me an opportunity. I have only just commenced my speech.

I did not intend to elaborate to any great extent. One of the things that worry me, as a person who drives a good deal, is the hoardings along the sides of our roads. When will we get rid of these ugly, unsightly and dangerous hoardings? Perhaps this matter does not come within the Minister's jurisdiction, but I think he could do something about having them removed.

**Mr. Hinze:** I saw one with "Vote A.L.P." on it.

**Mr. DEAN:** It should be removed. I do not care what it has on it.

I have seen all kinds of signs when I have been travelling on the South Coast road and the North Coast road and they are very dangerous obstructions.

Another hazard I wish to refer to is the difficulty in driving at night-time, especially on wet nights. On many occasions when I have been driving along a highway

on a wet night I have found the white lines to be practically invisible. I am wondering whether a new type of paint containing glitter would show up more on wet nights and whether such a paint could be evolved, discovered or compounded for use in painting these lines.

**Dr. Crawford** interjected.

**Mr. DEAN:** As the honourable gentleman said, they would probably be more easily seen if the paint had a bit of yellow colour or if yellow paint was used for the lines. This present situation is very dangerous indeed.

I am most appreciative of the provision of the Deagon deviation to which the Minister referred. It has made a big difference to my electorate as it carries the traffic to Redcliffe. I certainly hope that no hoardings are erected along it. A good deal of the Redcliffe traffic used to travel through the Sandgate area. This did not bring any trade to the business people there; as a matter of fact it took trade away from them.

I would like to see more road patrols on highways. This again might not come within the Minister's jurisdiction, but I ask that his department investigate putting more patrols on the highway.

The honourable member for Wolston referred to keeping to the left of the road. Many people are taking notice of the signs that were erected recently, but many are not. Some people do not read the correct signs. They read only the wrong ones.

I have had complaints recently in regard to the difficulty in paying registration fees to the Main Roads Department. The amount of work the clerks in that department are expected to do may be the cause of the delays. I ask the Minister to look into the matter of introducing flexitime in that department so that workers can pay registration fees on their way to work. Flexitime is being worked in some Commonwealth and State departments and it should be considered for this department. Many working people are having difficulty in paying their registration fees in normal working hours. On most occasions they have to get somebody else to pay the fees for them.

Coming closer to home—for many years I have requested both this Minister and his predecessor to establish a local Main Roads Office in my area and other areas for the collection of registration fees. This would cater for the local motorist. I suggest that the fees could be payable at the courthouse. Possibly there are some difficulties in providing there the office space and the facilities required. However, I think the suggestion is worthy of consideration and I would like the Minister to look at it.

**Hon. R. J. HINZE** (South Coast—Minister for Local Government and Main Roads) (5.19 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable



members for their contributions. Also I thank Government members for deliberately refraining from speaking in this debate. No doubt all honourable members could speak for an hour on road-works in their electorates. In saying that I could say that I am speaking on behalf of all Government members.

I would like to reply specifically to the member for Wolston, who said that the \$800,000 would be used for freeway construction. I was concerned that the same \$800,000 might get out of the area and that we might have to borrow or increase registration fees to pay the interest on the loan. All we are doing is trying to borrow funds for road construction throughout the State. We have to explore every avenue to obtain the necessary funds.

The Commonwealth Bureau of Roads recommended that Queensland should be entitled to \$140,000,000, yet the State is receiving only \$90,000,000. Labor members have heard my criticism of their colleague, Charles Jones. They have also heard my criticism of my colleague Peter Nixon. I cannot understand why the Federal Government is not prepared to finance the programme of work that has to be undertaken in this State. We are not getting the funds that we need. As the current programme terminates in 1977, a new road-planning programme is being prepared, and it is hoped that it will be possible to receive the level of funding that the Bureau of Roads recommended for Queensland.

The honourable member for Mackay referred to his area specifically, and, of course, he was pleased that funds have been made available for the construction of the Rocligh Bridge. This is the project that I referred to in question-time this morning. My colleague the Minister for Mines and Energy, together with the honourable member for Mackay, has been making representations for the construction of this bridge.

The honourable member for Rockhampton North mentioned that people in his electorate have had some difficulty in paying registration fees. I can indicate to him that an office will be opened in Rockhampton within the next six months. I think that offices will be opened in the Redcliffe and Sandgate areas tomorrow, and on the Gold Coast and in Ipswich in a few months' time. This is part of the department's development and diversification throughout the State.

**Mr. Casey:** What kind of support has come from Queensland Federal members in your approach to the Federal Government for more funds?

**Mr. HINZE:** I think that they have been told fairly clearly that they should put forward on the floor of Parliament and in the joint-party room our case for the funds that we are seeking. I do not want to take anyone specifically to task.

**Mr. Houston:** We do not want a sermon; just tell us the facts.

**Mr. HINZE:** We must try to get them to understand that they, too, have to say their piece.

The honourable member for Bundaberg referred to toll roads. There is nothing new about toll roads. In some of the countries of high-density population such as Japan, France, and Italy, there is a swing back to toll roads. I do not know if this is a sign of times in that Governments are not prepared to return to the people the funds they have taken from them.

When Sir Robert Menzies was Prime Minister, the Government imposed a fuel tax and 90 per cent of that tax was returned for road construction. Now it is down to about 47 per cent. The nexus was broken by Sir Robert Menzies, who said that there was no connection between the fuel tax collected and the funds for road construction. The present reduced percentage will give members an indication of how difficult it is to get the funds we need.

I take strong exception when anybody says in this Chamber that the Government uses most of our funds for freeways in the city of Brisbane. It was said also that we had been taking some of the funds for work in the Gold Coast area. This is not true, as honourable members know. If somebody asked me to give a figure on a per-capita basis, I would say that, relatively, the Northwest gets far more than it is entitled to. If somebody wants the figures, I will give them to him any time he likes.

The honourable member for Rockhampton also referred to the Yeppoon road. I want to say here and now that through the efforts of my friend and colleague the honourable member for Callide it has been possible to allocate \$170,000 for that specific project this year. It was not due to anything done by the honourable member for Rockhampton.

In connection with signs on the road, I agree with the honourable member for Sandgate that there are far too many, and therefore I have given instructions to the commissioner that his officers are to make sure that any signs other than directional and speed signs on the side of the road are to be removed forthwith.

In winding up the discussion, I want to thank honourable members for their contributions. I know that many of my colleagues would have liked to spend 30 minutes discussing roads in their areas, because they are a matter of major importance in every part of the State. When honourable members opposite start saying that we are putting all our money into the city of Brisbane, I ask them to please remember that last week we opened the Flinders Highway.

**Mr. Wright:** What about the Fitzroy Bridge?

**Mr. HINZE:** I promised the mayor of Rockhampton, Alderman Pilbeam, that I will do all I can to complete the Drummond Range road.

**Mr. Wright:** When?

**Mr. HINZE:** Never mind that.

**Mr. Wright:** That's what it's all about.

**Mr. HINZE:** I have told Alderman Pilbeam that I will complete the Drummond Range road when it is possible. I have already asked the commissioner to inform me of the distance that remains to be completed, the funding that is required, and when I can get—

**Mr. Wright:** What about Yeppen crossing? What are you going to do about that?

**Mr. HINZE:** Never mind about that for the moment.

I have already informed the honourable member for Mackay that the construction of the Rocleigh Bridge will also commence next year. I think that I have been more than generous in the distribution of the limited amount of funds that I have to spend throughout the State. I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Motion (Mr. Hinze) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

### GOVERNORS' PENSIONS BILL

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—Pensions payable—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (5.30 p.m.): As I indicated earlier to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I thought there was some merit in his suggestion. Accordingly, I move the following amendment—

“On page 2, line 5, omit the words—  
‘born in Australia’

and insert in lieu thereof the words—  
‘who is an Australian citizen.’”

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba) (5.31 p.m.): I thank the Premier and his staff for making the alteration. I believe that it will make it quite clear that all Australians will be equal when an appointment to the position of Governor is being considered.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 6, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, by leave, read a third time.

### NURSING BILL

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Minister for Health) (5.34 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

This Bill constitutes the Nurses Registration Board of Queensland, which will be responsible for the registration or enrolment of the various categories of nurses in Queensland and for the regulation of the practice of nursing in this State.

Now that honourable members have had the opportunity to peruse the Bill, they will have noted that the provisions are generally similar to those contained in the registration Acts for other professional groups.

As a result of the introduction of separate legislation relative to the education of nurses in Queensland, the opportunity was taken to completely revise and update the provisions of the Nurses Act of 1964 whilst deleting reference to the previous educational function of the Nurses Board of Queensland. The extent of the revision was such that repeal of the existing Act and development of new legislation were considered to be more satisfactory than amendment of the existing Act.

The present members of the Nurses Board of Queensland will complete their term of office as members of the reconstituted Nurses Registration Board of Queensland. On expiration of their term, a board of seven members in lieu of nine will be appointed. The Bill provides for at least five of the seven board members to be registered nurses, one of whom will be chairman of the board.

Provision is made in the savings clauses of the Bill for the transition of the board, its registrar and other appointed staff, and of records maintained under the repealed Act, to the new legislation. The rights of individuals to have their name restored to a register or roll after repeal of existing legislation are also catered for.

Definitions provided are essentially unchanged apart from those of “registered nurse” and “enrolled nurse”. The term “enrolled nurse” has replaced the previous term “nursing aide”. The enrolled nurse undertakes a training programme, at present of 12 months, passes an examination and

plays an important role in patient care. The term "aide" was considered to convey the impression of a much more menial role than the actual duties undertaken by these nurses.

Provision is made in the Bill for proclamation of an appointed day on which educational responsibility will be assumed by the Board of Nursing Studies. Until the appointed day the educational responsibility of the Nurses Board of Queensland under the repealed Act will continue to be met by the Nurses Registration Board of Queensland.

Provisions relative to tenure of office, filling of casual vacancies, appointment of advisory committees and payment of allowances and expenses of board and committee members are similar to provisions of other registration Acts.

The sections relative to appointment of the registrar and board officers and to accounting practices have been updated.

Qualifications required for a nurse to become registered or enrolled in Queensland are clearly established. Firstly, a nurse educated in Queensland seeking registration requires a certificate, degree or diploma from a school of nursing accredited by the Board of Nursing Studies or a certificate obtained following a course of study and examination under the terms of the repealed Act. Provision is made for persons trained under the repealed Act who have been absent from nursing for some time to undertake such additional training as the board prescribes before registration is granted.

Provision is made in the Bill for a nurse trained elsewhere than in Queensland to be registered if her qualification is regarded as equal to or higher than the standard required of Queensland graduates. Where her qualification is not of this standard, provision is made for the board to consider her application subject to the satisfactory completion of additional training prescribed by the board. Provision is also made for the board to take into consideration post-graduate experience obtained by a nurse when examining her application for registration.

Similarly qualifications for enrolled nurses are clearly established. Finally, provision is made for applicants who have qualified in Queensland either at a school of nursing accredited by the Board of Nursing Studies or under the terms of the repealed Act. Provision is also made for those applicants who have trained outside Queensland and who are of an acceptable standard or who, subject to successful completion of a period of additional training, can be considered to have attained the required standard.

The Bill also makes provision for enrolment of nurses who have not undergone formal training but who have considerable nursing experience gained over many years of practice. If considered necessary the board may require applicants for enrolment in this category to undertake and pass an examination conducted by the board.

Subject to the prescribed qualifications for registration or enrolment being held, the Bill establishes procedures for an applicant for registration or enrolment. These are in accordance with procedures established in other similar legislation and include provision for determination of the medical fitness of an applicant to practise nursing by a committee of assessors.

Procedures for granting of provisional registration, registration for a limited period of overseas lecturers or nurses undertaking post-graduate study, registration of additional qualifications and issue of a certificate of registration or enrolment are established.

The Bill provides for removal of a nurse's name from the register or roll and for correction of the register or roll as required. Procedures are established for taking disciplinary action against a registered or enrolled nurse and penalties are prescribed.

Provision is also made in the Bill for lodging an appeal against a decision of the board, and proceedings for hearing of an appeal are established.

Provisions of the previous legislation relative to the practice of nursing are relatively unchanged apart from increased penalty provisions. Authority is provided for the board to take or demand a statutory declaration for the purposes of the Act.

By-law-making powers of the board have been revised to correspond with the functions of the board provided for in the Bill.

This Bill does not depart from established procedures followed in registration Acts for other professional groups. It serves only to update and consolidate previous legislation relative to the registration and enrolment of the various categories of nurses in Queensland and to regulate the practice of nursing in this State.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (5.40 p.m.): As the Minister has indicated, with the introduction of the Nursing Studies Bill the Government has taken the opportunity to update other nursing legislation and is setting up a Nurses Registration Board to take the place of the old Nurses Board.

We have no opposition to the Bill. One of its provisions that deserves praise concerns the retraining of nurses who leave the profession, settle down and get married and subsequently decide to re-enter the profession. They are a valuable asset to the profession. Nurses are in short supply, and it is necessary to make provision for women who leave the profession and later re-enter it to be granted registration. They should be able to receive full training.

Some nurses, particularly those in country areas, have not received the full formal training, and the Minister is recognising that

point. Bush nurses, for example, have looked after people for years and under this Bill will be given registration even though they have not undergone the full training that is required. As I say, we have no opposition to the Bill.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask honourable members to speak up. The public address system has broken down and the Hansard reporters are having difficulty in hearing honourable members.

Motion (Dr. Edwards) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 50, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Dr. Edwards, by leave, read a third time.

### MEDICAL ACT AND OTHER ACTS (ADMINISTRATION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Minister for Health) (5.43 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

At the introductory stage I indicated that the amendments were of a machinery nature only, to incorporate the titles of new Acts replacing repealed legislation and to repeal a redundant section. I am sure that no further elaboration is required at this stage.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (5.44 p.m.): The Opposition has no objection to the procedures provided for in this Bill.

Motion (Dr. Edwards) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 4, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Dr. Edwards, by leave, read a third time.

### HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Minister for Health) (5.46 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

In my introductory speech, I outlined the major provisions of this Bill. Now that honourable members have had the opportunity to peruse it, I will elaborate upon its intent.

A number of provisions of the Bill relate to drug offences. I have previously advised this House of the Government's commitment to reducing the incidence of drug-trafficking in Queensland and to assist the rehabilitation of residents of this State who have become dependent upon drugs.

To reduce drug-trafficking, which can be extremely lucrative, a decision was taken by the Government to provide penalties at a level that, if applied by the courts, would be a considerable deterrent. While the profits of drug-trafficking can be high, the proposed maximum fine of \$100,000 should seriously deplete the available resources of any trafficker.

The possibility of a sentence of life imprisonment on conviction should also have the desired effect, but, if not, such a sentence will at least remove these pedlars of misery from the community.

I look now to the courts to use the provisions of this Bill, and the penalties now created for trafficking in drugs and prohibited plants, to maximum effect, to support the Government in its drive against drug use and abuse in Queensland.

Consistent with the drive against drug traffickers and the provision of harsher penalties for trafficking, the Bill introduces a new provision to impose similar penalties for possession of money or other securities either for commission of an offence against the provisions of the Health Act or obtained from the illicit sale of drugs or prohibited plants. Such penalties are for conviction on indictment.

Provision is made also in the Bill for such moneys or securities to be forfeited to the Crown on conviction and to be paid into Consolidated Revenue.

Where securities are involved, suitable provision has been made for these to vest in the Treasurer of Queensland and for any register or other record to be so adjusted. The Treasurer will be authorised to deal with and realise on any securities so forfeited.

Where securities forfeited as a result of action taken under the provision of this Bill are stolen property, the Bill makes provision for the rights of the lawful owner to be observed.

The definition of prohibited plant has been amended to put beyond doubt that a seed is a seed in any proceedings where the seed of a prohibited plant is involved.

The Bill also expands the present provision of section 130J of the Health Act to incorporate possession of a quantity of a substance

containing a drug in excess of a quantity prescribed in addition to possession of a quantity of a drug exceeding the quantity prescribed. This provision was included on the request of police representatives at a recent meeting of the National Standing Control Committee on Drugs of Dependence.

The present provisions of the Act are expanded to provide for detention by a police officer of any person he reasonably suspects of having in his possession or at his disposition money or other security for commission of or received from the commission of an offence against the provisions of section 130 of the Health Act. The Bill also provides for retention of things seized in connection with an offence against the Act pending final determination of appeals.

These various provisions I have outlined will all serve the Government in its fight against the distribution and illicit use of drugs and prohibited plants in Queensland.

The Bill provides a revised definition for a "pharmacist" following the recent introduction of the Pharmacy Act 1976 and amends previous references in the Health Act to a "pharmaceutical chemist" accordingly. An exemption is provided also for a State botanist from the provisions of section 130 of the Act where he is required to have in his possession in the course of his duties a prohibited plant. State botanists will be appointed under the existing provisions of the Act.

This Bill also introduces a new division in the Act relative to pest control operators. Pest control operators will be licensed under the provisions of this division.

The new division lays down procedures for the issue of a licence, the basis for eligibility, duration of licences and renewal procedures, cancellation or suspension of a licence and the imposition of conditions on a licence. Procedures for use of pesticides are also established and provision is made for the making of regulations to give effect to the provisions of the division.

A licensee will be required to notify the Director-General of Health and Medical Services of any accidents that occur in the preparation or use of pesticides. Powers of inspectors are also established.

The Bill contains provisions also for appeal to the Minister by any licensee or person aggrieved by a decision of the Director-General made pursuant to this division.

Considerable time has been spent by botanists employed by the Department of Primary Industries in court appearances to give evidence concerning examination of plants seized by police officers. A provision of this Bill will enable botanists' certificates to be received by a court on the same basis as analysts' certificates.

Regulation-making powers of the present Act are revised to put beyond doubt the authority of the director-general to make

regulations relative to all of a pharmacy and in respect of the manufacture and packaging of poisons. Provision is also made to prescribe fees for examination by State analysts and botanists.

A clause of the Bill updates the titles of various professional bodies eligible to nominate members of the Queensland Radium Institute.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (5.51 p.m.): While the Opposition has some serious reservations about some of the provisions of this Bill, we do not propose to oppose them at this stage. We hope that in the drive to deal effectively with those who batten on drug users by trafficking in drugs, the Government will not act savagely against those who need rehabilitation and treatment. We support any move to stamp out drug-trafficking and, as I said, with some reservations we offer no opposition to the Bill.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (5.52 p.m.): I should like to congratulate the Minister on his attitude to drug addiction and drug-pushing. Over a period of years since 1960 we have seen a great upsurge in drug use and abuse. I do not know why they have suddenly escalated. There is only one answer. It is not the fondness of the victim for the drug but, I think, the salesmanship and the greed of the pusher.

It is pleasing to see the Department of Health and the Minister taking a lead in Australia to provide sentences that will make any pusher really think twice before he goes into the trade or hopes to make money out of the victim.

Basically I do not think that the human mind has changed very much in seeking joy, pleasure and relief from our so-called modern civilisation. I think it is as a result of the salesmanship of the pusher and the person behind the use of these heinous drugs and his techniques of attack on our youth that this problem has reached the magnitude that it has today.

There are one or two aspects of the drug scene that I am not happy about. In this State we use what is called the methadone treatment of the heroin addict. The use of heroin has assumed rather tremendous proportions not only in this country but also in Europe and other countries such as America. The people there know where it comes from. They have traced it and followed it through to the purification plants, but they still have not got it under control.

The people who are pushing and running this form of drug are extremely clever. In some countries they have the ear of politicians and public servants with the result that it is extremely hard to break the chain. I am pleased to see that we are starting to break the chain by providing penalties that

will make these people think a second time. Addiction to drugs is rather interesting. Drugs have a sort of chain reaction.

I have heard in discussions and I have heard honourable members here say that the penalties are too severe. Personally I do not think the penalties are severe enough. In Singapore, there is no argument. Pushers are taken out and hanged. I wanted to see the old Changi camp and as the taxi-driver took me past it he said, "That is where they hang them for drug offences today." Evidently it is the accepted procedure there for getting rid of unwanted people. I think that the imprisonment of our drug runners goes a long way as this is a serious and heinous crime. Hanging was usually reserved for murderers in this country or for people who committed treason.

When one looks at people who have started on the chain of the heroin run, a big proportion start with marijuana and alcohol, and then they turn to heroin. From then on anything can happen—from murder to complete degradation and disintegration of morals, mind and body. To see a heroin addict is to see a hulk of a human being completely addicted to a drug, a chemical compound, without rhyme or reason. In the result, the whole body disintegrates and the addict ends up with hepatitis and phlebitis, and eventually death. There are many, many cases recorded. The penalty proposed by the Minister is a little less severe than that of Mr. Lee Kuan Yew but is definitely warranted. I would not be aghast if in this State or in this country of ours the death penalty were brought in for heroin pedlars. I would agree with it because I have seen so many problems arising from the use of heroin and associated drugs.

I suggest to the Minister that when he is next reviewing the drug problem in this State he thinks deeply on the methadone treatment for heroin addicts. We have a great number of people wandering around who are registered drug addicts. Virtually what we have done is substitute one drug for another. Methadone is a drug of addiction, and we actually have not cured the problem; all we have done is to transfer the person from one drug to another.

**Mr. Moore:** Keep on the heroin!

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** The member for Windsor said to keep them on heroin. The problem would be less because they would die faster. We would still have the problem of drug addiction. That solution would most probably amount to the same as the one the Prime Minister of Singapore has used.

**Mr. Moore:** They used to give the opium addicts drugs from the chemist. They still do.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** That is so. When I first came to Queensland there were registered opium addicts. When the Government

Medical Officer was not there these addicts would go to the hospital and be issued with certain quantities. Luckily these opium addicts were elderly Chinese who have since all died.

I think the Minister is to be congratulated on his approach to this problem, and I would request that when he is reviewing the drug problem in this State he thinks seriously about modifying methadone treatment as I do not think it is the answer. Japan tried it and found it wanting.

**Dr. Crawford:** It is an American idea.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** And in other countries. I believe the Minister visited Macao and saw the drug addiction centre there. They do not use the methadone treatment.

The Japanese say that addicts are not criminals; they are sick people and are big nuisances so they are locked up. I think that this idea will go a long way towards solving the problems we have with the methadone treatment of heroin addicts. Long-term confinement may have to be investigated in conjunction with rehabilitation programmes.

**Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (5.58 p.m.):** I shall speak very briefly as time is short. I realise that the penalties under these amendments are substantial, and I would suggest that if we are going to use them as a deterrent they must be made known to the would-be pushers and users. This is one of the greatest problems with law enforcement, because young people do not understand the penalty to which they are liable if they are caught. I would ask the Minister to publicise these penalties widely, especially in schools, and also to make people clearly aware of the rights of the individual. The Government seems to be adopting a policy of heavier punishment, but it has a responsibility to point out that access is available to areas of rehabilitation where people can obtain help. At the moment very few people realise where they can get help. There are a number of voluntary organisations in the metropolitan area. There are ministers of religion, church groups and other organisations where people can go for help.

I would ask the Minister to speak to the Minister for Police about the need for greater assistance for the police in overcoming the problem of trafficking in drugs. There is a need not only for an increase in the number of police involved in apprehending these people but also additional finance. I read an article recently which stated that the British police have had some real successes because money is made available to them which enables them to set traps to catch the pushers. Admittedly this does not come within the ambit of the Minister's portfolio—

**Mr. Lane:** You've been watching too many B-grade movies.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** The honourable member would not know. He should stay out of this or go out and evict some more pensioners. This is a serious matter. If we are going to do something about pushers, the police must have the facilities and, above all, the ability to carry out their job.

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

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Minister for Health) (7.15 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions. The Leader of the Opposition said that honourable members opposite support the Bill's general principles and will be interested in observing its outcome. We will certainly be interested ourselves, as will the rest of Australia. As I have indicated, it will be a national uniform programme to try to overcome the problem by this method.

The honourable member for Townsville mentioned methadone treatment. The Government and I have been very concerned for some time about the amount of methadone that is used in this State. Recently we had a panel of experts look at the use of drugs and the results of that inquiry by my department will be available in the new year. One of the findings of that inquiry dealt with the extent of the use of methadone in this State. This is a cause of concern to all States. I assure the honourable member that we are looking at this problem and urging doctors also to do so.

The honourable member for Rockhampton mentioned methods of publicising the availability of treatment. I am sure he is aware of the Health Paper we produced recently on alcohol and drug dependence services. One of the things we will be emphasising will be an education programme and, of course, under the health education programme we will have a special drug education unit to try to assist affected people. A committee comprising officers of the Health and Education Departments has been established to publicise this matter in schools. I share the honourable member's concern about this matter.

Motion (Dr. Edwards) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 13, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Dr. Edwards, by leave, read a third time.

PETROLEUM ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Energy) (7.18 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

This is a very short Bill. It will bring fees payable as deposits on permits, rental of permits and rental of leases more in line with present-day values. I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. MARGINSON** (Wolston) (7.19 p.m.): During the introductory debate Opposition members indicated that they could see nothing wrong with the Bill. The proportionate increase in some of the fees has been greater than in others, but we go along with them. We have no objections to the Bill.

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Energy) (7.20 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Wolston and the Opposition for their co-operation.

Motion (Mr. Camm) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Camm, by leave, read a third time.

BUSINESS NAMES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (7.21 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Now that the Bill has been printed, honourable members will have observed that although in my introductory speech I made all money references in decimal currency, in fact the words limiting the amount of fees which may be charged under the Business Names Act, which it is proposed to remove, are “(not exceeding ten pounds)”.

The reason for this is to be found in section 7 of the Decimal Currency Act of 1965, which authorises the Government Printer to substitute in all copies of any Act printed by him for any and every reference to an amount of money expressed in the

old currency a reference to an amount of money in the new currency. Accordingly although the Business Names Act is actually written in terms of the old currency, money amounts in the Act as reprinted since 1965 are expressed in the new currency and what may appear at first glance to be an anomaly has really a very simple explanation.

The principal purpose of the Bill, as I have already explained, is to remove the restriction on the upper limits of fees which may be charged under the Business Names Act and to validate any unauthorised charges already made. In addition, the opportunity is taken to express in the new currency all money amounts which are still on the Statute Book in the old currency.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (7.22 p.m.): The Opposition supports the legislation, which, as the Minister has explained, relates to an increase in the fees charged for registration and also contains amendments relating to decimal currency. It is rather restrictive on any Assembly to have such a ceiling on fees, and it is undesirable to have to change legislation continually. The principle was put forward in this Chamber some time ago—originally by the honourable member for Landsborough, I think—that this Assembly should make the final decision on fees, and honourable members will have to watch very closely each year to see what the quantum is when we begin amending Acts. However, it is the task of this Assembly to act as a watch-dog.

I looked at the Business Names Act, and although the legislation now before the House is very simple, all honourable members will agree that the concept of business names is a very important one and that the name used often sells a product. It is to be noted that under the Act the registrar has certain requirements that must be met when a person applies for registration. I have made representations on behalf of people who have been refused the right to use certain names because they were too close to another name. Decisions of that type have to be made by the registrar to ensure that someone cannot profit by using a name similar to that of someone else who has worked hard over a long period to establish a business.

I note also that a business name is often used as a means of establishing one's bona fides. Too often one finds firms, particularly in country areas, telling people that they have a registered business name. Because of that, people think they are something special. That must be made very clear, because trouble occurs repeatedly when certain companies that are able to register a business name engage in activities that are shocking. I think particularly of the house-cladding groups that are registered and use that name.

The time is coming when the registrar will have to go further into the requirements. Instead of knowing only the business

name and having a concise description of the true nature of the business carried on, perhaps the time has arrived when he should give deeper consideration to what the company or firm is going to do. I again refer to the house-cladding groups. They register a name and then go round and catch people for hundreds of dollars by way of contracts. People fall for that.

I think that the registrar should look very closely at some of the names that are still being registered. I know of a case of a fellow who started off with a travelling photography studio. He used a name very close to that of a well-known firm in the State. When people asked him about it he said, "Oh, you have heard of us, for sure, haven't you?" They would say, "Yes, I think so." So they would enter into contracts. We found later on that the firm was a one-man show with a back-room studio, and the contracts were never fulfilled.

Although the measure before us is a simple one, this is a good time for the Minister to consider the role of the registrar. Although we do not expect him to carry out a deep investigation into all the activities, there is a responsibility on him, in the interests of consumer protection, to look further into the practices of the businesses.

**Mr. AHERN** (Landsborough) (7.27 p.m.): The honourable member for Rockhampton has prompted me to make a brief reference to a principle that is involved in this legislation. The point I was making earlier is characteristically enshrined in the original Act, that is, that a maximum charge is included in the legislation. I take it that what we are now doing is removing the maximum altogether and enabling the Government to put on whatever charge it likes. Basically this is not a good principle. I think the Legislature itself should maintain some supervision over the scale of fees. We are now saying that, if the Government wants to make a charge of \$100 a year for the registration of a business name, it can do so. In these times of inflation costs have been skyrocketing, and this has created difficulties.

Soon we will have to return to the principle that the Legislature should maintain a certain supervision over maximums in charges and penalties, and not allow the Executive the completely unfettered right to determine the level. After all, all that the Bill enables the Government to do is to register business names, and to maintain supervision. If it becomes a device to raise revenue for the State, it is going beyond the principles initially enshrined in the Act. I am quite happy to let this go through, but eventually we will have to return to the time-honoured principle in the original Act of designating a maximum level beyond which we do not think the Government should go in charges. Otherwise we would be negating the principle of the original Act.



**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (7.29 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions. As I pointed out at the introductory stage, this is a budgetary measure, and honourable members would have had an opportunity on an earlier occasion to debate the matter.

The other matter which is quite significant is that the charges are to be introduced by regulation, and regulations can be challenged in the House. While I accept what honourable members have said—

**Mr. Wright:** We have no control over money aspects.

**Mr. LICKISS:** A member can move for the disallowance of a regulation in relation to quantum. We have a Subordinate Legislation Committee, which ensures that regulations are not legally incompatible with legislation. The substance of a regulation tabled in the House can be challenged within 14 days.

I thank honourable members for their contributions. Their remarks will be noted.

Motion (Mr. Lickiss) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 4, both inclusive, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Lickiss, by leave, read a third time.

### URBAN PASSENGER SERVICE PROPRIETORS ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. K. W. HOOPER** (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport) (7.32 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

In introducing the Bill I pointed out that it was purely a machinery measure, and the support of honourable members is appreciated.

It is hoped that with the speedy passing of this legislation it will be possible for administrative procedures to be effected to enable those proprietors of urban passenger services to receive retrospective payment, as provided by the Bill, prior to Christmas. Of course, honourable members will appreciate that this cannot be done until assent is given to the legislation.

I thank the honourable member for Cairns for his support and the honourable members for Toowoomba North and Landsborough for again raising some aspects, which, as they are well aware, have my support.

**Mr. JONES** (Cairns) (7.33 p.m.): The concept of the Bill is a good one. The Opposition realises the need to reframe section 17 to provide that, where the Governor in Council approves, entitlements will be granted to eligible bus proprietors. Retrospectivity applies, particularly to the percentage, which is also designated and approved, to the date of proclamation of the Act or 12 months antecedent to the date of approval, whichever is the later.

The Opposition supports the amendments so that the benefits accruing to bus operators and proprietors conducting urban passenger services will be granted. They will be able to provide a viable and efficient passenger service at cheap fares.

Motion (Mr. Hooper) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Hooper, by leave, read a third time.

### FAUNA CONSERVATION ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### INITIATION

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

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Fauna Conservation Act 1974 and the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975, each in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

#### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (7.37 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Fauna Conservation Act 1974 and the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975, each in certain particulars.”

In Queensland we have an extremely rich heritage of fauna. The recently created National Parks and Wildlife Service has been entrusted with the conservation of this heritage.

There are 223 different species of mammals in Australia. About two-thirds (or 149) of these different species are found in Queensland. Likewise, four-fifths (or 547) of the 683 different species of birds and over half

(or 352) of the 626 different species of reptiles and amphibians which Australia has are recorded in Queensland.

Most significantly, many of these species are not found in quantity or at all in the other States and certainly not overseas. This very richness and uniqueness unfortunately makes Queensland an attractive and lucrative target for both interstate and overseas illegal fauna-trafficking. Small animals, reptiles and birds especially, are very vulnerable to the attentions of these dollar-hungry predators of our wildlife. Honourable members on both sides of the Chamber, I am sure, will have seen photographs of the victims of this revolting trade. Smuggled as they are in hollowed-out transistors, wooden boxes, false-bottomed suitcases or in the folds of clothing, drugged and closely confined with no food or water for long periods of time, it is not surprising that mortality frequently reaches 100 per cent.

The rewards, however, are so great in dollar terms that the trade can stand these odds. The cost overseas of a matched pair of even our more common parrots is often of the order of thousands of dollars. Even interstate, the market value can multiply tenfold and more.

In some ways, this illegal traffic in fauna is comparable to drug-trafficking. The people are totally ruthless—mobile, yet highly organised. The rewards are very great, and regrettably, as with the fight against drug-trafficking, law enforcement agencies are uncovering only the tip of the iceberg.

The purpose of this Bill is to strengthen the arm of the law by increasing the powers of the wildlife rangers of the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the matter of certain offences in fauna-dealing. The Bill also aims to increase the penalties that offenders will receive when they are caught. The young National Parks and Wildlife Service, though strong in the quality of its officers, is not so strong in quantity. In fact an appointment made only last week brings its strength to five wildlife rangers in the field to cover this vast State. It is intended to increase this number progressively, but the present need to curtail the growth of the Public Service has had to be applied right across the board. As well as this, of course, these officers have many other duties, such as the management of commercial and sport shooting, inspection of the premises of legitimate fauna dealers and zoos, and performing extension work for the service in their field of expertise.

The Bill, therefore, has particular worth at the present time, while the service is so short of field and clerical staff.

It will help in two ways. On the one hand it will enable these officers to act quickly and positively by giving them powers of arrest. The service enjoys, at all levels of contact it has with the Queensland Police, a very good working relationship and full co-operation. This Bill does not propose to

encroach on police powers. It is designed to complement law-enforcement powers in some of the emergent situations in which wildlife rangers find themselves placed from time to time when police help is unavailable.

On the other hand, substantially increasing the penalties and royalties recoverable may well frighten off the fringe operators—small-time collectors and trappers and those who are willing to transport intrastate and interstate to the larger operators. These people, attracted by the promise of a few easy dollars with no questions asked, may think again when they can see they are gambling with higher stakes.

The reason for the urgency of this legislation is that my officers have advised me that they are becoming aware that the extent of this traffic is reaching frightening proportions and could pose a threat to the viability of localised populations of some of the rarer and therefore more valuable species involved. I feel that in the circumstances I would be derelict in my duty if I were to delay this short Bill until the next sittings of this Parliament.

I commend the Bill to honourable members on both sides of the Chamber and believe it is deserving of their support. I am sure we can rely with the utmost confidence on the professional competence of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife (Dr. Graham Saunders) and the experienced officers he has in this field of the service's responsibilities.

I am sure the powers will not be used lightly or wantonly, nor do I believe that the proposed increases in penalties—to include gaol as well as fines—are too harsh for the type of offence we are considering.

I said earlier that the trade had features in common with drug-trafficking. Accordingly, the penalties proposed match those for drug-trafficking.

When our State's treasure-house of fauna is plundered like this, it transcends political boundaries for we are all losing a precious part of the Queensland we know and that we want our children to know.

I commend the motion to the Committee.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (7.42 p.m.): We in the Opposition welcome any Bill to protect the fauna and flora of this State. We realise that in our fauna we have a valuable heritage that we ought to protect not only because of their beauty and the wonderful way they can entertain us if we see them in their natural environment, but also to maintain them for the benefit of the youngsters who are following us.

I can remember the introduction of the Fauna Conservation Bill in 1974. At that time the penalties were increased from a minimum of \$8 and a maximum of \$300. When I heard that this Bill was to be

introduced I looked at the newspapers that I had referred to at that time. I found a large number of headlines over the years from about 1970 onwards concerning the smuggling of birds.

When the Bill was introduced in 1974 we said to the Minister that we did not believe he would be able to protect birds such as the golden shouldered parrot and the hooded parrot, because they were so valuable that they would bring \$4,000 to \$5,000 in Holland or in Singapore. I believe that at that time the golden shouldered parrot, a little bird about the size of a budgerigar from the Cape York Peninsula, was added to the list of permanently protected fauna.

I was shocked to hear the Minister say tonight that we have only five wildlife protection officers and that the last of them was appointed in only the last week or so. One of the most urgent steps to protect our fauna is the appointment of more officers. It is no good increasing the fines or providing for the arrest of people caught unless there is staff to implement those penalties.

I accept that fauna officers will have problems in catching someone trapping birds in the Gulf Country or in any other country area when a policeman is not always available, so I am prepared to accept that in the circumstances additional power should be given to these wildlife officers. I am apprehensive, however, about giving them powers similar to those of the police because, unless they are trained in the same way as the police, then we will create some problems for ourselves. At the same time we realise that there is a need to protect what I believe are defenceless little creatures.

I was brought up in a family on a farm where my Dad would never allow us to cage a bird. He believed in freedom and was opposed to gaoling or locking up defenceless animals or birds. I believe, as I think most people do, that although birds look attractive in spacious aviaries, it is far better to see them in their wild state.

**Mr. Moore:** You do not like them in aviaries?

**Mr. BURNS:** I do not like aviaries. I believe that people are entitled to their own tastes. I would not have a small aviary in my backyard with wild birds caged in it.

**Mr. Moore:** What about breeding?

**Mr. BURNS:** It is just a matter of taste and the way people are brought up. My father did not believe in that in any shape or form. I was taught that and I believe it. I do not object to the person down the street who wants to keep an aviary. It is just not my idea of the way to treat a wild creature. I do not believe in it.

It has been suggested over the years that maybe we are in part responsible for some of our own problems in Australia because

we do have birds and animals which are unique and prohibiting the trapping of them and sending them overseas makes them all the more valuable to thieves and, I suppose they could be called fauna-robbers—dollar-hungry men who are prepared to carry birds concealed in the lining of their clothes.

**Mr. Moore:** And anaesthetise them and pack them in all sorts of ways. If it were open and they could be sold, the birds would arrive there alive and well.

**Mr. BURNS:** In 1973 Alec H. Chisholm, who, I am told, is a world-renowned ornithologist, wrote an article. He was helping the Australian Customs to stamp out the smuggling of parrots overseas. He was visiting Brisbane to give the inaugural Clem Lack Memorial Oration to the Royal Historical Society of Queensland. At that time he suggested that we ought to look at the controlled export of some of these parrots. As I say, it goes against my grain to say that they should be locked up, anyway, but more and more people are saying that it might well be time for us to look at this suggestion. We sent a couple of koala bears the other day over to the San Diego Zoo because gum trees grow there that they can be fed on and they will be well cared for.

**Dr. Crawford:** Their progeny are dying, unfortunately.

**Mr. BURNS:** Are they?

**Mr. Moore:** They are dead.

**Mr. BURNS:** Over there? The new ones? That is a pity. Under those circumstances, the situation needs rethinking. I hate to visit zoos round the world and see a lonely poor old kangaroo. I saw one in Moscow and one in Stockholm. I felt sorry. I thought that confining a single kangaroo in this way was cruel.

**Mr. Tenni:** You ought to see the dead ones on the road up my way.

**Mr. BURNS:** I am talking about the ones we have taken and deliberately locked up and sent across the world. It is different from the kangaroo that runs on the road. At least it was free and doing its own thing and ran in front of the car. I was smashed up by emus and kangaroos all round the countryside when I was an organiser through the West; I have had experience with them.

It seems to me that we have a problem in trying to control bird smuggling. If people are going to continue to smuggle, maybe it is a good idea to try controlled exports. I am told that the hooded parrot from the Northern Territory is virtually extinct. I have never seen a golden-shouldered parrot. I am told that they are the size of a budgerigar.

**Mr. Moore:** They are breeding them round about.

**Mr. BURNS:** I do not think so.

**Mr. Moore:** I can prove it.

**Mr. BURNS:** They tell me that they are worth four and five thousand dollars in Holland. They are worth \$3,000 each in Singapore.

As I see it, we have a problem. The Minister has admitted that we have a shortage of staff and that the Act is being amended now to increase the penalties that were introduced in the Act of 1974 and to give our rangers greater power. I have no objection to doing just that as long as we do not overstep the mark.

If we are providing for police-type powers, we should have policemen to use them. The job should not be given to rangers who are not trained to handle it. There are two matters that we have to look at urgently—more rangers and the controlled export of rare birds.

**Mr. ROW** (Hinchinbrook) (7.50 p.m.): I welcome this legislation whole-heartedly. I suppose I must admit to being guilty of taking for granted the situation confronting our fauna, especially our birds. The position is brought home to us by reports of the wholesale trapping and shipping overseas of birds—especially the way that they are mistreated.

Although legislation is not usually brought into the Chamber in such a hurry, on this occasion I certainly agree with the hasty passage of this Bill. I believe that our birds are a priceless feature of our heritage. Australia has a large variety of birds and an equally large variety of habitats for them. Our wildlife is unique and we should think about this a lot more than we do. Some of the most famous ornithological works in the world have dealt with Australian birds. These works have been produced only because of the unique opportunities available to ornithologically minded people. The circumstances and the subject are ideal, and so we have in our literary archives some of the most famous ornithological works in the world. They should remind us that we should protect our birds.

One thing that has always impressed me about Australian birds is that probably they have been the subject of more books for children than any other species. I recall how fond I was of birds and bird books when I was a child. I remember very well that when I was about 10 years old my mother gave me Neville Cayley's famous book entitled "What Bird is That". It is still being used by my children, and my grandchildren are almost old enough to enjoy it. I had almost forgotten about it until I contemplated the implications of this legislation. Children of no other race have been as fortunate as Australians in their opportunities to enjoy their wildlife, and wild birds in particular. They are a priceless

feature of our natural history. Birds have been studied by some very prominent people to determine the effect of avian diseases on humans.

I really enjoy Aboriginal legends based on birds. The influence that birds had on the tribal life of our indigenous people over many hundreds of years is quite amazing.

**Mr. Tenni:** They eat them.

**Mr. ROW:** Many of the legends are based entirely on the habits of birds. As has been suggested by one of my colleagues, they have also been a very significant food source for our Aborigines. Even now poultry is part of our stable diet. While talking about Aborigines and birds, I recall that when I was a child in a country area, with others I had the opportunity of associating with Aboriginal children who, although not living in the tribal state, still practised the old habits of hunting their own food. On one occasion we saw an Aborigine hurl a throwing-stick at a flight of wild ducks and bring down one or two for food. Being children, we decided that that was a good trick, so we went down to the water-hole one day with throwing-sticks and threw them at the ducks as they flew by. The next thing we knew was that we received an almighty kick in the backside from our Aboriginal friends. They said, "You never throw a stick into the middle of a flock of ducks. That is where the females are. The drakes fly on the outside to protect the females." No Aborigine would ever throw a throwing-stick into the middle of a flock of ducks for fear of killing a breeding female. He would always throw it at the outside and kill the drakes.

**Honourable Members** interjected.

**Mr. ROW:** Some honourable members who are interjecting had better keep their heads down if they go to that area. If they do not, they will get similar treatment.

It is rather wonderful to think that the preservation of birds was practised deliberately long before the white man came to this country. On the other hand, it is terrible to think that today, after several generations of European habitation, the practice of preservation has deteriorated to such an extent that there are now in the community people who have no respect for wildlife and who, for financial gain, are prepared to destroy part of our great heritage. For that reason, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I welcome the introduction of the Bill.

I think we should also keep in mind the migratory habits of birds and the fact that they can fly round the world. After a great deal of pioneering and after trying many imperfect methods, human beings are now able to fly round the world. Many human beings met their end while trying to emulate the birds. It should be remembered that birds fly from Siberia to the southern-most

tip of this country. Certain species of snipe visit my property in North Queensland each year. I can almost set my clock by their arrival. They come from Siberia across China and over the Timor Sea. They then cross the continent of Australia and land in feeding places along the east coast. It is an extraordinary feat of navigation and, as I said earlier, I can tell almost to the day when they will arrive.

We can never do enough to protect birds. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the facilities we now have are barely adequate for carrying out the procedures necessary to reverse the terrible trend that has manifested itself in the destruction of and disrespect for Australia's wildlife. The proposed legislation will provide for tighter surveillance and enable quicker action against those who traffic in birds. However, it is only a beginning and we must ensure that our capacity to deal with the problem is increased. I hope that will be done forthwith.

As I said earlier, I whole-heartedly support the proposed legislation.

**Mr. POWELL** (Isis) (7.59 p.m.): I support the Minister in his introduction of this very worth-while measure.

As honourable members are aware, I asked the Premier a question without notice this morning and in reply he stated the rather alarming fact—I think that some honourable members were aware of it already—that avaricious people were plundering the bird life from forests and national parks, particularly in southern areas of the State.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Miller): Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The microphones are not working to their full capacity, and I seek the co-operation of honourable members because it is very difficult for the Hansard reporters to hear and take down what is being said.

**Mr. POWELL:** These people are plundering the bird life of south-eastern and central parts of the State. I have never been able to understand the mentality of people who want to take birds from their natural habitat and keep them in a small cage in the backyard of a suburban home merely to look at them occasionally or perhaps to give children the task of looking after them. The caging of small birds such as budgerigars and finches is perhaps a different matter. When I see the type of birds that people are taking from our forests and selling at tremendous profit I just cannot understand the mentality of those concerned. I find myself in complete agreement with the Leader of the Opposition (which no doubt is rather a strange stance) in what he said on this matter.

In the Minister's opening remarks he said that we have only five permanent wildlife rangers to cover the whole State. That

is indeed regrettable. But we have as well a large number of police officers and honorary rangers. I wonder whether the honorary rangers will be given some power of referral for arrest. Perhaps they could refer a matter to the police or a ranger so that it could be dealt with expeditiously. Unscrupulous people take the birds from the forest, lock them in a cage of some description on a large vehicle, and then transport them intrastate or interstate. It is essential that we stop this very bad practice. We must enforce the laws of the State which prohibit the taking of these birds.

I would hope that this Bill will not only strengthen the power of the Wildlife Service rangers but will give the police and honorary rangers power to administer the legislation. In that way we will have enough people to enforce the Bill. Of course, we all believe that it would be desirable to have national parks completely manned by national park rangers, but probably we could not afford that at the moment. While there are only five permanent officers there would probably be few problems with the police and honorary rangers acting in that capacity.

I congratulate the Minister for the speed with which he has brought this Bill into the Parliament. I hope that it will have the support of all honourable members. It is a measure we must pass so that we can catch these despicable people.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (8.3 p.m.): Today we have debated the most important legislation this session but it has all been rushed through in a few hours. It is like me trying to take a lung out in 10 minutes; it cannot be done properly.

The Minister made a magnificent speech. He detailed very carefully the species and types of fauna we wish to protect. But I think he was a bit mild in not providing heavier penalties.

We have an interesting assortment of fauna in this State, but it is being decimated by the traders. Recently I saw 30 or 40 young galahs in a pet shop. I am told that the galah is probably the most intelligent parrot in the world, yet the Australian refers to his friend in a derogatory way when he calls him a galah. The galah is not happy in captivity and never really becomes friendly. In the same cage I saw several sulphur-crested parrots. They were all young birds that had been taken out of the nest on an organised hunt. When I made a few inquiries I learnt that the birds were not taken from a national park but off private properties with the agreement of the owners. Apparently there was an organised cleaning-out of the birds with the permission of the owners.

I understand that in China the birds have been wiped out, so it is necessary to shoot insect pests.

Because birds destroy insects, they are a great asset to the nation's primary industries. But what is happening? The birds are being destroyed or caught and sold. I agree whole-heartedly with the endeavour of the Minister and his officers to get this put on a sane, sensible basis.

Just as it is impossible to reason with a person who peddles drugs, it is impossible to reason with one who traps birds and sells them at a profit. Therefore, the imposition of stiff penalties is called for. However, the apprehension of persons who trap and sell birds will probably be very difficult. For a start, I gather that the department does not have sufficient finance. I recommend that in the next Budget allowance be made for an increase in the number of rangers.

The Commonwealth Government is spending a fortune on police to shepherd, herd, harass and annoy passengers embarking on aircraft. Surely the Commonwealth can provide some financial assistance to the State so that it can protect its fauna. We have inherited our fauna from our ancestors, and we should ensure that it is left for our children to inherit from us. If pillaging is allowed to continue, however, the lot will be lost.

If the Commonwealth Government is not prepared to give us finance, surely it could ensure that its Customs officers carry out their duties efficiently. Obviously they are not doing their job, because large numbers of birds are being exported illegally from Australia. I remember how in the past girls used to bring from New Guinea birds of paradise on the top of their hats. It does not matter whether birds are being taken out of Australia in that manner or in any other way, it is up to the Customs officers to ensure that birds are not illegally exported. The Commonwealth may not co-operate on finance; I hope it does in relation to fauna.

Obviously the steps that are being taken to combat the problem will only scratch the surface. In Townsville we used to be told that a boat outside Magnetic Island was loading parrots and we used to think that that was quite a story. But obviously that sort of thing goes on. If persons who smuggle birds are prepared to hide them in the bottom of road transport trucks and run the risk of killing all of them, they must stand to gain a huge profit from the sale of only one or two birds. It would be much easier to take them out of the country by boat, particularly from North Queensland, than by road transport. As I say, this measure will probably only scratch the surface.

The problem is a big one and calls for the appointment of a large number of staff to overcome it. Surely more than five rangers could be appointed in Queensland. I hope that next year the Minister provides for the appointment of more than five. In the

meantime, the Commonwealth police should be alerted to the extent of this problem and Queensland police should co-operate with those in other States in an endeavour to overcome it. As well, the services of volunteers should be obtained.

At present a lot of people are crying out, "Don't mine uranium." Why don't they do something concrete and help us preserve our birds? Recently members of Friends of the Earth and other conservation groups in Townsville claimed that if water was reticulated to Magnetic Island it would desecrate the island. On any morning thousands of birds can be seen at Blakey's Crossing. There are magpies, geese, brolgas, black ducks and teal ducks. And what is going to happen to that waterway? It is to be filled in. Yet there is not one protest from the conservationists against that. They have their heads in the bloody sand. They are totally out of orbit.

**Mr. Jones:** What colour sand? White sand?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** As a matter of fact, it is very murky at the moment from the filling and sewage running into it. It is an extraordinary colour.

I agree with the Minister that penalties should be severe. No penalty is too harsh for these smugglers. Throughout history smugglers have been shown to be ruthless scoundrels. They have no code of ethics even among themselves. They would cut each other's throat. If we do not stop them, they will destroy our fauna. As the Minister has said, they are very mobile with all types of transport at their disposal. They have road and aerial transport and I know that they use sea transport, with boats working off the north coast of Queensland.

Previously, before this Act was introduced, they operated without risk. They ran wild and free. There were no deterrents. It is interesting to look back at the history of some of them. A couple of yahoos were recently associated with the destruction of our fauna. They got into a kangaroo park and cut the throats of the kangaroos and bashed them over the head. Later on, one of those fellows was convicted of a brutal murder. So wherever they go, they play true to form.

The Leader of the Opposition said that he does not like to see birds locked up in a cage. Neither do I. I think 99 per cent of Australians would agree. It is solitary confinement. If anybody wishes to shrink a person's brain and intellect, he should lock him up all day and every day. I have seen it happen. I once saw a Japanese who had been imprisoned for a murder that he had not committed. Every day for 18 months his warders walked up to the cell and said to him in Japanese and English, "They are going to hang you by

the neck at such-and-such an hour." Then his conviction would be set aside. They could not prove that he had committed the crime. In fact, he did not commit the crime. After 18 months they let him go. He walked around the prison camp like a zombie. God only knows what happened to that man after that. They shrank his brain and his spirit. That would happen to a bird—even a galah—locked up in a cage. There should be some limit to the size of a cage that people can put birds in.

If this Bill receives the approval of the Parliament, it can do nothing but good. It is an emergency measure, and it should be revised as soon as possible. There should be co-operation and consultation with other States so that right throughout this Commonwealth of ours we can begin to stamp out this wilful destruction of our fauna through the provisions of a uniform code. The Minister is to be congratulated for introducing this piece of legislation.

**Mr. SIMPSON** (Cooroora) (8.12 p.m.): It is obvious that the cat is out of the bag. I hope it is not amongst the pigeons. Illegal trafficking in our mammals, birds and reptiles has been likened to drug-trafficking. The only analogy, of course, is that in both fields we are seeing only the tip of the iceberg. It is very hard to apprehend those who are responsible.

As the Minister has outlined it, the Bill seeks to strengthen the powers of fauna officers so that they may control illegal trafficking in animals, birds and so on. Of the 223 mammals in Australia 149 (or two-thirds) are found in Queensland. Some 683 varieties of species of birds are found in Australia, four-fifths of which are from Queensland. Over half the reptiles—352 out of 626—are to be found in Queensland. That gives some idea of how rich our State is in rare native animals and birds. They represent a heritage that we must protect.

What strikes me most strongly is that we are so poorly equipped to tackle the task. It is a young department, obviously understaffed. Although departments are being told to cut back and not to spend more than they have in the past, obviously consideration must be given to increasing the strength of this section to cover the illegal trading in our native fauna. If we cannot lock the door to these people who have found such a lucrative, illegal trade, Queensland will lose a heritage that is unique in the world. It is obvious that a better system should be devised so that police can be used, if necessary, to help apprehend offenders.

The Minister has indicated that the penalties will be increased substantially; they were apparently very low. In order to indicate to the courts how seriously we view this matter, I hope that the Minister will provide for a maximum and not set a minimum.

Like those in New Guinea, the parrots and birds of Queensland are renowned for their tremendous colour and attractiveness. They are worth a lot of money on overseas markets and where large sums of money are involved people engage in devious means of smuggling them out of the country. Some of the methods employed involve the use of drugs, such as chloroform, to quieten the birds so that they can be hidden in special containers.

The officers will have a mammoth task in apprehending these offenders. Any Queenslanders who find anything suspicious in the behaviour of people in secluded places or in forestry reserves should report it to fauna officers.

In my area, shooters have been killing kangaroos near Noosa. When the local people apprehended them they said, "Go and get lost. What authority have you got?" I hope that the legislation will give the power to the officers to apprehend those who are blatantly breaking the law and exterminating some of the mammals which form part of our heritage.

I think the Bill will set the pattern and show how important we think these resources are to Queensland. I hope that any other aspects of legislation that require strengthening, such as involving the police in apprehending offenders transporting illegal fauna will be looked at.

In Queensland we have people who are authorised to deal with zoos throughout the world. These people know how to handle animals, birds and reptiles and we should maintain that type of control.

We should clamp down on those who are exploiting our natural resources and I commend the Minister on introducing the Bill.

**Mr. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon) (8.18 p.m.): Mr. Miller—

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Why not tell us about the kangaroosters in Goondiwindi?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I could talk about the Trades Hall parrots.

Coming back to the Bill and trying to make a sensible contribution—this is largely an education problem. How many Australians realise which parrots are rare and which are common? The Australian has a fair amount of brains and if he were told how rare some birds are he would respond and stop trying to trade in the rather rare species. This education should start in the schools.

It is a fact of life that many farmers feel there are too many of certain types of parrots on their properties and, whether we want them to or not, they are destroying the birds. It is also a fact that there is a great deal of trafficking in birds in a very inhumane manner. I would guess that for every bird that is exported live, probably 50 or 100 are dead. It is a shame that poor little birds can be drugged, locked up and sent overseas, with so few surviving the journey. I wonder

whether it would be possible to legalise this operation so that birds that are plentiful in Australia could be exported in a humane manner.

Some people claim that we will not overcome the drug problem by getting tough on drug addicts and people who distribute drugs. I do not go along with that theory. I think people could be stopped from smoking drugs if the penalties were high enough and I am thinking of life imprisonment.

The penalties for illegal trading in birds will be so high that life imprisonment is a possibility. However I do not think that even this increase in penalties will achieve the effect that the Minister desires. I do not think they will stop the trading. I am not advocating that the penalties should be higher. I think that it is an education problem and that the Government should look at the best possible way to stop so many birds being killed rather senselessly through the manner in which birds are exported.

It seems to me that a lot of nonsense is talked about the conservation of our flora and fauna. People say that one should not kill a little bird. I do not like killing little birds, either, but there is not much difference between killing a little bird and killing a sheep, and people like to eat sheep. People tend to get carried away if it is something that looks pretty. They think that it is more valuable than, say, a sheep or something else.

The destruction of kangaroos was mentioned a short time ago. Take the case of a farmer trying to earn a living at the moment and having his livestock complete with kangaroos for fodder. He would not have quite the same opinion of kangaroos as some people in Brisbane. People have been caught up in this senseless idea of harvesting a certain number of kangaroos. I think that over the years farmers have been very conservation-minded and have never gone anywhere completely wiping out kangaroos in this State. There are many more kangaroos here now than when the Aborigines roamed this country. Just because people in the city do not see them when they drive out in the bush at the wrong time of the day, they think that kangaroos are in danger of becoming extinct. They are certainly not.

I recognise the problem with our birds, but I do not know whether the Bill is the best way of dealing with it. I would ask the Minister to look at the possible legalisation of the export of some birds and at an education programme to prevent people from trapping or destroying the really rare species.

**Mr. MOORE** (Windsor) (8.24 p.m.): In rising to speak to the Bill, one can only go at this point of time on the outline given by the Minister. The problem of the illegal export of birds, especially in the Cape York area, is not new. I can recollect that it

existed before the present Minister assumed this portfolio, when it was administered by the present Minister for Primary Industries.

The manner in which the birds are exported is most undesirable. I am worried to some extent, although my fears may be unfounded, about the introduction of this Bill in the dying stages of this part of the session. Normally a Bill goes before the Minister's committee and then before the joint parties. On this occasion neither procedure was followed and it has turned up in the Chamber. I will have no complaints about it at all if when I read it I can find no bugs in it. I recall that early in the session we were virtually crying out for legislation and saying that the Parliamentary Counsel should be doing a better job so that we could have a more even flow of legislation. Now we are pushing 22 Bills through in one day, virtually, and there is something wrong with that.

If this legislation does not contain provisions relating to reverse onus of proof or search without warrant, I will have no quarrel with it. Generally speaking, these are a couple of tenets in our legislation which I insist upon, and it is Government policy that Labor Party legislation still on the Statute Book, especially that introduced during the Gair regime, should be repealed. That legislation is full of provisions such as the reverse onus of proof and search without warrant, and because it is almost impossible to repeal it all in one fell swoop it is now our policy that, when we amend legislation which contains such provisions, we will scrap them. If this Bill does not contain that sort of thing, the Minister will have no trouble from me.

The illegal export of our rare species shows that there is a real market for them overseas, and if the death rate is about 99 per cent it is obvious that we will not stop smuggling. If their value remains high, smuggling will continue; however, if export of a limited amount of this fauna was allowed, they would be better treated. It is said that the golden-shouldered parrot will not breed in a cage, but I can take members down to Woody Point and introduce them to a gentleman who breeds them. He feeds the young on white ants and has no trouble. Some bird fanciers have the expertise to do this.

**Mr. Powell** interjected.

**Mr. MOORE:** The honourable member made his speech a few minutes ago and made a dreadful job of it. It is not true to say that, because there would be no regeneration, if we started to export these birds we would have to continue to export them. We have sufficient expertise in this nation to breed the birds, and termites are world-wide. The food source would be there, so there would be no problems about exporting these birds.



We export koalas, which like certain types of eucalypts and these trees grow in America, Spain and a number of other places. Apparently the eucalypts which grow in America are not exactly the same as ours. As a matter of fact, they do not even look like the same tree. Apparently the reason is that the insects, grasshoppers and other things do not attack them in the same way. But I just wonder whether that is the case or whether the trees growing in the northern hemisphere are a different species. We export koalas and say, "Well, there are plenty of eucalypts over there", and we find all the koalas go to heaven. If there was no food source, we certainly would not export them, but I do not think we should impose a total ban. Total bans are stupid, and I disagree with them.

**Mr. Powell:** What about exporting Trades Hall parrots?

**Mr. MOORE:** Yes, I would export them.

**Mr. Gygar:** They always fly off to Peking and Moscow in the winter.

**Mr. MOORE:** Yes.

The honourable member for Townsville referred earlier to galahs and sulphur-crested cockatoos. I remind the Committee that the trapping of galahs is prohibited. Yet a farmer with a grain crop—it may be sunflower seed; it may be corn—who sees a flock of galahs or sulphur-crested cockatoos descend on it, strip the cobs or bend the sunflower heads over and thus create devastation, goes out with a shotgun and shoots them. He does not apply to the Minister's department at 9 a.m.; he is out there at dawn, blazing away and killing hundreds of cockatoos.

I would much prefer to see a cockatoo walking around the kitchen saying, "Scratch cocky", leaving his little visiting cards here and there on the floor, crawling up the leg of the kitchen table or chewing the bottom off the chair. They just love seagrass chairs; they will devour one a day. They are happy about being there, and I cannot see anything wrong with that. Galahs and sulphur-crested cockatoos adapt readily to the home environment, as do some Mexican parrots, and I cannot see any reason why we adopt the stupid hard line that we do now.

In speaking about the depletion of our fauna, I should mention what has happened in the Torres Strait islands since the introduction of the .22 rifle. If the Islanders hear a bird call, they pick up a .22 rifle—"Bang!"—and the next thing a seagull is in the cooking pot. One no longer hears a bird call on any of those islands. If a bird does call, it is soon in the pot. The Islanders no longer use spears or throwing sticks; they use .22 rifles. The Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and Fisheries is in the Chamber listening to

me, and he would know that one no longer hears a bird call up there. We have allowed that to happen.

We say, too, that the Aborigines and Islanders must have their share of dugong and turtles. They are living on baked beans, ham and chicken but we say that they must have their share of dugong. We are not allowed to have them, but they go along in their motor-boats and kill them. Dugong are decreasing in number, so we should be protecting them, too.

During the open season, one can go out and shoot wild duck—black duck, teal—you name it, Mr. Miller, and you can shoot it. But one is not allowed to capture one or two and take them home and put them with muscovy ducks, which are really geese, anyway.

**An Honourable Member** interjected.

**Mr. MOORE:** If they breed with a wild duck, they become mules. As I said, a muscovy duck is not really a duck; it is a goose. However, it is an offence for a person to take black ducks home and allow them to breed. They might run round with the chooks on a farm, and there is nothing wrong with that. You are allowed to shoot them, wing them, or injure them if you are a bad shot. What happens? Nothing! But you are not allowed to take them home.

**Mr. Row:** Have you heard of the Morton Brothers, who used to shoot wedge-tailed eagles from an Auster aircraft?

**Mr. MOORE:** No, but I have heard of Governor-General Casey, who used to shoot wedge-tailed eagles.

The biggest problem throughout the length and breadth of Queensland is not the trapping or the illegal export of the birds but the clearing of the properties and their habitats so that no food source is left for them. In some of the areas in the Central West where Townsville lucerne is growing wild, one can see galahs by the thousands on the overhead wires. When they descend on the Townsville lucerne, it looks like a grey and pink carpet. The biggest problem is man himself, who is for ever expanding and putting property under the plough. If the food crop that is planted attracts birds, the shotgun comes out. That is what causes the depletion. I do not like to see birds being smuggled, but the number lost that way is infinitesimal compared with the losses through the inroads of man.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (8.36 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members on both sides for their contributions. I would like to say how pleased I am that the legislation has been so well received.

As to the point raised by the honourable member for Windsor about haste—I assure the Committee that, although there is a

certain amount of haste about the Bill, there is nothing in it that will not stand investigation. The session is just closing and we believe that now is the time to get a short Bill through to cover particular trafficking problems. We are saying that fauna officers should have the powers of arrest.

There are only about three points in the Bill. It deals with powers of arrest, fines and one or two other matters that I will deal with at the second-reading stage.

The Leader of the Opposition covered the subject particularly well. He said he was in favour of higher penalties. The penalties will be a maximum fine of \$10,000 or two years' imprisonment. We believe the offence is so serious that we have to raise the maximum. For the benefit of the honourable member for Windsor I point out that there is no suggestion of any minimum penalty. That's out! The trafficking has been very severe.

**Mr. Houston:** How will the exhibits get on? Will they take them back to where they came from?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I wouldn't think so. I think we would just have to let them go. Unscrupulous people in trucks are predators of our birds. The birds are worth a fortune. Those people go to a lot of trouble to get them over to places like Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Once again we have an indication of the good things we have in Queensland. This State probably has the best birds in Australia. Our golden-shouldered parrots are worth up to \$4,000 a pair. We have to take some steps to protect them.

I think every speaker mentioned that we have only five permanent fauna officers. I am glad that they spoke about that. Those officers will be given powers of arrest. Under the old Act those poor fellows had to take evidence, let the offender go and report back to the service. I would sign a form of prosecution. It would all take up to about 18 months, by which time the whole illegal operation would be over.

**Mr. Houston:** 18 months?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** It could take as long as that. Under the Bill the action will be instant. The officers will take the necessary evidence, and they will have the powers of arrest.

Nearly every speaker mentioned the Police Department. I have spoken with the Minister for Police on this matter. All police officers are fauna officers. I believe that our fauna officers should co-operate with the police and in fact he and I have agreed that certain police officers be detailed to anti-trafficking duties in strategic places such as Goondiwindi on the border, and Mungindi. We hope to be able to stop it. Police officers, of course, have the power to arrest, and the idea is that our officers and the police be on hand to do this job. The position has been getting out of hand.

**Mr. Casey:** Interstate police—does New South Wales have similar legislation?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** We co-operate with New South Wales, but the honourable member will appreciate that once the birds are taken out of the State, we have lost control over them. We are trying to apprehend the traffickers in Queensland. I am hopeful that in next year's Budget provision will be made for more officers. We are dealing virtually with professional gangsters. They are big-timers; there is no nonsense about it. They carry guns. Yet we are expecting our officers to perform their duties without guns.

The Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Carnarvon spoke about the controlled export of some protected birds. This raises a very interesting question. I have to admit that I don't know the answer. If we give authority to people to take protected birds it could become very hard for us to police that activity. I would not like to say tonight that I have the answer. Through our service we have to discuss some of these problems to see how we can best handle them.

It can be said on the one hand that because of the actions of people who take birds to New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia and then export them, this State is losing a lot of money by way of uncollected royalty payments. On the other hand, it could be said that if we commercialise this activity and collect royalty payments, we will get quite a lot of money. It is not as simple as saying that one is right and the other is wrong. Our service will have a good look at this to see whether we can come up with a satisfactory solution.

As I indicated earlier, the Bill is a very small one. In due course we hope to introduce a far more comprehensive Bill covering the National Parks and Wildlife Service. All people are interested in national parks, birds, snakes and other wildlife. National parks are for the people and they have the right to talk about these problems.

I thank the member for Hinchinbrook for his contribution. He has a sound knowledge of the subject. I shall comment on some of his remarks at the second-reading stage. He is interested in training birds, a subject that he has studied for a long time.

The honourable member for Isis referred to the five rangers. I have covered that matter. Again I say that co-operation with the police could result in helping to overcome some of these problems. He also claimed that speed was essential because we have had evidence of quite a few people going south.

The honourable member for Townsville, in supporting the Bill, made a good contribution. He said that in a lot of cases people who pretend to be protectors of birds and other animals are actually the worst

offenders. Some people who pose as protectors of fauna and flora give us a worse time than people who have little interest. Looking after marsupials and birds can at times be very unrewarding. This is one of the problems that I find in this field. He suggests that more finance is required and that it should come from Federal Government sources. That is an interesting thought. We have not made any approaches in this context to the Federal Government, but there is no doubt that we shall make some inquiries along those lines to see if we can obtain any assistance from the Commonwealth.

He also mentioned that the Customs people are not doing their job. That is fair comment, too. This is a bit like the debate on foot and mouth disease. If the customs officers did their job correctly, no birds would get out of the country. The fact of the matter is that they do. The point he made is quite a valid one. We shall have to have a look at this to see whether we can tighten it up and whether in some way we are at fault or the blame lies with the Federal authorities.

The other point he made was that he supports far heavier penalties. The penalties I have mentioned of a \$10,000 fine and as much as two years in gaol, subject to the discretion of the magistrate, indicate what we think about it. I would like to think that he supports penalties along those lines.

The point the honourable member for Cooroora made related to the powers of arrest for fauna officers, which I have mentioned. I would hope that we can work out a good system of co-operation between fauna officers and the police in an effort to tighten up our control.

I have covered the points made by the honourable member for Carnarvon. I now come to the last speaker, the honourable member for Windsor, who referred to the speedy introduction of the Bill. I repeat that it has been fast only because of the problems that have arisen. I assure him that next year I hope I will be in a position to introduce a far more comprehensive Bill for the National Parks and Wildlife Service, which will cover all the controversial aspects that honourable members can pose. I hope that at that time we will be able to make a far better job of it than we can now. However, it was necessary to introduce a Bill to try to stop this trafficking and I believe that this Bill will do that.

Motion (Mr. Tomkins) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

The House adjourned at 8.50 p.m.