

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 22 MARCH 1977**

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## TUESDAY, 22 MARCH 1977

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt, Chatsworth) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

### ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES NOMINATION OF MR. W. M. GUNN

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to inform the House that I nominate Mr. W. M. Gunn, Temporary Chairman, to act in the office of Chairman of Committees during the absence of Mr. Speaker.

### PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Order in Council under the Harbours Act 1955-1976.

Regulation under the Mental Health Act 1974.

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

#### EGG AND I PTY. LTD.; WITHDRAWAL OF IDENTIFICATION SYMBOL

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.3 a.m.): A number of reports have appeared in the media, and on television, during the past few days relating to the withdrawal of the identification symbol from a Tweed Heads firm selling eggs into prescribed areas of Queensland. The principal of this firm claims that he has been unfairly treated by my department and that he was not given sufficient warning before action was taken against him.

Over the last 12-18 months, the egg industry in South Queensland has implemented a campaign to ensure that top-quality eggs are supplied to the consuming public. All producers are required to meet quality standards prescribed in the regulations, and this has involved many of them in considerable expense.

The Egg Marketing Board has done its part by instituting new handling procedures which cut down the delay between farmer and consumer. It also has taken the major step of stamping egg cartons with a "use by" date, which clearly indicates to the consumer and retailer the period during which egg quality can be expected to remain at an acceptable level.

The benefit of these measures to the consumer is a supply of eggs of good quality, properly graded for weight. Egg producers also realise the potential benefits of keeping consumers happy with their product.

Against this background, we have the case of Egg and I Pty. Ltd., the Tweed Heads poultry farm which has had its identification

symbol withdrawn because eggs sampled at a number of retail outlets were found to be far below the standards prescribed for quality and weight in the regulations under the Poultry Industry Act.

My department has warned this firm on two occasions in the last 12 months about supplying poor quality, underweight eggs to Queensland consumers. The first warning was given on 28 April 1976, and the final warning on 23 December of the same year.

The firm was given 21 days from the date of the last warning to effect the necessary improvements. When eggs were again checked 25 days later, the situation had not improved; in fact, it had worsened. Eggs were sampled from 15 stores supplied by Egg and I. All of the eggs sampled were graded second quality because of extreme staleness—indicated by watery whites and enlarged air cells—or because of soiling, staining, cracking or weakness of the shells. Every sample contained underweight eggs and, in many cases, more than 50 per cent of the eggs in the sample were underweight.

Not only were consumers being sold short on weight but they were, in fact, paying around \$1 per dozen for eggs which were marked as being first quality but were worth no more than 35c per dozen as second-quality eggs. It was obvious that positive action was required to stop the further sale of these eggs in Queensland. Being satisfied that adequate warning had been given to the firm in question, I approved the withdrawal of the egg-marking symbol "ZAC" which had allowed Egg and I Pty. Ltd. to market eggs in the prescribed areas of Queensland.

The principal of the firm has referred to the unemployment that my decision may cause. If he had been really concerned about his employees' jobs, surely he would have taken urgent action to put fresh, clean eggs, properly graded for weight, on the Queensland market. I should add that an alternative market is available to him through the New South Wales Egg Board.

There is nothing to prevent this firm from applying again for an identification symbol to put eggs on the Queensland market. Should the firm make written application to my department for the issue of a new symbol, consideration will be given to this application provided I can be convinced that the requirements of the marking and grading regulations will be fully complied with in future.

### COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES COMPULSORY LEVIES ON SALARIES OF CERTAIN PARLIAMENTARIANS

Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (11.8 a.m.): I lay on the table of the House the report of the Privileges Committee relating to the matter raised on 9 November 1976 by the honourable member for Bundaberg and referred to the committee on 10 November.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the report on the table.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. ACQUISITION OF WOONGOOLBA LANDS BY ALBERT SHIRE COUNCIL

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

Has the Albert Shire Council met fully the requirements of the special Act which this Parliament passed last year concerning the right of securing lands at Woongoolba and, if not, what provisions have not been met and what action has been taken to see that the council observes the law?

Answer:—

The honourable member's question involves a legal interpretation, and accordingly I consider it would be inappropriate for me to comment thereon.

2. BUILDERS' REGISTRATION BOARD

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

(1) Who are the existing members of the Builders' Registration Board?

(2) How many members of that board have resigned or left since its inception, who were they and when did they resign?

(3) Were any reasons given for the resignations and, if so, what were they?

(4) How many members of the board's staff have resigned since its inception, what are their names, what positions did they hold and what were their reasons for resigning?

Answers:—

(1) Mr. Joseph Stanley Box (Chairman); Mr. Henry Jardine Parkinson; Mr. John Allan Stewart Pidgeon; Mr. Thomas William Chard.

(2) Three. Mr. C. Bushell on 12 March 1973; Mr. K. D. Morris on 9 December 1974; Sir David Nicholson on 15 December 1976.

(3) Mr. Bushell, deceased; Mr. Morris, resigned for personal reasons; Sir David Nicholson, retired, having attained the age of retirement required of members on Government boards.

(4) I lay upon the table of the House the information sought by the honourable member, as it is rather lengthy. It may be included in "Hansard" if he wishes.

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER: Is it the wish of the House that it be incorporated in "Hansard"?

(Leave granted.)

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the following schedule upon the table:—

BUILDERS' REGISTRATION BOARD OF QUEENSLAND REGISTRATIONS

Name of Employee	Dates Employed	Reason for Resignation	Position Held
Allom, Vicki	18-2-74—28-6-74	Travelling	Clerk-Typist
Amies, John Lowell	28-8-72—7-1-74	No reason	Senior Building Inspector
Beattie, Anne	5-12-75—14-5-76	Travelling	Clerk-Typist
Beckman, Kathryn	19-11-73—27-9-74	No reason	Clerk-Typist
Bould, Bronwyn	26-5-75—30-6-75	Services terminated	Clerk-Typist
Bligh, Carolyn	8-7-74—31-1-75	No reason	Clerk-Typist
Dempsey, Kathleen	27-4-76—24-9-76	Travelling	Clerk-Typist
Desmier, Jennifer	10-10-73—19-10-73	No reason	Clerk-Typist
Feltham, Karen	16-9-74—1-10-76	Travelling	Stenographer
Griffiths, Diana	6-1-75—10-12-76	Husband transferred	Clerk
Grosvenor, Patrick	7-1-74—28-11-75	No reason	Building Inspector
Harris, Pamela Mary	18-9-72—7-6-74	Travelling	Stenographer
Heffernan, Wendy	7-1-74—16-5-75	No reason	Clerk-Typist
Hicks, Kathleen	29-3-76—13-5-76	Illness	Clerk-Typist
Houghton, Barbara	2-5-73—30-5-75	To take up home duties	Finance Clerk
Lancaster, Robyn	16-4-73—11-10-74	To take up home duties	Administration Clerk
Lusk, Julie	12-5-75—5-12-75	Personal	Clerk-Typist
McLeod, Janice	7-8-72—27-6-73	Dissatisfied with salary	Secretary
Morris, Patricia	19-11-73—24-12-73	To take up new position	Stenographer
Nelkie, Cherie	7-1-74—11-4-74	To take up new position	Clerk-Typist
Palazzi, Karen	30-4-73—13-7-73	Travelling	Clerk-Typist
Palazzi, Karen	29-4-74—2-4-76	Home duties	Clerk-Typist
Parker, Helen	18-6-74—10-7-74	No reason	Clerk-Typist
Pierpoint, Maureen	26-8-74—10-12-76	To take up part-time work	Administration Clerk
Stott, Helen	9-7-73—14-12-73	Medical reasons	Clerk-Typist
Tate, Joanne	22-4-74—1-5-74	Illness in family	Stenographer
Trotman, Elaine	10-6-74—9-1-76	No reason	Stenographer
Welsh, Frederick	7-1-74—4-3-77	Returned to Darwin	Building Inspector
Wheatley, Sherral	17-9-73—24-10-73	No reason	Clerk-Typist
Whiteman, Bruce John	3-9-73—21-1-77	Returned to Sydney	Building Inspector
Young, Roland	21-10-74—12-11-76	To take up position elsewhere	Building Inspector

3. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF URBAN WATER SUPPLIES FOR RECREATION

**Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Water Resources—

As this State has now had a recent case of cholera (El Tor strain) attributable to water from the Albert River and a previous severe outbreak of hepatitis in Mt. Isa attributable to water from Lake Moondara, will he consider legislation to prevent the pollution of our urban water supplies by prohibiting their use as recreational areas and so prohibiting boating, swimming and picnicking in these areas?

*Answer:—*

The question as to whether boating, swimming and other recreational activities should be prohibited on storages constructed solely for town water supply purposes is one for determination by the local authority owning the particular storage in conjunction with the Local Government and Health Departments.

In regard to storages controlled by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, only a small proportion of the water available from these is used for urban purposes. The water is mainly used for irrigation, industrial and mining purposes and the need to ban recreational activities on these storages is considered unwarranted.

My colleague the Minister for Health recently stated that the use of reservoirs and other domestic storage areas for aquatic sports would be reviewed following the recent Beenleigh cholera case.

4. EXTRA-CURRICULAR LECTURES AT HEATLEY HIGH SCHOOL

**Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) Has he been informed that extra-curricular lectures are being delivered at Heatley High School, allegedly on a bipartisan basis, by people who are in no way connected with the educational system?

(2) If so, will they be allowed to continue in their present undesirable form or will arrangements be made for the opposite side of the question to be put to the students or will they be eliminated altogether?

(3) Who pays for the cost of transportation, accommodation, etc., for these Communist and curious lecturers to enable them to deliver their tirades?

*Answers:—*

(1) Lectures have been given at Heatley State High School during this year by the following speakers:—

(a) Mrs. Stedman—Marriage Guidance Council, who spoke on the work of the council.

(b) Rev. Wayne Sanderson—who spoke on the work of Life Line.

(c) Dr. Ian Hills—Psychology Department, James Cook University, who spoke on “What employers expect of you”.

(d) Mr. Perkins—probation officer, whose topic was concerned with his work and the law as it concerns young people.

(e) Miss L. Rooney—social worker, Commonwealth Department of Health, who spoke on her work at schools and on community service.

(f) Mr. Wells—Townsville Environmental Committee, whose subject was pollution.

It is common and accepted policy in schools that reputable persons from the community at large be invited to speak to students on topics such as those associated with their course of study, on career opportunities and conditions of employment, on community welfare organisations and topics of a similar nature. It is my understanding that all of the above lecturers were invited by the school to address students.

(2) It would be a retrograde step in education to deny students the opportunity of having addresses on suitable topics given to them at school by citizens of good repute. I do not therefore intend to eliminate this community service. Of the topics listed in (1), pollution is the only one of a controversial nature. With subjects such as this I would expect the school to ensure that a balanced coverage is given to the students.

(3) Lecturers at Heatley High School gave freely of their time, and no costs of any kind were incurred.

5. Q.R.X. DEPOT AT MAREEBA

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

(1) With reference to the rail service to Atherton, is he aware that Q.R.X. is purported to be setting up a depot at Mareeba for the purpose of supplying goods to Atherton and Ravenshoe and, if so, as people in these areas fear that loss of revenue may cause the line to be closed, what effect will this have on the revenue and future life of the line?

(2) What is the relationship between Q.R.X. and the Railway Department?

(3) Will he give favourable consideration to extending the same concession to Atherton and other Tableland centres as applies in Mareeba and elsewhere in Queensland with forwarding agents for contract wagons?

*Answers:—*

(1) No, but the forwarding agents operating a rail service to Mareeba are permitted to deliver by road within a

radius of 25 miles of that station and this applies at all other centres to which bulk-loading services are provided.

(2) Queensland Railfast Express Pty. Limited is one of the four forwarding agents operating bulk-loading door-to-door services by rail to various northern centres.

(3) Applications for bulk-loading services to Atherton are being examined at present.

#### 6. EX GRATIA PAYMENTS TO VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIMES

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

(1) How many claims for ex gratia payments have been made by innocent victims of violent crimes since the scheme was introduced in 1968?

(2) How many of the claims have been (a) successful or (b) denied and (c) how many are still under consideration?

(3) What is (a) the total compensation paid, (b) the lowest individual payment made and (c) the highest individual payment made?

(4) What is the average time for a claim to be processed to the point of a decision being made?

(5) As financial assistance is usually needed most by the victim immediately after the incident, will he consider ways and means of making this possible in order to alleviate undue hardship?

*Answers:—*

(1) 89.

(2) (a) 35. (b) 34. In addition 10 claims were subsequently withdrawn by the applicants. (c) 10.

(3) (a) \$38,025.00. (b) \$200.00. (c) \$4,000.00.

(4) Three months.

(5) The procedure involved has been simplified where possible. It is essential for all relevant information to be obtained before the Governor in Council can make a decision and this information is not always readily available.

#### 7. SCABIES

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

(1) Is he aware that concern has been expressed by members of the medical profession that the infectious disease scabies is on the increase throughout Queensland, Australia and the world?

(2) During the last 12 months, how many cases of scabies have been reported in Government institutions administered by his department or under the school health scheme?

(3) As some people incorrectly believe that scabies does not require special medical treatment and that it will eventually go away of its own accord and as some treatments, for example, as suggested by the Encyclopaedia Britannica, are no longer accepted medically, will he have pamphlets on the disease produced for distribution through schools, community health centres and other medical institutions?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) Scabies is not a notifiable disease and consequently information on the number of cases occurring in the various institutions and hospitals is not collated.

The Division of Health Education has produced a pamphlet regarding scabies for the information of the public. This was first produced in 1973 and has been distributed through maternal and child health clinics, local authorities, State schools, community health centres, doctors in the metropolitan area and to the general public. It has also been distributed to Teachers' Training Colleges and the Kindergarten Training College for training teachers in the recognition of human parasitic infection.

#### 8. RAILWAY IMPROVEMENTS, ROCKHAMPTON

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

(1) With reference to the Denison Street railway line, Rockhampton, and in view of the recent agitation for its removal, when will this important project be undertaken?

(2) Will he give serious consideration to the installation of railway traffic lights at the major intersections along the line as an interim measure in order to alleviate the present requirement of having to stop before crossing the line, which is considered to be unwarranted because of the limited number of trains which use the line?

(3) What is the latest estimated cost of (a) removing the line, (b) re-routing the line, (c) constructing a new rail bridge across the Fitzroy River and (d) installing railway traffic lights at Derby, William, Denham, Fitzroy and Archer Streets?

*Answers:—*

(1) As the honourable member has been previously advised, the Railway Department has not formulated any definite plans for the carrying out of this major project.

(2) The practicability of adopting this proposal will be thoroughly investigated.

(3) A detailed investigation essential to the production of an estimate of cost has not been undertaken, but, as I have previously stated, an outlay of many millions of dollars would be involved.

9. OVERCROWDING AT MAREEBA AND YORKEY'S KNOB STATE SCHOOLS

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

(1) Is he aware of the overcrowding at the Mareeba State Primary School and at the Yorkey's Knob State School?

(2) What action is being taken to overcome this immediate problem?

(3) If no action is being taken, will action be commenced immediately?

Answers:—

(1) I am aware that increased enrolments are taxing the accommodation at the State schools at Mareeba and Yorkey's Knob.

(2 and 3) Appropriate action, however, is being taken in each case. Provision has been made in the draft primary capital works programme for the erecting of a replacement primary school at Yorkey's Knob. This school will be larger than the present school and will cater for projected future enrolments. To relieve the situation until the replacement school is built, the Department of Works has been requested to supply a demountable building at the present school.

Provision has been made on the priority list for libraries for a new library at Mareeba State School. This will free for teaching use the two classrooms that are at present being used as a library. The Department of Works has been requested to provide four new teaching spaces to replace temporary classrooms.

10. PRE-SCHOOLS, FRESHWATER, CLIFTON BEACH AND MOSSMAN

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

(1) When will the pre-schools at Freshwater and Clifton Beach be constructed?

(2) What action is being given to increasing the capacity of the pre-school at Mossman to allow all the available children to attend?

Answers:—

(1) It is hoped that a start may be made on the proposed pre-school at Freshwater in 1977-78 subject to the availability of funds and the finalisation of a land acquisition. With regard to Clifton Beach, negotiations to obtain a site for a new primary school have fallen through and a fresh start is being instituted. Once the site for the primary school has been secured, a pre-school will be provided as quickly as possible on this site.

(2) Following representations from the honourable member for Barron River, investigations were instituted by officers of

my department. An officer from Townsville visited Mossman on Friday, 18 March, with a view to inspecting certain accommodation to cater for the overflow at the existing pre-school. It is hoped that the matter will be able to be resolved in the very near future.

11. TRAFFIC CONTROL ON NORTH SIDE OF BARRON RIVER DURING FLOOD

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

(1) Is he aware that no police officer or car was placed on the northern side of the Barron River to control traffic and any other problems which may have arisen when the area recently became flood-bound?

(2) Will he give an assurance that this will be automatic in any future flooding problems in this area?

Answers:—

(1) Four police officers from Cairns who resided on the northern side of the Barron River performed duty in the areas in which they resided, with the authority of the Inspector of Police, Cairns. In so far as the police officer who performed duty at Machan's Beach is concerned, residents of the area and members of the State Emergency Service have passed most complimentary remarks on his efforts during the flood.

(2) The Inspector of Police, Cairns, has intimated that on future occasions when he considers it warranted, a radio-equipped vehicle will be allocated to the northern side of the Barron River.

12. CONTROL OF PARTHENIUM WEED

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

(1) What are the latest moves to help control the spread of parthenium weed in Queensland?

(2) Is the Commonwealth offering any worthwhile help through the C.S.I.R.O.?

(3) What impressions did he gain on the problem while in my area recently?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The current control programme by which local authorities and landholders are being assisted is designed to curb spread of parthenium weed by spray treatment of small isolated infestations and such infestations on properties and roadsides from which seed could be transported by vehicular and stock movements.

Formal measures to secure entry into Brazil of an officer of the Sir Alan Fletcher Research Station are well advanced and it is expected that his investigations into biological control will begin in that country in June next.

The C.S.I.R.O. has made phytotron space available and has assigned a plant physicist and an assistant to research parthenium weed. I understand certain trials in the phytotron have been completed and that a report from the C.S.I.R.O. will be received in the very near future.

My recent visit to the infested areas of the central highlands confirmed my earlier impressions that while the application of herbicides must continue as a containment exercise, a solution to the overall problem depends on evolution of a practical and effective means of treatment. We are still searching for that solution.

### 13. PRE-SCHOOL FOR ALPHA

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

What can be done to institute pre-school facilities in Alpha?

*Answer:—*

I thank the honourable member for his continued interest in the education of the young people in his area and for the manner in which he pursues these matters. I would now advise him that it is provisionally planned to construct a pre-school at Alpha in 1978. Of course, its construction will be subject to the availability of the necessary funds.

### 14. COT DEATHS

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

What are the latest scientific inquiries undertaken by the Government into the increase in, and mysterious circumstances surrounding, cot deaths, which are causing heart-break to many young families?

*Answer:—*

Cot deaths (or, as they are now referred to, the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) occur and have occurred regularly in all communities.

Originally these deaths were attributed to suffocation but not since 1945. The investigation of these deaths has been intense both in Queensland and elsewhere. The pathologists on the staff of the State Health Laboratory working at the Institute of Forensic Pathology investigate each death with the utmost care.

A full autopsy is carried out and in addition microscopic examination of the tissues as well as bacteriological, serological and virological investigations are made. A large volume of scientific information has been accumulated. A paper concerning cot deaths in Brisbane was published in 1966 by Dr. O'Reilly, the Deputy Director of the State Health Laboratory.

Similar detailed scientific investigations are being carried out all over the world into the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and several international meetings have been held. As yet no real solution to the cause of the syndrome has been found.

As in any disease when the cause is undetermined, innumerable theories abound. Each is evaluated with care. Many can be discarded and others are carefully studied.

One of the main problems associated with Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is the emotional stress in the parents. This was realised in Brisbane very early in our association with the syndrome. As a result as soon as possible after the death a social worker visits the bereaved parents to provide information and counselling. This service has been provided for more than 15 years in Brisbane. It has done much to alleviate the sense of guilt in the parents and to provide reassurance that the death is unpredictable, the result of a natural cause and not due to neglect. The State Health Department was the first to introduce such a counselling service in Australia.

### 15. USE OF N.S.W. TIMBER FOR NORTH QUEENSLAND HOUSES

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

(1) In an effort to protect the viability of North Queensland sawmillers, who have had to retrench staff because of competition from low-cost imported timbers, I requested him in 1976 to direct that all houses built for any Government department should be erected with Queensland timbers only. Although he was not prepared to agree to my proposal at that time, is he now aware that a Brisbane-based building contractor, Peter Kurts, can erect a timber frame for a house in Townsville \$600 cheaper by using imported New South Wales timber as against northern and southern Queensland hardwoods?

(2) Will he investigate how this anomaly comes about and take some steps to protect the Queensland timber industry generally before all northern builders are forced to buy New South Wales hardwood in order to compete with southern builders?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) The construction departments in my portfolio follow Cabinet policy on the use of local timber. The question should be directed to my colleague the Honourable K. B. Tomkins, M.L.A., Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service, who is responsible for timber-usage policy in this State.

## 16. TOWNSVILLE FISH BOARD

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

(1) What action does he intend to provide adequate wharf facilities adjacent to the new Fish Board depot on the Ross River?

(2) Is he aware of recent statements in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" that the new Fish Board may be a white elephant because increased handling charges could send professional fishermen broke, and of inflammatory statements by Mr. Keith Bryson, a professional fisherman, that some fishermen could be tempted to engage in smuggling and other illegal activities in order to earn a decent living?

(3) Will he assure the professional fishermen based in Townsville that steps are being taken to offer greater protection to the industry?

*Answers:—*

(1) Vessel-unloading facilities at the new Ross River depot will be a priority item in the Queensland Fish Board loan works programme for 1977-78.

(2) I am aware of recent statements attributed to Mr. Bryson but I am confident that no worth-while fisherman will need to resort to such activities in order to earn a decent living and equally certain that no reputable fisherman would do so.

As an interim measure it will be necessary to transport product by road from the Flinders Street wharf to the new Ross River depot until the new unloading facilities are constructed at Ross River and a dredged access channel provided.

The additional costs will affect the Fish Board's overall profitability but should be offset by greater volume of throughput. In any case, they will have to be absorbed by the board and are most unlikely to send any professional fishermen "broke" or for that matter seriously affect any incomes.

(3) The special problems facing professional fishermen based at Townsville will be given every consideration and appropriate protective measures implemented where necessary and practical.

## 17. DRAINAGE OF SUGAR-CANE LANDS

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

(1) Is he aware that the present big wet season in North Queensland has highlighted the fact that, of the currently assigned cane lands in that area, 40 per cent requires drainage improvement?

(2) As the proper provision of drainage is the only way in which some mill areas can attain productivity increases, what action is being taken to implement the

recommendations of the drainage report compiled by Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey?

(3) What was the cost of the report and what are the estimated costs of carrying out the drainage work in all the various mill areas?

*Answers:—*

(1) The overview study of drainage problems in the northern sugar region recently carried out by Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey, on behalf of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, has shown a total of some 40 000 hectares of currently assigned caneland could benefit to varying extents by drainage.

(2) Copies of the drainage report have been made available to interested parties and organisations, and discussions between these parties and the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission are now being held.

While the drainage study examined aspects of local drainage, a review of flood mitigation required to supplement local area drainage was essential to obtain the complete picture regarding problems in the region.

Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey are expected to complete a further report on flood mitigation aspects by mid-April 1977. Copies of this report will also be made available to interested organisations for comment and discussion. Following these discussions, the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission will prepare an overall report for submission to Cabinet for consideration and determination of possible future action.

(3) Cost of the drainage study amounted to \$71,000 and estimated cost of the flood-mitigation study is \$35,000. Estimated capital cost of actual drainage works within the northern sugar areas has been estimated to be some \$9,500,000 with an annual maintenance cost, excluding interest and redemption, of some \$650,000.

## 18. DAMAGE TO JOHN ROW BRIDGE, INGHAM

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

Will he arrange for an investigation to be carried out, in conjunction with that of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, into recent damage to the John Row Bridge at Ingham with a view to modifying the structure, if necessary, in order to prevent further damage to adjoining property by the diversion of floodwaters, which was apparently caused by the structural factors of the bridge?

*Answer:—*

The major damage to the John Row Bridge at Ingham was a draw-down slip at the southern abutment similar to many



which occurred in the Herbert River following the recent high flood. Restoration work to allow movement of traffic has already been completed and further work will be undertaken with the objective of avoiding a repetition of this mode of failure.

A separate and totally unrelated issue is the question of the effect which the bridge may have had in diverting floodwaters onto adjoining properties. Such matters are taken into consideration during the planning and design stages for bridges such as this, and in this case it was concluded that any such effects would be negligible.

Following the recent high flood, departmental officers have already been in consultation with the shire engineer to arrange for the collection of flood level information in this location. They will also liaise with officers of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission investigating aspects of damage caused by the recent flood. Until these investigations are completed, any comment I might make on possible remedial measures would be meaningless.

#### 19. QUALITY OF MOTOR SPIRIT

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

What tests are applied to motor spirit retailed in Queensland to ensure that it complies with the octane rating and purity required by law?

*Answer:—*

Refiners of motor spirit exercise their own quality control to ensure that motor spirit produced by them is of a certain octane rating. It would, of course, be competent for the Commonwealth Government, through the Trade Practices Act, to make mandatory throughout Australia standards for octane rating and purity of motor spirit. This is a more desirable approach than individual action by a State in view of the fact that not all motor spirit retailed in a State would be refined in that State.

#### 20. BUILDING SOCIETIES' LEVY ON BORROWERS

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

In relation to an article on page 8 of "The Courier-Mail" of 17 March wherein he is claimed to have said that some permanent building societies, including the Queensland Permanent Building Society, have introduced a 1 per cent levy on borrowers who are two months or more in arrears, which permanent building societies have levied this charge?

*Answer:—*

I would refer the honourable member to the answer given by me in the House on Wednesday last, 16 March 1977, to a question from the honourable member for Archerfield, which I quote:—

"I understand that similar levies are imposed in other States and in one particular instance at a higher level than that applicable to Queensland Permanent Building Society".

The honourable member will note that I did not indicate that any other society in Queensland had adopted the policy of imposing a levy on loan repayments more than two months in arrears.

It is unfortunate that the article in "The Courier-Mail" of 17 March 1977 inferred that I had informed the House that other societies in Queensland had introduced this levy. This is not what I had said and I refer the honourable member again to my reply, which was also quoted in this same article.

#### 21. FLOOD RUN-OFF FROM INGHAM-TULLY AREA

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

(1) Have any studies been done with a view to harnessing the huge flood run-off from the Ingham-Tully area with a view to using it to water the fertile Flinders River Basin and/or the Upper Burdekin and, if not, will he commission such a study immediately?

(2) From where may these studies be obtained and what were the relevant committees' recommendations?

(3) Is he aware of the cost of the annual floods in the above area and of the droughts in the inland, that the Tennessee Valley Authority in the United States of America undertook its projects with unemployed labour during the great depression and that such labour pools now exist in North Queensland?

*Answers:—*

(1) A tentative proposal was put forward in 1938 by the late Dr. Bradfield to divert water from the Tully, Herbert and Burdekin Rivers into the Flinders Basin.

The Bradfield proposal was subsequently examined in some detail in 1947 by the late Dr. W. H. R. Nimmo, who was able to use more recent topographical, rainfall and stream-flow data. Broadly, Dr. Nimmo found that with modifications the proposal was physically possible but that it was not as attractive as Dr. Bradfield suggested. The costs were extraordinarily high and out of all proportion to the benefit likely to be received.

In late 1961 the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission undertook a preliminary investigation of the proposal to divert the Herbert River into the upper Burdekin River. This study confirmed that diversion was feasible and concluded that a need for the work could develop to meet the long-term requirements for irrigation in the Burdekin catchment. This aspect has not been considered in the current joint Commonwealth/State study of the Burdekin Basin. Further studies of the diversion proposal do not appear warranted at this stage.

(2) Copies of the original Bradfield proposal are not available. Dr. Nimmo's report was published in the annual report of the Land Administration Board for the year 1946/47. Details of the 1961 investigation are set out in a preliminary report by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, "Water Resources Development—Herbert River".

(3) The annual costs of flooding in the Ingham/Tully regions are known in broad terms and an overview study is currently being finalised for the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission on the requirements for flood-mitigation works in these sugar-growing areas and others in North Queensland. It is appreciated that the costs likely to be involved in such works are considerable, and financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government would be essential to implementation of any scheme. Implementation of the Tennessee Valley scheme relied very heavily on Central Government support plus income from power generation.

## 22. EDENLEE PTY. LTD. LAND, HERVEY BAY

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

(1) With reference to my questions to him on 26 August 1975 and 1 April 1976 concerning the sale of land at Hervey Bay by Edenlee Pty. Ltd., has the Corporate Affairs Office completed its investigation and, if so, what action has been taken against the company?

(2) When can investors expect return of all or part of moneys given to these land cheats?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs has completed his investigations under the Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971-1975. The matter has now been referred to Fraud Squad officers attached to the commissioner's office for further investigation. The company has been prosecuted and fined a total of \$3,000 on three summonses issued for breaches of the Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971-1975.

(2) Investors should seek their own legal advice as to what action they should take in the recovery of moneys paid to this company.

## 23. BAQUACIL FOR USE IN SWIMMING-POOLS

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

(1) Is he aware of a chemical known as polyhexamethylene biquanide hydrochloride and commonly marketed as Baquacil for the control of algae and bacteria in swimming-pools?

(2) If so, why is this product on sale only in Queensland and South Australia and are there any health restrictions preventing its sale in other States?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) I am advised that the product is or will be marketed in other Australian States.

## 24. NEW SOUTH WALES EGGS ON QUEENSLAND MARKET

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

(1) What are the names and addresses of the two or more New South Wales egg producers who have special symbols from the Queensland Egg Marketing Board to supply the Queensland market?

(2) What is the name of the supplier whose symbol has been revoked and what was the reason?

(3) In view of the restrictions placed on Queensland egg producers through the hen quota system for the control of eggs on the Queensland market, what regulations exist that prevent the sale of New South Wales eggs to Queensland markets, particularly to the northern and north-western areas and does the overproduction of eggs by New South Wales producers cause flooding of the Queensland market?

*Answers:—*

(1) The names and addresses of the two New South Wales egg producers who have been granted egg identification symbols under the provisions of the Poultry Industry Act are:—

(i) Mr. J. Bolster, Egg and I Pty. Ltd., Pacific Highway, Tweed Heads.

(ii) H. and F. Brazil, Legume, N.S.W.

The responsibility for issuing egg identification symbols to New South Wales producers who can meet the necessary egg-grading standards rests with my department.

(2) The supplier whose symbol has been revoked is:—

Mr. J. Bolster, Egg and I Pty. Ltd., Pacific Highway, Tweed Heads.

The reason for withdrawal of the symbol previously issued to this egg producer was failure to comply with the quality and weight-grading standards set down in the regulations made under the Poultry Industry Act.

(3) Section 92 of the Australian Constitution precludes any interference with the free trade of goods across State borders.

Provided eggs are marked and graded in accordance with the quality and weight standards set down in the regulations made under the Poultry Industry Act, there is no restriction on New South Wales eggs being sold in Queensland. These regulations do not apply in the north and north-western areas of the State.

While the egg industry in New South Wales has encountered delays controlling over-production, there is no evidence of these eggs being sold in Queensland by persons other than the two symbol holders mentioned above.

There is no record of the number of New South Wales eggs sold in Queensland.

#### 25. CABOOLTURE MUNICIPAL OFFICERS' DISPUTE

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

(1) Is he aware of a dispute existing in Caboolture between members of the Municipal Officers' Association and the shire council?

(2) What is the cause of the dispute and what action has his department taken?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) An industrial dispute currently exists between the Municipal Officers' Association and the Caboolture Shire Council.

I am informed that the dispute emanates from notices of dismissal being given to Mr. M. Kerins, a storeman, and Mr. J. Ferguson, a soil tester, and has resulted in a series of rolling strikes by other members of that union.

The two employees concerned, and those who participated in strike action, work under the conditions prescribed by an award of the Australian Arbitration Commission. It is reported that the Caboolture Shire Council rejected an offer by Commonwealth Commissioner Gough to chair a meeting between the disputants in an endeavour to resolve the dispute on the grounds that the Commonwealth commissioner had no authority because the dispute was not of an interstate nature.

The Municipal Officers' Association notified the State Industrial Commission of the dispute on 16 March 1977 and a

conference was convened by that commission on 17 March 1977. I am informed that an offer made by the Caboolture Shire Council to continue both employees as labourers was rejected by the Municipal Officers' Association. Efforts to resolve the dispute by conciliation appear to have failed.

At this stage there are no appropriate avenues available to my department to take further action to resolve this dispute.

#### 26. A.U.S. COMBAT SEXISM KIT

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

(1) Is he aware of a kit put out by the Australian Union of Students, a Communist-dominated group of lesbians and homosexuals dedicated to the destruction of student morality in this country?

(2) As this kit, known as the "Combat Sexism Kit", is being sold to students throughout the country, will he take steps to prevent its being sold in Queensland?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) Though I have not had the opportunity to examine this kit in detail, it appeared to contain some material which would be acceptable and useful. However, some other material in it appeared to be very questionable and may offend some people. In such cases they could resort to the appropriate legal action if they felt strongly enough about it.

#### 27. SAFETY OF QUEENSLAND RAILWAYS

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

(1) With reference to the New South Wales inquiry presently being conducted into the Granville rail disaster, is he completely satisfied with the safety of the Queensland railways?

(2) How many derailments have there been on Queensland railways over each of the last 10 years and on what lines?

(3) How many persons have been killed and how many have been injured, what is the total value of the loss of, or damage to, private goods and railway property on the Queensland railways over each of the last 10 years?

(4) What are the facilities and safeguards and how many safety officers are involved to ensure that a tragic disaster such as that at Granville does not occur in Queensland?

(5) How many bridges of the same type as that at Granville are on the Queensland railways?

(6) What is the age of the oldest carriages and wagons now being used on the Queensland railways, how many are there, and what is the daily average number of people travelling in such carriages?

(7) How many complaints have been made concerning safety on the Queensland railways, who made them and what action was taken?

(8) Will he consider holding a general inquiry into safety on the Queensland railways to ensure that a tragedy such as that at Granville does not happen here?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 8) Apart from the considerable time and effort which would be entailed in researching the records to ascertain the detailed information sought by the honourable member, it would be quite inappropriate for me to comment, at this stage, on matters in any way relating to the Granville rail disaster in view of the fact that the circumstances surrounding that mishap are, at present, the subject of a judicial inquiry.

#### 28. EROSION PROBLEM AT GREEN ISLAND, NORTH QUEENSLAND

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

(1) Further to his answers to my questions on 8 October 1975 and 21 September 1976 concerning erosion problems at Green Island, is he aware that the construction of the polythene-enclosed sand groyne was washed away following the high tides of November-December 1976 and that recent cyclonic weather has accelerated critical erosion of this coral atoll and premier tourist resort?

(2) Why was local knowledge rejected in this matter and the timber groyne removed?

(3) What is the cost of this project to date and are the results considered to be satisfactory?

(4) Did the State Government submit a request for a developmental grant of \$74,504 for beach protection work at Green Island and was this grant withdrawn by the Commonwealth Government in February this year?

(5) Will urgent action be taken to recover the situation in this now disaster area?

*Answers:—*

(1) The experimental groyne constructed by my Department of Harbours and Marine in 1975 of sand-filled polypropylene bags has slumped slightly under wave action but is substantially intact.

My Department of Harbours and Marine is aware of the erosion which has occurred at the south-west corner of the island, causing a threat to buildings owned by

Hayles Magnetic Island Pty. Ltd., and to the jetty, the maintenance of which is the responsibility of that company.

(2) The timber groyne failed under storm-wave attack, leaving timber debris and remnants of rusting steel rails protruding from the coral of the lagoon. These were removed in 1972. It is the opinion of my Department of Harbours and Marine that the groyne may have contributed directly to losses of sand from the island.

(3) The most recent contract for sand-pumping and experimental groyne construction cost a total of \$67,323. The sand replenishment of the cay is considered to be satisfactory in that it corrected a situation where the cay was deficient of sand. The groyne and sand-pumping did not prove to be useful in protecting buildings owned by Hayles Magnetic Island Pty. Ltd.

(4) A grant of \$74,504 was sought from the Commonwealth Government under the Tourism Grants Scheme 1975-76 towards the cost of the works mentioned in my answer to the honourable member's third question. Advice was received in March 1976 that the grant programme had been discontinued and that the grant would not be made.

(5) Cabinet has decided, and Hayles Magnetic Island Pty. Ltd. has been advised, that no further funds will be made available for shore protection works on Green Island as these would be essentially for the protection of private property. I do not consider Green Island to be a disaster area. While there is certainly a threat to two of the company's buildings, there is no present likelihood of loss of the island.

#### 29. FIRST-YEAR CENTRE AT TRINITY BAY HIGH SCHOOL, CAIRNS

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

(1) Was the erection of a first-year centre at the Trinity Bay High School, Cairns, which was contemplated for the commencement of the 1977 school year, deferred?

(2) Did the parents and citizens' association receive advice during 1976 assuring it that the building would be completed before 1977 to relieve the ever-increasing staff-room and classroom accommodation shortage at this school, which is being aggravated by ever-increasing student enrolments?

(3) If so, how does he reconcile this action with the original advice and when is it now expected that the work will commence and the building be ready for occupation?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am not aware of any such action.

(2) I am not aware of any such assurance.

(3) No indications can be given in this regard.

30. THREAT TO GROWERS OF MALTING  
BARLEY

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

As the livelihood of growers of malting barley is being threatened by a serious decline occurring in Australian beer production, what action can this Government take to ensure that the 30c now paid on every bottle is not raised by the Commonwealth Government, so disadvantaging growers in an already serious position?

*Answer:—*

I am aware of the 1.2 per cent decline in Australian beer production which occurred during 1975-76. However, I would refer the honourable member to the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics Production Summary No. 42 dated 2 March 1977, which indicates a 1.2 per cent increase in beer production over the six months ended 31 December 1976, compared with the same period in 1975.

In relation to the Queensland barley industry, returns to growers for malting barley are dependent more on developments in international trade than on demand from local maltsters.

In fact, over the last three seasons, including the current one, substantially less than 20 per cent of the Barley Marketing Board's malting barley intake has been taken up by local maltsters, while the balance has been placed on overseas markets at satisfactory prices.

31. UPGRADING OF SECTION OF ISIS  
HIGHWAY

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

Further to his letter of 11 March 1975, what is the position on plans for the upgrading of that part of the Isis Highway just west of Childers and including the unsatisfactory crossing of Apple Tree Creek?

*Answer:—*

The position remains substantially the same as when I wrote to the honourable member in 1975. As I said then, the level of funds available precludes either the construction of the proposed deviation or the upgrading of the existing route. This road is in the rural arterial category for which the needs far exceed the means.

32. TREASURY SAVINGS ON PUBLIC  
PROJECTS

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

Further to my question of 9 March concerning his statement that he is able to reallocate millions of dollars from the

State Budget and his reply that since November \$65,000,000 was available from State Consolidated Revenue for employment-generating capital works, as on his own figures only \$35,500,000 was calculated to be available from the money allocated to cover the cost of salary and wage award increases, from where was the remaining \$29,500,000 derived?

*Answer:—*

The question implies that I did not adequately answer the honourable member's previous question with respect to the allocation of the further \$65,000,000 that has been made to employment-generating works. This is not so.

I have gone back to the previous question and answer and am satisfied that every fair-minded member will agree that I have a complete answer on all matters that were not readily available in printed material. As a matter of fact, in an endeavour to provide the honourable member with a complete picture of the position, I went further than just answering the specific question. I firstly corrected his misconception that the additional allocation was \$35,000,000 where in fact it has been \$65,000,000. I might add that, as financial spokesman for the Opposition, the honourable member should have been aware of this.

I then explained again the Budget strategy, which already had been fully described in my Budget speech last September, and which was in effect that funds released during the year would be applied as they were now being applied in support of the capital programme so as to ensure that employment-generating works were maintained and enhanced.

I then went on to table fully the areas of additional expenditure benefiting from the additional \$65,000,000, and these mainly were—

	\$
Housing .. .. .	10,000,000
Roads .. .. .	15,000,000
Railways .. .. .	7,000,000
Sewerage .. .. .	7,500,000
Hospitals .. .. .	5,000,000
Irrigation .. .. .	4,000,000
Schools .. .. .	3,700,000
Agricultural Bank Advances .. .. .	3,500,000
Surveys .. .. .	700,000
Police Housing .. .. .	500,000

The sources of the funds being released can be fairly readily ascertained by an examination of the progressive Budget figures which are published quarterly in the Government Gazette. They are net revenue surpluses and expenditure savings flowing from tight Budget control under many headings, and I do not intend to do the honourable member's homework and analyse these published figures for him.

What would not have been readily disclosed from a quick examination of the published figures was the \$35,000,000 expected saving which was spread through all salary and wage Votes and I explained this as being a benefit flowing from the success of the Federal Government's economic management policies whereby cost escalations have been held to a lower level than had been experienced in recent years.

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

**Mr. KNOX:** And every local authority and Government in Australia has experienced that.

**Mr. Houston:** It is the greatest lot of rubbish we have ever heard.

**Mr. KNOX:** The honourable gentleman says that it is rot. Let him look at what New South Wales does. He is supposed to be the expert. Let him see what his colleagues do in New South Wales.

**Mr. Houston** interjected.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Premier is in the process of answering a question. He will be heard in silence.

*Answer (contd.)—*

I do not know what is troubling the honourable member with respect to this further allocation to capital works. I would have expected him to be pleased that the Budget could be so managed that it could release funds of this magnitude, sufficient to provide work directly for over 4,000 men plus, of course, the employment it provides back in the support industries. Have he and the Labor Party a vested interest in unemployment or is he concerned that a Queensland National-Liberal Government with a relatively smaller Budget can produce a better employment record than the New South Wales Labor Government?

**Mr. Houston:** Our employment figures are down, and you know it.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! I would not want to be put in the situation where I had to deal with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but if I am forced to I certainly will.

**Mr. KNOX:** I would not want you to be put into that position either, Mr. Acting Speaker. Let me deal with him.

*Answer (contd.)—*

On Thursday last, the day the honourable member was again querying Queensland's \$65,000,000 effort, the New South Wales Labor Government announced a similar \$30,000,000 allocation to relieve unemployment in that State, but the New

South Wales \$30,000,000 was to be spread very thinly over a 12-month period, whereas Queensland's \$65,000,000 will be spent by 30 June.

### 33. ROAD AND FERRY TRAFFIC CHANGES FOR NEW PORT OF BRISBANE

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

(1) With reference to the Local Government Minister's statement that 58,500 vehicles per day will use Wynnum Road in 14 years' time as a result of traffic growth and the building of the new port at Fisherman Islands, as this traffic flow will place an intolerable burden on the existing roads, what progress has been made by the Government in the provision of down-river ferry services?

(2) What assistance has been given to the existing up-and-down-river ferry operator by way of subsidy, provision of landing facilities, etc.?

(3) Has the report on the investigation into ferry services been completed and, if so, will a copy be tabled in this House for consideration by the public?

(4) Has the existing down-river ferry operator placed his business on sale because of lack of Government support?

(5) Is he aware that this service is regularly patronised and that there is a pressing need for such a service?

(6) Will down-river ferry services be provided for the Port of Brisbane and riverside suburbs when the port commences operation?

*Answers:—*

(1) The anticipated increase in traffic volumes on Wynnum Road in the next 14 years will include a high proportion of commercial vehicles, and authorities other than the Metropolitan Transit Authority will be looking at ways of dealing with this possible situation.

The desirability of passenger ferries to down-river points was included in the terms of reference for the study of the use of the Brisbane River for passenger transport. I expect to receive the final stage of the study containing recommendations shortly.

(2) The Metropolitan Transit Authority will be in a position to consider subsidies or provision of facilities for ferry services after the complete study report has been received. The study has collated information, for the first time, to provide the basis for proper assessment of river services. No assistance has been provided to date, other than Brisbane City Council support under standing agreements with cross-river operators.

(3) The study is nearing completion and I will be considering its recommendations in due course.

(4) I am not aware that the up-down ferry operator has placed his ferry service up for sale. This is a private enterprise which must make and take its profits in the market-place. We are not here to spend public money for private good.

(5) Yes, it is understood that the service enjoys good patronage during peak periods but I would suggest that off-peak patronage is not always a paying proposition and that the service must be balanced if it is to remain viable without subsidy support, as at present.

(6) As mentioned previously, down-river services are included in the study and their introduction will be contingent upon the recommendations of the study, which also was asked to review existing facilities.

#### 34. FORESTRY DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

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

(1) For each of the last 10 years, how many people have been employed in the Forestry Department as at 30 June?

(2) For each of the last five years, how many people have been dismissed from the department?

*Answers:—*

(1) Employment of wages staff in the Forestry Department as at 30 June for each of the last 10 years was as follows:—

1967, 1,744; 1968, 1,793; 1969, 1,465; 1970, 1,711; 1971, 1,637; 1972, 1,737; 1973, 1,775; 1974, 1,684; 1975, 1,739; and 1976, 1,413.

(2) Dismissals from the Forestry Department in the last five years have been:

1971-72, nil; 1972-73, nil; 1973-74, nil; 1974-75, nil; and 1975-76, 277 (including 250 men employed under the Regional Employment Development Scheme).

In replying to this question it is assumed that the honourable member refers to staff retrenchments rather than to normal dismissals for disciplinary reasons.

Since 1974 the department's work-force has generally declined in numbers due to changing work requirements. This trend was temporarily reversed, however, in 1975 when the number employed was inflated by some 250 men engaged under Regional Employment Development Schemes.

The general reduction in the work-force evident since 1974 has been achieved almost wholly by non-replacement of men who retired or resigned from the department. Only in 1976 was it necessary to dismiss men and this was due to termination of the Regional Employment Development Scheme, and to some extent because of a decrease in funds available to the State from the Commonwealth under the Softwood Agreement.

#### 35. GOLD COAST LICENSED RESTAURANTS

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

(1) With reference to recent statements by the executive officer of the State Licensing Commission that investigations were undertaken by the commission following complaints that some restaurants on the Gold Coast imposed excessive cover charges during the Christmas/New Year holiday period, which restaurants were complained about?

(2) What action was taken against the restaurants which were exploiting people in this fashion?

*Answers:—*

(1) Only one complaint was received by the Licensing Commission and this was in regard to El Rancho Restaurant, Surfers Paradise.

(2) A direction of the Licensing Commission was subsequently issued to the licensee of these premises and, in fact, to all holders of restaurant licences and limited hotel licences throughout Queensland, drawing their attention to the provisions of the Liquor Act which prohibit the imposition of a cover charge without the approval of the Licensing Commission.

#### 36. PROBLEMS OF FAMILIES OF ALCOHOLICS

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

(1) Is he aware that social workers severely criticise the State Government's new Health Paper on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Services for failing to recognise that the families of alcoholics should be involved in the rehabilitation?

(2) What emphasis does his department place on the family in relation to the alcoholic?

(3) What support systems are provided for the family of an alcoholic?

(4) Will he take into account in this area that those closest to the alcoholic or problem drinker are involved emotionally and often physically and that family attitudes and reactions also affect the alcoholic and his illness?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) In answer to the honourable member's four-part question, I would point out that in the Health Paper tabled in this House on 27 October 1976 the following quotation appears:—

"Alcoholism is often a family problem and for most alcoholics, and certainly for those where social deterioration is not advanced, facilities should be as near as possible to the individual's home. If this basic principle is broken, unrealistic therapeutic endeavours can

proceed in centres remote from the family. Such efforts are essentially inefficient”.

Such a statement undeniably indicates that it is a basic principle of the developing services of the Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Service of the Government that attention will be paid not only to the dependent person but also to the family of the dependent person. I am aware that one particular organisation has made such a criticism and has sought Press publicity on this matter. However, it has been pointed out to its members quite clearly that their criticism has been made on a false premise.

### 37. INQUIRY INTO ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE PESTS

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

(1) Has the inquiry into animal and vegetable pests been concluded and, if so, what were the recommendations and have the report and recommendations of the inquiry been submitted to Cabinet?

(2) Has Cabinet made any decisions stemming from the recommendations and, if so, what were the decisions?

(3) Will he table a copy of the report and recommendations?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) The committee of inquiry into animal and vegetable pests has furnished its report and recommendations and these are presently being considered by Cabinet. The report is still under consideration. I feel confident that in due course the report will be tabled in the House.

### 38. ACCESS ROAD FROM TEWANTIN TO RAINBOW BEACH

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

(1) Will he consider setting aside land in the forestry area of Como to give a better road access from Tewanin to Rainbow Beach?

(2) Is he aware that such a road would greatly assist access to Cooloola National Park and Fraser Island?

(3) Will he assist the move for such a road to boost the tourist and allied industries, which would help to relieve the local unemployment problem?

*Answers:—*

(1) Gazetted road access from Tewanin to Rainbow Beach already exists except for a small section of about 2 kilometres. Representatives from the interested shires considered the location was satisfactory. There would be no objection to the gazettal of the missing link.

(2) The road would virtually halve the present distance from Tewanin to Rainbow Beach and would certainly improve access for tourism in the area.

(3) Reforestation funds would not be available for construction of the road in question and its development would depend on the allocation of special funds.

### 39, 40 QUEENSLAND PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETY

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

With reference to a \$2,600,000 discrepancy in the accounts of the Queensland Permanent Building Society last year, have any of his officers from the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs been instructed to make any investigations whatsoever into this matter and, if so, for approximately how long have these investigations been taking place?

*Answer:—*

Officers of the building societies section of the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs are making investigations. However, since the administration of building society matters is the responsibility of my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Works and Housing, I suggest that the honourable member direct his question to him.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** I do so accordingly.

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

(1) What are the total funds invested with the Queensland Permanent Building Society?

(2) How much of this represents money accepted on term deposits?

(3) What is the total membership of the society and how many of these persons are borrowers?

*Answers:—*

(1) Total funds of the Queensland Permanent Building Society as at 11 March 1977 equalled approximately \$180,249,000, which represents an increase in total funds of approximately \$23,653,000 since 30 June 1976.

(2) I am not prepared to state the amount this society holds on term deposits, as this would disclose confidential management information to its competitors.

(3) Total membership of the society approximates 142,000, of which approximately 8,750 are borrowing members.

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

(1) Is he satisfied with the interest rates charged to borrowers at present by the Queensland Permanent Building Society?



(2) Does he support the principle whereby the Minister for Works and Housing should request cost-cutting exercises by the society in an endeavour to marginally lower their interest rates instead of having the situation where the society's clients have to pay for the society's former mismanagement?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) I would suggest the honourable member direct any specific question he may have on the matter to the Minister responsible for it.

42. MISLEADING PACKAGING ADVERTISING OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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

(1) Is he aware that the Victorian Consumers Association has investigated a number of products and has revealed that misleading packaging advertising is taking place in a wide variety of normal household consumer goods?

(2) Has he a copy of the report of the Victorian Consumers Association and is it the subject of review by his department?

(3) To protect consumers against false and misleading advertising, will he introduce legislation similar to the trade practices legislation?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) It is assumed the report to which the honourable member refers is that contained in the December issue of "Consumer Comment" under "Food Labels". In the circumstances, I suggest the honourable member redirect his question to my colleague the Minister for Health.

**Mr. Yewdale:** I do so accordingly.

43. MRS. TREWREN'S JAM

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

(1) Is jam branded as Mrs. Trewren's, which is made in Melbourne, being sold in Queensland and is it claimed that it contains no added sugar?

(2) Does the 200 g jar contain about 480 calories and is the jam sweetened with sorbitol, a carbohydrate used in diabetic diets and having similar calorie content to that of sugar?

(3) What action will he take to prevent the advertising of this product from deluding Queensland consumers?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) I suggest that this is a matter for my colleague the Minister for Health.

**Mr. Yewdale:** I redirect it to the Minister for Health for tomorrow.

44. RAILWAY IMPROVEMENTS AT ROCKHAMPTON

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

Has he received a submission from the Rockhampton City Council relating to the removal of the railway line from Denison Street, Rockhampton, and the construction of a new rail bridge across the Fitzroy River and, if so, as the Minister for Transport was forwarded a similar submission, has he consulted with him on the matter and, if not, when does he contemplate discussions will commence?

*Answer:—*

The mayor of Rockhampton wrote to me in this regard on 7 March and my colleague the Minister for Transport and I are presently looking at the proposals put forward.

45. S.G.I.O. BUILDING SOCIETY RATES

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

As mortgagees were assured in early 1976, when the operations of certain building societies were taken over by the S.G.I.O. Building Society, that no extra charges would be involved in connection with the transfer of mortgages, how can the increase in interest rates from 10.65 per cent to 11.75 per cent and the present increase from 11.75 per cent to 12.25 per cent, effective from 1 March 1977, be justified when the depositors' investment rate remains at 9.5 per cent?

*Answer:—*

The S.G.I.O. Building Society interest rate to borrowers was moved to 12½ per cent from 1 March and this brings it more or less into line with the majority of its competitors.

The Queensland Permanent Building Society charges 12½ per cent to \$25,000, 13 per cent thereafter to \$40,000, 13½ per cent thereafter to \$50,000 and 14 per cent on loans over \$50,000.

Security Permanent charges 12½ per cent to \$50,000 and 13½ per cent for \$50,000 and over. First Provincial is at 12½ per cent whilst the Metropolitan Permanent lending rate is 11½ per cent.

The S.G.I.O. Building Society took over the affairs of seven societies trading unprofitably. Substantial administrative economies have been effected to date and still are being effected. This together with the raising of the lending rate to 12½ per cent enhances the prospects of the new society trading profitably, thereby serving the best interests of clients of the S.G.I.O. Building Society in the longer term.

46. FARES TO MELBOURNE FOR  
TREATMENT OF RETARDED CHILDREN

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

As the New South Wales Minister for Youth and Community Services provides fares to Sydney and Melbourne to allow retarded children to receive treatment, will he consider providing fares to parents and the child when a retarded child is required to travel to Brisbane and Melbourne to receive the Delacato physical methods given by a Melbourne-based organisation known as ANSUA?

*Answer:—*

This matter does not come within my ministerial responsibilities.

**Mr. Prest:** I refer it to the appropriate Minister.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member referred the question to the "appropriate Minister." I shall have a look at that.

47. PRE-SCHOOLS AT BILOELA AND  
GLADSTONE

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

(1) In view of his answer that the pre-school at Biloelela was completed and opened two years ago and his efforts to refute claims that money allocated for educational projects in Labor-held electorates is being diverted into Government-held seats, is the Biloelela Pre-school now to be extended?

(2) What is the estimated cost of these extensions?

(3) In view of his statements, will he give an unqualified assurance that the construction of the proposed pre-school in Gladstone will still go ahead as originally planned, especially as tenders have already been called?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) I have already indicated that the matter of pre-school provisions at both centres is under consideration. Patience is a virtue that the honourable member should learn to acquire, as he was given the foregoing information only last Thursday.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### ACTIONS OF POLICE DEPARTMENT FOLLOWING CONVICTION OF POLICE OFFICERS AT CAIRNS

**Mr. TENNI:** I ask the Minister for Police: In view of the recent criticism by certain members of the legal profession in Cairns of the action taken by the Police Department in respect of two members of the Police Force presently at Cairns, can the Minister inform the House if there is any real justification for this criticism?

**Mr. NEWBERRY:** In view of the publicity that this case has received over the week-end and again today, and the fact that the public has been misinformed through certain channels, I have a statement to make that should answer the question that has now been put to me.

Criticism in this matter appears to be based on the assumption that the two convicted policemen will not be dismissed from the Police Force. Such assumption is improper at this time because the matter has yet to be finalised. Commissioner Lewis, acting in accordance with police rules, has called on the two officers to show cause why they should not be dismissed from the force. In effect, the commissioner has commenced a summary inquiry and the critics should hold their tongues until the commissioner's decision is announced. It is grossly improper that members of the legal profession or the general public should attempt to influence or interfere with the role of the commissioner in the exercise of his statutory authority.

It should be understood that the commissioner has no power to dismiss automatically a member of the force following conviction in an open court. Under the police rules, the commissioner is required to institute show-cause proceedings and these proceedings are now in train. The certificates of conviction on which the show-cause actions are based were received by the commissioner on 16 March. The show-cause notices were signed on 17 March and have been sent to the two officers concerned.

I should also point out to the House that the time allowed for the two officers to lodge appeals against their court convictions has not elapsed and it is a matter of regret that speculation about their future should be allowed to continue before the officers have had the opportunity to exercise this right.

#### PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW OF RADFORD SCHEME

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: As the Scott committee is at present making recommendations to the Board of Secondary School Studies, following its study of the Fairbairn-Rigby report and the Campbell report, and in view of his previous statements in this House recently that no further review was required, will he now explain the reason behind setting up a parliamentary review of the ramifications of the Radford scheme?

**Mr. BIRD:** I do not think this can be regarded as a separate inquiry. The members of my parliamentary education committee have indicated, and I have agreed, that if at any time they believe that any matter should be brought to my attention and to the attention of the Education Department, they should be able to do so. I believe that they are fulfilling their duty in this regard.

A matter has been brought to the attention of my education committee and to the attention of the joint parties, and as a result my

education committee will be providing me with more information on the matter that is considered to be of concern at the present time. When the information is supplied to me, I will be taking it to Cabinet for consideration.

#### MINISTERIAL CONTROL OF SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS AND RESOURCE MATERIAL

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: What control has he over the textbooks and resource material used in schools? In view of the allegation that has now been made that a book is being used through which children involve themselves in a murder situation, what action is the Minister prepared to take to see that this type of book is not being used by students in our Queensland schools?

**Mr. BIRD:** As all members will be aware, soon after taking over my portfolio of Education I issued instructions to all school principals and parents and citizens' associations that they should peruse all material in use in schools throughout this State and, if they felt that a particular book should not be used, they should ensure that that book was not introduced into the schools.

As the honourable member knows, a certain amount of freedom has been given to schools in more recent years, and I agree with this, but the particular book which is receiving publicity in the news media at the present time is one which, having looked at it after it was brought to my attention, I would agree most certainly is not the type of book which should be used in our school system. I hope that the parents and citizens' associations and the principals and teachers of this State have heeded my warning and taken my advice. If they have not I would be very disappointed. But I have issued instructions this morning that, if the book is found to be in use in any of the State schools throughout Queensland, it should be withdrawn immediately.

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

#### PRIVILEGE

##### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (12.4 p.m.): Mr. Acting Speaker, I rise under Standing Order No. 115 on a question of privilege. On 17 March I gave notice of a question directed to the Minister for Education for today, but from the Notices of Questions today I find that it has been emasculated and in fact the questions I asked have not been answered. This has happened time and time again and rulings have been made that it should not happen and that it is the question as put that has to be answered.

I ask, Mr. Acting Speaker, that you request the Minister for Education to answer my question as put.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! This is not a matter of privilege; it is one of House procedure. The question was referred to me yesterday. A good portion of it was not in fact a question but a statement of fact, and it was thus considered not necessary that it be placed on the Notices of Questions. That statement of fact in support of the question was forwarded to the Minister, and he was aware of it. It is not the role of the Speaker to adjudicate in any way upon how the Minister chooses to answer a question.

#### FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### INITIATION

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs): 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 Fire Brigades Act 1964–1976 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

#### FIRE BRIGADE CHARGES REFUND BILL

##### INITIATION

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs): 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 refund to policy-holders of certain fire brigade charges and for matters incidental thereto.”

Motion agreed to.

#### JUSTICES ACT AND THE CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL

##### INITIATION

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General): 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 Justices Act 1886–1975 and The Criminal Code each in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

#### LIBRARIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### THIRD READING

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

UNIVERSITIES ACTS AMENDMENT  
BILL

THIRD READING

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

IRRIGATION ACT AND ANOTHER  
ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT** (Auburn—Minister for Water Resources) (12.12 p.m.): I move—

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

My introductory speech sought to explain the reasons for the proposed amendments, and in broad outline how the amendments were proposed to be made. I am pleased that honourable members engaged in considerable debate at the introductory stage and that the proposals as outlined were generally agreed to be necessary and acceptable.

The amendments are largely procedural matters and I will, therefore, offer brief comments on the specific clauses of the Bill containing the amendments.

Clause 4 deals with “Assessments on owners of sugar-mills”. The insertion proposed by this clause clarifies the power of the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply to make and levy an assessment on owners of a sugar-mill in respect of lands within an irrigation area assigned to such mill with respect to the supply of water to those lands from works constructed by the commissioner or from underground sources assured as a result of such works.

The charge has been approved to apply in the Bundaberg and Eton irrigation areas. The basis of the charge has been accepted by all the mill owners in the areas. Assessments are presently being made on two mills in the Bundaberg area. Charges for 1976-77 totalled some \$37,000 and on completion of Phase I of the scheme will be some \$250,000.

The making of assessments was in effect approved by previous resolutions of this House, and the amendment is made on the advice of the Solicitor-General, who considers it doubtful whether the present provision provided the necessary powers.

Subclause 4 (b) of the Bill deletes the regulation-making power contained in the Schedule Part II, in relation to “Charges on owner of sugar mill”, which becomes redundant following the proposed amendment.

Part III sets out the proposed amendments to the River Improvement Trust Act.

Clause 6 amends section 3 subsection (2), “Constitution of other River Improvement Areas”.

A local authority may make application, or any two or more local authorities may make joint application, for the constitution

of a river improvement area. The present wording of the section is not completely clear in respect of the constitution of a river improvement area on the application of a single local authority. The amendment rephrases the subsection to more clearly express the requirements for constitution of a river improvement area.

Clause 7 amends section 11, which provides that a trust may, by notice in writing, called an improvement notice, prohibit an owner or occupier of land within the river improvement area from doing or continuing any action which caused or may contribute to damage to any bank of the river within the area. An improvement notice duly issued is also binding upon every person who, subsequent to the giving of the notice, becomes the owner or occupier of the land. In this regard section 11A of the Act provides for the notification of existence of an improvement notice to be recorded by endorsement on the instrument of title or noting in the relevant register.

To assist in the service of a notice and the subsequent notification of existence thereof, the amendment proposed widens section 11 to enable a notice to be issued on the legal personal representative of a deceased owner or occupier. The amendment is made by the insertion of a new subsection 9 to section 11 stating the wider meaning of owner and occupier. For consistency in drafting, a paragraph stating the definition of the word “prohibit” is deleted from subsection 1 and grouped in the new subsection 9.

Clause 8 amends section 12 of the principal Act—Fund of the Trust—to require the establishment and maintenance of an emergency fund to provide moneys for the carrying out of urgent works rendered necessary by a flood or other cause. The clause also provides that the Minister, when he is satisfied the need for an emergency fund is not likely to arise, may on application exempt a trust from establishing or maintaining an emergency fund. Some trusts have already established such a fund, and members may be assured that the Act will be administered to enable the fund to be progressively built up, having due regard to the resources available to a trust.

Clause 9, the final clause of the Bill, provides for three amendments to section 13—Budget. Clause 9 (a) is a machinery clause to provide that in framing the budget a trust shall estimate the amount to be provided for the emergency fund established in accordance with the previous section of the Bill.

The second amendment provides machinery which, where circumstances in any year render it necessary, will enable a trust to incur expenditure not provided for in the budget, or in excess of the estimates in respect of that item provided in the budget. A trust before making such a disbursement

shall by resolution approve the making thereof and obtain the approval of the Minister for the making thereof.

The final amendment proposed is to subsection 4 of section 13, which section enables a trust to expend funds upon works, maintenance or repairs rendered necessary by any flood or cyclone during any year, provided the commissioner with the consent of the Governor in Council approves of the action, before any expenditure is incurred. As the budget of a trust and any over-expenditure thereof is approved by the Minister, and as the need for consent and approval generally arises as a matter of urgency, the amendment proposes that expenditure for this purpose be subject to the consent of the Minister in lieu of the Governor in Council.

In view of the procedural nature of the amendments and the general acceptance previously indicated, I trust that these comments have adequately covered the purpose and intent of the Bill. I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (12.18 p.m.):** We have considered the comments of the Minister at the introductory stage. We accept his statement that most of the proposed amendments are procedural ones.

The first proposed amendment to the Irrigation Act deals mainly with the clarification of a legal position. It is very important that that should be done at this stage. The Government's power to levy the sugar-mills should be properly clarified and set out clearly in the Act. The whole economy and operation of these schemes is dependent on this legislation, with the mills being levied so much per tonne of sugar assigned to the particular mill area. Because of the Federal Government's cut-back in the funding of the Bundaberg and Eton Irrigation Projects—the two main ones concerned here—we cannot have anything else go wrong with the funding of those projects. Both projects are under way. Both of them are vital to the sugar industry, and to the maintenance of a proper economy in the Bundaberg and Mackay districts. The Opposition clearly supports that amendment.

Some of the clauses which amend the River Improvement Trust Act are very timely. Indeed, some of them are very much overdue. I refer in particular to the clause relating to emergency spending. Very often flood-waters in many Queensland rivers cause extensive damage. That can happen when a cyclonic influence moves down the coast. Sometimes within a fortnight—before funds can be allocated to effect repairs—another cyclonic influence floods the rivers again and causes more harm than the earlier one.

The establishment of the emergency funds and the giving of power to the Minister (rather than to the Governor in Council)

to approve immediately emergency expenditure by river trusts are very important matters. The emergency funds should be set up properly. River trusts are financed mainly by precepts levied on local authorities. In turn, the local authorities obtain funds from their ratepayers. Because river trusts are not responsible directly to the public, we must ensure that the build-up in costs of work carried out does not become a severe burden on local authorities. Sometimes work carried out does not benefit people in a local authority area, and it may not be their wish that it be carried out.

I should like to see the Government Actuary look at the income and expenditure of river trusts over a period, on a pro rata basis, to ensure that no river trust establishes a major emergency fund simply for the sake of having a fund which will become purely an investment portfolio for the authority. This is one matter that is not clearly spelt out in the Bill. The Minister may be able to enlighten me on this and, if he cannot, I am sure that he will be prepared to look at the way in which emergency funds are to be invested. To be a true emergency fund the money will have to be readily accessible. If a local authority needing money in a hurry has still to go through a hassle to get money from a borrowing authority, it will be no better off. If a rock wall has to be built on a river-bank where scouring has occurred, it has to be done fairly quickly before subsequent flooding causes really bad damage to farming areas or townships.

In the past few years a number of people in the Herbert area have been drawing the attention of the Hinchinbrook Shire Council and the Herbert River Improvement Trust to the need to remove the large sand islands in the Herbert River that restrict its flow. Just before Christmas the Ingham-Halifax Branch of the A.L.P. drew this matter to the attention of both organisations. In many instances the older residents of an area can tell us more about these problems than the experts from the various Government departments and organisations. The local residents of Ingham and Halifax know that these sand islands have helped to create the flooding. When cattle were allowed to graze on the islands they kept the grass down, which helped to prevent the islands from joining together, and the normal flow of the river kept the sand on the move out to sea.

How do we differentiate between emergency funds and general funds? Mr. Acting Speaker, you would be well aware that in recent days many questions have been asked in the House about damage done in the Herbert River area—to the approaches to the John Row Bridge and to several farms and other areas along the banks of the Herbert River. Certainly the flooding may have resulted in an emergency; but is it work that should have been carried out as part of the general funding and normal functions of the river trust itself? It is in that area that we

have to be both cautious and careful. A clear line of demarcation has to be set as to what emergency funds are to be expended on. The Herbert River affords an excellent example of what may happen, as recent events are fresh in everybody's mind.

One principle of the Bill I do find a little hard to accept relates to the granting of exemption to those trusts that require it. I can barely conceive the likelihood of a river trust finding it necessary to set itself up in the first place if there is not a problem with its river. As we all well know, in any problem-prone river emergencies are likely to arise from sudden flooding. Consequently, I cannot see the need for exemption where there is the need for a river trust.

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** We have only put that in to give the trusts the option. We don't really dictate to them.

**Mr. CASEY:** I think it is fair enough for the Minister not to insist that a river trust embark upon emergency funding. However, on the same basis, if river trusts say, "We don't want emergency funding. We do not want to add to our local authority precepts on the possibility that there will be an emergency.", they should not suddenly be like the boy who cried wolf when they are confronted with an emergency that has been created by flooding. They should not run to the Government, asking it to solve all their problems, give them hand-outs and fix everything up when it has been their own fault because they chose not to set up their own emergency fund. I regard emergency funds as somewhat akin to insurance for the area. A levy should be struck actuarially for the particular area.

Similarly, it is very difficult to conceive how river trusts can function without incorporating drainage work in their scope. When a river overflows after flooding, the water lodges behind the natural levee banks and cannot drain away. That causes severe problems. Particularly in cane areas, when water cannot find its way back into the stream it causes a lot of damage. That is one of the biggest problems arising from the flooding in North Queensland this year. In certain sections water has lodged behind levee banks and rotted the cane. On the other hand, it is necessary that care be taken when a drainage scheme is undertaken by a river trust, because the water that does lodge there may well be responsible for recharging the underground aquifers. Certainly the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission is the correct body to oversee work of that sort.

Those are the main points I wish to make on this Bill. I would certainly not like to take advantage of your being in the chair, Mr. Acting Speaker, and digress to other subjects. I have restricted myself to the principles of the Bill and not digressed in the way several members did at the introductory stage—members who obviously did not know the first thing about river trusts.

**Mr. JENSEN (Bundaberg)** (12.29 p.m.): This Bill is an important one, as the validity of any charges should be legally established, especially after the successful challenge on the stock levies. Irrigation schemes today are very costly and must be funded by levies imposed under this Act. Although sugar millers have agreed to the levies, nevertheless their imposition must be legalised.

The escalation in the estimated cost of the Bundaberg Irrigation Scheme is considerable, having risen from \$47,000,000 to \$100,000,000. In view of this escalation, it is imperative that the Bundaberg and Eton schemes be completed as soon as possible. If the rate of escalation continues and if there is a further lag in completing these schemes, it could result in their not being viable.

I agree with the honourable member for Mackay that in the funding of irrigation schemes the Federal Government has let Queensland down completely. There is no reason why the Federal Government could not fund these schemes. Money should be created to finance them. They are capital projects and money is always created for capital projects which will benefit the country not only immediately but in the future. If overseas interests set up new industries in this country or undertake projects here, the money for them is not poured into the country; it goes into foreign exchange and new money is created here. This, in turn, adds to inflation. The Federal Government says it is concerned about further inflation. I repeat that this is a capital project and that money for it should be created because it will benefit the country not only immediately, but in the future.

**Mr. Casey:** Forgan Smith did it.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Forgan Smith did it and other Governments have done it, but the Federal Government is letting this State down very badly.

I suggest that \$100,000,000 a year would not be too much for the Federal Government to put into irrigation schemes which will assist our primary industries and some of our secondary industries in the years to come. I agree with the honourable member for Mackay that the Federal Government has let Queensland down and has caused further unemployment. Capital projects should be going ahead. Because of the present escalation in costs, they should not be allowed to lag.

The State Government has done the right thing, particularly with the Bundaberg Irrigation Committee. Its budget this year has been increased to over \$6,000,000. That is the biggest budget we have ever had. Until now, \$2,000,000 of that budget came from the Federal Government but, because of that Government's failure to help the State with this irrigation scheme, the State Government has provided an extra \$2,000,000 in order to keep the scheme viable.

I hope that every honourable member has read the brochure I have in my hand. On page 9 it says—

“The slow-down of works caused by the non-provision of funds now incurs an annual interest charge of \$1.7 million.

“This loss will continue until more funds are provided to make this scheme productive.

“In addition there is a loss of water sales (@ \$12 acre/ft.) amounting to about \$700,000 per year.”

If the Bill did not make provision for the levies, the Government would lose \$700,000 in future years. That is the extent of the present loss because of the lack of Federal Government funding.

The brochure contains photographs of pipes and other material lying around in Bundaberg waiting to be used to channel the water from the Monduran Dam, which is as big as Sydney Harbour. It is overflowing and, because the water cannot be channelled to the Burnett Barrage owing to the lack of Federal funding, the water is going to waste.

**Mr. Jones:** What is the heading?

**Mr. JENSEN:** “Don’t let it be a dam waste”. That is what it is at the moment. The water is going to waste and the State Government is not enjoying the benefit of the levies payable by the farmers who will use the water.

Of the total production of sugar, 16 per cent comes from this region. Australian exports of sugar are worth \$600,000,000 and 16 per cent of that is \$96,000,000. One year of drought could cost the area \$96,000,000. Yet it would cost less than that to complete the scheme. That indicates how stupid the Federal Government is. It receives \$96,000,000 a year from this area in export income from sugar alone, and the project is not being made viable. The brochure is simple to read and understand. It shows that only \$10,000,000 a year is required to keep this work proceeding at optimum speed. In four years, this part at least of the scheme could be completed. But the Commonwealth Government does not want to see that done.

I again congratulate the State Government on its efforts to further this scheme. The Treasurer was in Bundaberg for the Bundaberg Cup meeting on Melbourne Cup day. He went to the dam site; in fact, he stayed an extra day to see it. Even though the Minister for Water Resources had provided in his Estimates an extra \$1,000,000 for this project, the Treasurer could see that more was required. I believe he made a submission to Cabinet which resulted in the allocation of an extra \$1,000,000 for the use of the Minister for Water Resources. An extra \$2,000,000 over the allocations of other years was therefore made available. This amount should have been supplied by the Federal Government. On behalf of the Bundaberg Irrigation Committee, I thank the Minister for Water Resources for all that he has done to keep this project moving.

**Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT** (Auburn—Minister for Water Resources) (12.37 p.m.), in reply: There is very little to which to reply. I might inform the honourable member for Mackay that some trusts have already taken steps to establish emergency funds. Local authority representation on trusts can be expected to ensure control in the establishment and administration of such emergency funds.

It will be a requirement that the funds be invested in banks and trustee investments and it should be possible to arrange on-call facilities. This matter will be examined to ensure that the points raised do not create problems in obtaining funds when they are required.

The honourable member for Bundaberg raised the need for additional funds. I, in common with all other members, fully realise the need for funds from the Commonwealth Government. We went along with the Commonwealth Government this year because we believed the economic situation made it necessary to do so, but I say here and now that unless there is Commonwealth funding in the next financial year very serious problems will arise in this State in the financing of the schemes that are now in progress.

I think we all realise the value of irrigation to Queensland, and from it in due course a great amount of revenue flows to the Commonwealth Government also from increased production and better returns to farmers settled in the various irrigation areas. All I can say to the honourable member for Bundaberg is that I am conscious of the need for more money for Bundaberg, just as I am conscious of the need for it at Kinchant, Cania, Callide and so many other places.

I should also mention completion of the second stage of the Leslie Dam, which is a scheme that the State Government has had before the Commonwealth Government for very many years. Unfortunately that Government has not seen fit to make any funds available for it. The State Government has now undertaken to try to do some work on this project from its own resources. I assure the honourable member for Bundaberg that the State Government will be pressing the Commonwealth Government for additional funds because I, like all other members who know something about irrigation projects, fully realise that without more money many of these schemes are going to remain far from finished.

Motion (Mr. Hewitt) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(The Acting Chairman of Committees, Mr. Gunn, Somerset, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 9, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ACT AND  
ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (12.40 p.m.): I move—

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

Although I was unable to be present to introduce the Bill, I have subsequently taken the opportunity to read the speeches made during the introductory debate.

As might be expected, Opposition members adopted their usual hypocritical attitude and engaged in a futile exercise of political flag-waving. Their approach to the Bill will certainly not deceive the electors of Queensland.

As explained by my colleague the Honourable the Deputy Premier and Treasurer when introducing the Bill, the proposed amendment is a simple machinery measure designed to update the two Acts in question and bring them into line with current-day trends and practices. It is as simple as that. The reasons for its introduction have already been fully explained and I commend the Bill to the House.

**Honourable Members** interjected.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** A closed mouth catches no flies.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! We can learn our lessons the easy way or the hard way—I do not mind either—but it is recognised that when the Acting Speaker is on his feet, there shall be silence.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (12.42 p.m.): On behalf of the Opposition I move the following amendment—

“Omit all words after ‘that’ and insert in lieu thereof the words—

‘the Bill be withdrawn and redrafted to provide for a fair and impartial redistribution of electoral boundaries for the whole of the State by a commission headed by a Supreme Court judge.’”

The amendment is simple and self-explanatory. It seeks nothing more than a calm, considered review of the Electoral Districts Act in its entirety to permit a full, fair redistribution under the supervision of a Supreme Court judge.

Today this Parliament must defend its own credibility. Labor’s amendment provides that opportunity. If there is a scrap of courage, a scrap of conscience and a skerrick of sincerity left within the Liberal members of this House they will support Labor’s amendment. This is their chance to profess their own policies. There is no doubt that coalition controversies of recent weeks surrounding this legislation have left Queenslanders disillusioned and bewildered and, as I said during the introductory debate last Thursday,

the question is not whether a redistribution should be held this year but what kind of a redistribution we should have. To those who subscribe to corrupt electoral practices, the present Indian elections come as a warning lesson. Events since last Thursday’s debate stress the urgent necessity for an amendment of the nature that I now propose. It does not matter how the Premier argues or the Treasurer quivers, the purpose of the Government’s legislation is very brutally clear. Without reference to this Parliament or resort to law the Premier will be free to direct redistributions at his whim—redistributions as often as he likes into as many seats as he likes.

**Mr. Frawley:** Is that bad?

**Mr. BURNS:** Does the honourable member think it is good? That may be the way he sees parliamentary democracy, but it seems that every other Parliament does not. I understand that the boundaries in South Australia are being challenged in the High Court or the Privy Council, but this is not allowed under this Government’s legislation. In the Federal sphere the Parliament itself is allowed to debate the boundaries, but it appears that the honourable member accepts the Queensland situation and thinks it is quite correct to have Cabinet control and that Parliament should not count. Most people in the parliamentary democracies throughout the world have argued the exact opposite—that Parliament and not the Cabinet should be supreme.

The Premier will appoint the commissioners and approve their secret determinations. They report to the Premier. Last Friday at the conference of the Urban Development Association in Surfers Paradise the Minister for Main Roads made the National Party’s attitude overwhelmingly clear. I could quote what he said from the newspaper report and also at first hand because he had already said in this Parliament what he said last Friday. The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General also was present at the dinner. The Minister for Local Government was reported in “The Courier-Mail” as having said—

“I told the Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen): ‘If you want the boundaries rigged, let me do it and we’ll stay in power for ever.’”

**Mr. Frawley:** He was joking.

**Mr. BURNS:** He was not joking when he said it here in the House. He now argues that that was when he was a back-bencher and that what back-benchers say does not count. He went on—

“If you don’t do it, people will say you are stupid.”

That is what Mr. Hinze thinks of this exercise.

He continued—

“In South Australia, Mr. Steele Hall redistributed himself out of office.

“I don’t think you’ll be able to blame Joh or me of doing anything like that.”



He said it last Friday at the urban development conference; he said it last Friday night at the co-operative federation conference; he said it in this Parliament when he was a back-bencher; he said it on "This Day Tonight" when he debated the matter with me. So I think it is a fair, clear indication from one of the responsible members of the National Party of that party's attitude to the rigging of boundaries.

The Local Government Minister's sneering remarks are an insult to the intelligence of Queenslanders, and a repulsive, frightening smear on the respectability of our parliamentary system. Before so-called independent electoral commissioners are appointed, he declares that they must be corrupt because they are going to rig the boundaries so that the Government can never be voted out of office. Their sole capacity must be a capacity to rig the electoral boundaries according to the decree of himself, the Premier and the National Party. It is akin to assigning Darcy Dugan to investigate a gaol break.

Again I remind honourable members that "The Courier-Mail" is the newspaper that asks the people of this State to vote for the National-Liberal Government. At the time of every election over the last 20 years it has said, "After considering the pros and cons of the case, we say, 'Vote for the Liberal and National Parties.'" It has promoted honourable members opposite and their cause for 20 years. But this is what "The Courier-Mail" editorial said last Friday under the headline "An Unreal Coalition"—

"The amendment introduced into Parliament yesterday does nothing more than allow a redistribution and election this year on the same discredited zone system."

We are to have a gerrymander on a gerrymander.

While the Treasurer shivers in insipid silence, the Premier publicly brands him and his Liberal colleagues as "scabs and hypocrites". I did not think that "scabs" and words of that sort were used in the National Party. I thought it was considered terrible for people in the union movement to use words such as those.

The Treasurer talks of the impartiality of Cabinet while the non-elected State President of the National Party can predict its decisions. Mr. Sparkes is saying from day to day what Cabinet is going to do, what this Parliament is going to do and what the members he directs are going to do. It is little wonder that "The Courier-Mail" said in the same editorial last Friday—

"The State redistribution turmoil has confirmed what many Queenslanders already knew—that since the retirement of former Deputy Premier Sir Gordon Chalk the Government has become a one-man band led by lone maestro Mr. Bjelke-Petersen."

It is, as "The Courier-Mail" cartooned on the same day, a four-man circus, with Sundance Sparkes and Ringo Evans selling the tickets while the Kingaroy Kid bounces Billy the Babe through the political hoops. I have never seen a more distressing cartoon, but it appeared in "The Courier-Mail", the newspaper that supports the Government. Here is another cartoon saying, "If you want to stay a partner in this act you'll jump when I tell you." It presents the spectacular coalition—Joh and his faithful pet Bill jumping through the redistribution hoop. Tremendous!

"The Courier-Mail", in its editorial, said of the Treasurer—

"Mr. Knox has not proved a strong leader. He gives the impression of trying to hide his silence in his own Government by lambasting the safely distant Government in Canberra—a lion abroad, a lamb at home."

The amendment proposed by the Opposition will allow Liberal members in the House to rescue their party from such humiliation. They can vote for their own policy. In case some may have forgotten that policy, let me repeat it as reported by their president, Mrs. Yvonne McComb, in an article in "The Courier-Mail" headed "Electoral justice too important for hasty decisions"—

"This convention supports any and all moves for a fair and equitable redistribution of electorate boundaries in Queensland within the life of the present Parliament of Queensland and to this end moves that—

(a) That the numbers of electors in any electorate shall not vary from the quota by more than 10 per cent of the quota;

(b) Electorates be based on communities of interest, demographic similarities, geographic features, communication links, similarity of industry and proximity of community centres and wherever possible provincial centres should be entirely within the one electorate;

(c) The number of electorates to be kept at the present level; and

(d) That one of the redistribution commissioners be a judge of the Supreme Court."

So Labor's amendment gives the Liberals an opportunity to adopt that policy—a full, fair redistribution with a Supreme Court judge as chairman. But why, I ask, are the members of the National and Liberal Parties afraid of the judiciary? Why are they timid of justice—electoral justice or any other form of justice? The Government's alternative is a predetermined rort in which Mr. Sparkes and Mr. Evans are the sinister, shadowy map-readers.

There was a time in this State when Parliament protected democracy; today it aborts it. We have neighbouring seats that

vary by as much as 73 per cent, and towns within a few miles of each other with sharply differing voting standards. The Deputy Premier held up a map the other day. Ask anyone to have a look at the map of Kurilpa. Ask anyone why the provincial seat of Mackay would go over the river to North Mackay when in Maryborough the seat stops at the river bank, with Tinana being included in the Isis electorate. Why does the Government make fish of one and flesh of another? Why do we have legislation before us today which precludes Mt. Isa, Mornington Island, Burketown and all those other towns in that area from being dealt with as country towns, but allows other towns that vote for Government members to be classed as country towns in country areas with greater voting rights than people on Mornington Island and at Burketown, Camooweal, Dajarra or Malbon?

Cabinet solidarity is a recognised part of our parliamentary system. However, it ceases to be a responsible institution when it is misused by a ruthless 28 per cent National Party to force a non-elected, artificial majority in this Parliament. Whenever the Premier decides on whatever issue he declares, with the aid of the eight Liberal Judases he will be able to command this Parliament as he wishes. Mr. Sparkes and Mr. Evans, with Liberal consent, will be installed as the de facto administrators of Queensland. There is no point to Liberal conventions if policies are to be vetted by the faceless busybodies of the National Party while the Treasurer nods obedient assent.

I remind the Liberals, particularly the Liberal Ministers, that in the 1962 Federal redistribution the National Party (then the Country Party) did not show the same meek coalition allegiance to its Liberal partners. It joined with the A.L.P. in the Parliament to defeat the electoral proposals supported by the Liberals. Don't let Mr. Bjelke-Petersen tell them now that there is Cabinet solidarity. It didn't count to Black Jack McEwen and others. When their own electoral interests were at stake, Jack McEwen, Peter Nixon and Doug Anthony didn't care a hoot for coalition harmony or Cabinet solidarity. If the Liberal members in this House bow to the legislation now before us, they may as well defect completely from their principles and re-form officially as the George Street Branch of the National Party. Their policies are worthless if they are betrayed by their own Ministers in Cabinet. The Liberals are no longer in coalition with the National Party; they are in captivity. Cabinet solidarity, in its present excess, is the instrument of their suffocation.

I believe that Queenslanders throughout the State are astounded at the malice that motivates this legislation. It is unthinkable that our entire electoral system can be cast into undemocratic upheaval through an act of repulsive reprisal by the National Party against its Government colleague. In the 20 March edition of "The Sunday Mail" the

honourable member for Townsville (Dr. Scott-Young) was reported to have referred to the proposed redistribution as—

"A vicious sort of snipping at electorates here and there to further strengthen the position of Joh Bjelke-Petersen."

That article further reported—

"He was calling on delegates not to further antagonise the National Party. He said the National Party's proposal for partial redistribution was retaliation against the Liberal Party's policy on three-cornered contests."

There we had a Liberal member of Parliament addressing a Liberal Party conference and saying, "Look, don't antagonise the National Party any more or they will rig the boundaries some more. You've got to let this man do what he wants. You've got to let him carry on. You've got to let him carry on in an arrogant, dictatorial fashion."

Are we to have a fresh gerrymander every time the National Party and the Liberal Party have a squabble? Last Friday "The Courier-Mail" newspaper commented—

"It would be totally indefensible if electoral justice in Queensland were to be made a pawn in inter-party manoeuvres or a means of the Nationals chastising their ally."

For once "The Courier-Mail" was correct. If this legislation is successful, the Parliament will become a vehicle for intercoalition warfare. We will be called upon to adjudicate every time Yvonne McComb and Bob Sparkes differ on TV. The question is not whether a redistribution should be held but on what terms it should be conducted. No-one can justify a redistribution that is ordered in malice and based upon terms of reference that ensure its inconsistency before it begins.

The National Party seeks not only to pardon a political felony but to prostitute it still further. Today is the test of strength for the Liberal Party. The members in this House have the choice between Labor's amendment and sickly surrender to the Premier. They must declare themselves as either loyal Liberals or traitors. If they waiver, wither or wander, the Premier will be proved right. In the eyes of all Queenslanders they will be, as he said, scabs and hypocrites. Those are his words about the Liberal Party, not mine. Their policies will be worthless and their election promises discredited. They will be the lost column of the Queensland political system and the prostitutes of their own pious principles.

Today, through this amendment, Labor gives this Parliament the opportunity to escape from the bigoted hatreds of the outside National Party management committee. We have the opportunity to correct injustices and inequalities that pollute the parliamentary system of this State. Today Liberals have a choice between being Liberals or losers—permanent losers. It is time to take Parliament back to the people rather than to quarantine it as the National Party proposes.

Let Parliament, as a democratic institution, declare that it believes in democratic elections. Let us by all means have a redistribution, but a redistribution that is seen to be fair; a redistribution that is based on terms that ensure justice rather than pervert it.

It is futile for the Treasurer to pretend that this legislation is separate from the question of redistribution. If his contention was correct, there would be no need for the present haste. Even his own party supporters disbelieve him. The Premier has made it clear that the two are related intimately. While the Treasurer pretends that the coalition survives in harmony, the Premier describes his Liberal partners as "scabs and hypocrites". As a political duet the Premier and the Treasurer remind me of a similar political union, that is, the famous "Peace in our Time" agreement between Hitler and Chamberlain shortly before the outbreak of World War II.

I recommend the amendment to all Queenslanders who believe in the democratic system that our parents and those before them gave so much to establish.

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba) (12.56 p.m.): I am very happy to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition—

**Government Members** interjected.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** If the honourable members who are interjecting had as much backbone in their party room, the amendment would not be necessary; the Liberals would stand up for some of the Liberal principles I have heard them expound here, such as freedom of speech.

The Liberal Party leader sold out to the National Party last week when he introduced this legislation. He did not have to do that. It could have been introduced by the Minister for Mines and Energy or any other National Party Minister. The Treasurer introduced it because the parliamentary wing of the Liberal Party has sold out to the National Party. I wonder how many of the Liberals will join the National Party after this matter settles down.

I am not here to argue the toss with small fry of the National Party and problem children of the Liberal Party. I am here to support the Labor Party's attitude to redistribution. No-one has objected to a redistribution. The numbers show clearly that a redistribution of State electorates is justified. On former occasions I have questioned the wisdom of our constitutional set-up, which allows the Government of the day to decide on a redistribution and be in control of it. I firmly believe that we should have a completely independent permanent commission to adjust boundaries as the figures demand. A Supreme Court judge is appointed annually as the Elections Tribunal to adjudicate on election disputes. He is not appointed after a dispute arises. If a dispute arises, he adjudicates.

The first essential to having boundaries adjusted is a permanent commission headed by a Supreme Court judge. Because of his knowledge of the law a Supreme Court judge is the best person to head such a body, which governs the destiny of the State, our electoral system and our democracy. Surely this body which draws electoral boundaries should be headed by a Supreme Court judge. My first point is that that is embodied in our amendment. We argued this when the 1971 Bill was debated but the Liberals and the Nationals voted together against our proposition. That does not make it wrong. It is now more necessary than ever, particularly in the light of the public fighting between the National and Liberal Party leaders, with people calling one another derogatory names. There is no harmony between the National and Liberal parties.

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

**Mr. HOUSTON:** For a start, we should look at the existing legislation and try to analyse why the Government is so intent on preserving it and having only a partial redistribution instead of enacting new legislation that would, I believe, satisfy all members of the Chamber as well as the members of the public.

The existing legislation specifies four zones. From experience we know that the quotas in some western areas are very close to half of those in other zones. We also know that as time went on the number of people on the electoral rolls in western areas decreased, unfortunately, while in areas such as the Gold Coast and the area to the north of Brisbane the numbers increased. As a result, the number on the roll for one electorate was almost three times as many as that in another electorate. In other words, a member in the western area had a quota that resulted in each of his electors having the value of three votes of an elector in another area.

If the Government decided to enact new legislation, according to statements made by prominent members of the Liberal Party from time to time, that party would indicate that it required a change in the four-zone system, that it wanted a change in the number of zones and, in all probability, in the boundaries of the various zones so that the quotas would be more in keeping with the principle of one vote, one value. I am not arguing about whether the allowable variation above or below the quotas should be 10 per cent or 20 per cent. That variation applies only within each zone. When one zone is unduly loaded in comparison with another zone, the 20 per cent on its own becomes virtually meaningless.

At the present time in the western zone some electorates—and I instance Flinders—are down to 8,000 on the roll. Even an additional 20 per cent brings that to a quota of only 9,600—and that is still well below the electorate of Mt. Isa, which is very close

to Flinders and which has 13,000 on the roll. Obviously, Mt. Isa is much more than 20 per cent above the figure of 9,600. Therefore, any discussion about a variation of 10 per cent or 20 per cent is immaterial, as the variation applies only within each zone.

The main reason why the National Party does not at any time want a complete redistribution—in other words, a new Act—is its fear of a change in zone quotas and zone boundaries. What will be the result? By not enacting new legislation—in other words, by only amending the existing legislation—the Government provides only for the rolls to be printed immediately. It allows for a redistribution to take place within the life of this Parliament. After all, according to our own constitution, once we get to 2 February or 3 February it is too late. Therefore, section 23 has to be amended. The irony of it is that if the leadership of the Liberal Party had not drawn attention to the ramifications of clause 23, the Government may very well have gone ahead with a redistribution. Perhaps that is where the Liberal Party missed the political bus. If it had allowed the Premier to go ahead with his plan for partial redistribution and then told him that because of section 23 and the fact that the House was not sitting he could not apply it, the Liberals would have had their way, that is, no redistribution until after the next election.

**Mr. Lowes** interjected.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** It is not a matter of sections. The Liberal Party is playing politics with a pretty tough team in the National Party, and the honourable member knows it.

The position is that the National Party was told. I do not think that National Party members realised the implications of section 23 before that.

**Mr. Gibbs:** Don't be a fool.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** Unlike many people, I am very hard to fool. It is very easy to pull the wool over the eyes of some people and the honourable member has had the wool pulled over his eyes with this Bill.

Let us look at exactly what is being done. The Liberals say that they believe in equality and that they want a partial redistribution to level the electorates. How can they possibly justify having a quota of at least 13,069 electors for the electorate of Mt. Isa? The Act lays down what the Mt. Isa electorate must encompass. That electorate consists of not only the city of Mt. Isa but also the shires of Burke, Mt. Isa and Cloncurry, which contain many small country towns such as Burketown, Mornington Island, Camooweal and Dajarra. The people who live in those towns and in the city of Mt. Isa are being told, "Although you live in the west of Queensland and suffer all of the hardships, such as lack of communication, associated with living in our far-distant areas, it is all right for your member to represent more than 13,000 electors and for the member next door in Flinders and the other electorates in the

western zone to represent 8,000 or 9,000 electors." Is that electoral justice? Why is it perpetrating that situation when the Government is having a new look at boundaries and numbers?

Nearer to the coast, another electorate that cannot be changed is Mackay. At the latest count, it had 16,567 electors, and that number will increase. Apart from the city of Mackay itself, it includes other shires. Under the Act, Mirani right next door has just over 10,000 electors and other electorates around it, which are no greater in size —

**Mr. Newbery:** Comparing them with what?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** Mackay.

**Mr. Newbery:** Mirani is 180 miles long and 100 miles wide.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** And with very good communications. Let me cite the Minister's figures. I am pleased that he has come in on this matter. He is one of the Ministers who are supporting the Bill. Does he say it is right for him to represent only 10,600 electors when the honourable member for Mt. Isa, which is a lot bigger than the Minister's electorate, represents 13,000 electors?

**Mr. Newbery:** You are comparing it with Mackay.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I was, but that is only part of the comparison. Does the Minister believe it is fair and reasonable for his electorate to have 10,600 electors and for Mt. Isa (which is many times the size of his electorate, and contains areas that are harder to get to and much more isolated than his electorate) to have over 13,000 electors? Does he call that electoral justice? That is what he is supporting. By supporting this legislation and not having a complete look at redistribution, that is what he is doing. The Rockhampton zone, for instance, has been divided into three areas but, no matter how they are balanced out, the quota will still be about 15,000 for areas that are small compared with the electorate of Mt. Isa.

We can in the same way go through the whole ramifications of the Bill. In my view, what the National Party is doing is setting up machinery for a redistribution to suit its ends as a political party. Unfortunately, the Liberal Party is so weak that I have no doubt it will go along with the National Party and support it. The Labor Party is not opposed to a complete redistribution, but, we say, let us have a new Act. This could be done in the time available and section 23 could be part of that new Act. What is needed is a better system of working out the four zones. No city or area should be left isolated or unable to be altered. If what I suggest were done, the people themselves would be allowed to decide the issue.

I know that it may be said that there are at present so many Liberal members, so many National Party members and so

many members of the Australian Labor Party. But I am not so much concerned about who represents areas as I am with giving the people the right to equal representation. We support the amendment and I suggest, as my leader suggested, that if Liberal members want to show that they are not prepared to sit back and be dominated by the National Party in this House, they, too, will support the amendment.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (2.28 p.m.): I was born and bred in the back country, of very poor parents, and consequently I did not have, shall I say, the most luscious food that many other people had. For 27 years I worked in the Railway Department as an engineman under various vicious A.L.P. Governments. When I think of some of the food that I ate in railway quarters out in the back country, I realise why it is that my stomach is of the cast-iron variety. I have thought in recent years that nothing that I saw, ate or read could make me vomit; but, when the Leader of the Opposition moved his amendment, I went outside and vomited. I have never known anything so, shall I say, putridly partial as that amendment. It asks this House to agree to a redistribution of electoral boundaries that are, in the words of the amendment, fair and impartial. Fancy that coming from the A.L.P.!

When I entered the Queensland Parliament there were 62 seats. There was then a drift, as there always is, in political fortunes. The wheel of political favour turned and after the 1949 Federal election, when the Menzies-led Liberal Party swept the A.L.P. out of office in Canberra and again assumed Federal control of Australia, the A.L.P. in Queensland, if I may use the vulgar vernacular, got the wind up. Its members decided to hold a redistribution of electoral boundaries to see if they could ensure that they would be returned for ever and ever and ever. And so they introduced probably the most infamous redistribution of electoral boundaries ever placed on the Statute Book of any Government anywhere.

First of all, they increased the number of seats in this Assembly from 62 to 75—a jump of 13 seats, which was completely unwarranted and unnecessary. Then they divided the State into four zones: the western zone, the northern zone, the central division zone and, of course, the beloved Brisbane zone. I am not going to dilate on it. Frankly, every time I think of it, I wonder just how low political parties can sink.

I represented the electorate of Mundingburra up in the Townsville area. With 62 seats in the Assembly I had about 12,500 voters on the roll, but with the extra 13 seats that were shoved into this Assembly by that infamous redistribution of electoral boundaries, my electoral enrolment dropped to 9,000. But the seat that adjoined me was the seat of Charters Towers, which was held, of course, by a Labor man who,

incidentally, happened to be a Minister of the Crown. There we had these two seats—Mundingburra and Charters Towers. I had 9,000 electors on the roll and there were, I think, 3,700 electors on the roll of Charters Towers because the A.L.P. wanted to make absolutely certain that all western seats would go to it.

In my early days when I was a very prominent member of the A.L.P. (and a very illustrious one) out in the far western area of Cloncurry, our member was the late Johnny Mullan, who, I think, for nearly a score of years was the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General in various Labor Governments. Naturally as a very great believer in the A.L.P. in those days I used to do quite a lot of campaigning for Johnny. As a matter of fact, I was the secretary of the Cloncurry branch of the A.L.P. when I was not the president. It was really funny on polling day. We were lucky if in the whole of the Flinders electorate, as it was named then, we could rake up 1,200 people. If 1,200 people voted in the Flinders electorate to send Johnny Mullan back to Parliament—usually by about 800 votes to 400 or 900 to 300—that was something out of the bag. I will be quite honest with you, Mr. Deputy Speaker; we had to use quite a lot of ghosts in order to build the number up to 1,200.

**Mr. Lee:** Out of the cemetery, were they?

**Mr. AIKENS:** Yes. There were votes cast for people who had been dead and gone for many years, but their names were still on the roll.

The A.L.P. was a party large in numbers, and some of them, of course, had ability. We have in this Assembly today the pitiable remnants of that once great party. Every time I look at the 11 members of the A.L.P. I am reminded of 11 white-ant-eaten posts on a fence in a ghost town, because that is the only simile that I can apply to them. Here they are, these 11 white-ant-eaten political posts grumbling about a proposed redistribution of electoral boundaries in the State of Queensland at the present time.

I have very pronounced views on political representation. I have always held to the view that electorates should not be divided or, should I say, registered on the basis of enrolment alone. I have always believed that it should take the votes of about six people who live in Brisbane to equal the vote of one elector who lives out in the far-flung western or northern areas of this State and produces the wealth of this State on which the capital cities fatten and batten.

I speak now from years of experience and as an honest and sincere man who never has to fear the cracking of a party whip, who never has to look over his shoulder and see whether "Big Boss Brother" is listening, who never has to run to the telephone after he makes a speech and say to

Archie Bevis or "Horse-and-Child" or Tom Burns, or somebody else, "Look, I said this in the House a few minutes ago. I want you to excuse me. It was a slip of the tongue; I didn't mean to say it." and then start to slobber and "globber". I do not have to do those things. I think of what is right and fair and what is just, and I say it.

I really think there are too many members in this Assembly—far too many. Instead of 82 members, there ought to be not more than 60. Of those 60 members, just speaking in round figures, I would put five members in Brisbane, Ipswich and the surrounding area, and five would be more than enough. Then, of course, I would apportion the rest of the members, and the farther I went away from Brisbane the more members I would have in those areas.

Let me make an honest, sincere suggestion to the House. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke of the need to establish an electoral commission with a Supreme Court justice as chairman. Good God! That is the last man we should have as chairman of an electoral commission. From all my years of experience with electoral commissions, I know that the judge selected is a political toady of the party in power. So let us be honest and keep the Supreme Court justices, the political toadies of the party in power, off the electoral commission.

I suggest that if the Government really wants a first-class, dinky-die, honest redistribution of the electoral boundaries in Queensland, it should appoint me as sole commissioner. I will make a redistribution for the whole of the State that will be received with acclaim by every honest Queenslander and everyone who believes in a fair deal.

Let us get away from the old idea that electoral redistributions can save Governments or save parties. If you care to turn up the pages of "Hansard" for 1949, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the late E. M. Hanlon—and I do not know that a more astute politician ever entered this Chamber—was dealing with the Bill he was introducing, which provided for the infamous redistribution to which I referred earlier—

**Mr. Moore:** What year was that?

**Mr. AIKENS:** I would say it would be 1949. It was in preparation for the 1950 election, so I assume it would be 1949. It does not matter if it was 1948, but I really think it was 1949. Mr. Hanlon said—and this is fundamentally and irrevocably true—

"No redistribution of electoral boundaries will save a political party that is unpopular with the electors."

Neither it will, but he did not take many chances, just the same. He said, "I am not introducing this redistribution of electoral boundaries to save the A.L.P. from defeat. I am doing all I possibly can."

We know, of course, that there is some disputation between the two branches of the Government, the Liberal Party and the National Party. It is a matter of complete indifference to me whether they fight or whether they do not. I have always viewed my political future with equanimity, and whatever the problem of the day happens to be, I will grapple with it. If a man constitutes himself my enemy politically, then, of course, he has to take all that is coming to him. If he constitutes himself my friend, then I forget about him and turn on those who constitute themselves my enemies. It is a case of my hand against them and their hand against me, and I am happy with the outcome.

But the point is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that these two parties—the Liberal Party and the National Party—are fighting for their own individual survival. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, whether it applies to individuals or to political parties. I think we can let them settle their own differences as best they can. I know this, and I say it without qualification: if they are to survive as a coalition Government, their only hope of triumphant survival—I think they will survive in any case—is to keep Joh Bjelke-Petersen in the Premier's chair and in the box seat, and let him be the man to drive the coach.

Let honourable members travel throughout the length and breadth of this State, out into the back country and into the highly populated areas where any industry happens to be the centre of activities. That is what I do. I go around at my own expense, although I will admit that I get a free plane trip now and again. I talk to the people everywhere. I do not address little groups of any particular party or section. I talk to all the people—the old and the young, the wealthy and the impoverished—and each and every one of them pays a sterling tribute to the Premier as an outstanding Queenslander. When all is said and done Queenslanders—except the political fanatics and political bigots—on polling day invariably vote as Queenslanders, because they want to preserve this State as it is, and they want to see that this State progresses and prospers as they know it can progress and prosper.

I put this proposition to the House very sincerely: if there is going to be a redistribution of electoral boundaries, I will resign my seat in Parliament to take on the position of the electoral commissioner. I will do the job clearly, honestly and fairly—a job that no Supreme Court justice will ever do. There is a very old saying that when a judge walks into the court justice flies out the window. That probably would be the case with the electoral boundaries.

Let us be honest about it: first and foremost we are Queenslanders, and we owe it not only to ourselves but to our children, our children's children and the generations

yet unborn to make this State the best State in the Commonwealth, and to make our standard of living the highest in the civilised world. We can do that only by looking fairly at everything that comes before us. If we are going to run around and pick quarrels and fight with each other, and if we are going to suggest to the people that they should put their political fortunes into the hands of the absolutely discredited, disgruntled, disgraceful, despicable, detestable A.L.P., then where are we going to finish? What are we going to say to those who come after us? "In 1977 we had a redistribution of electoral boundaries that handed you over to the Bob Hawkes, the Halfpenneys, the Carmichaels, the Bevises and all those other people." We would be desecrated in their eyes and we would deserve everything we got from them.

If we are going to have a redistribution of electoral boundaries, let us have a fair dinkum redistribution that gives full weight to the contribution that each section of our State makes to the prosperity and progress of this State. To do that we have to get away from the capital city to where the salt of the earth live and labour. We have to say to them, "Irrespective of how old you are, how big you are or how many there are of you, we are going to give you electoral representation on the basis of your worth to this State—the wealth you bring to this State and the prosperity with which you enrich this State." Never mind about how many there are of them. Let that be the last consideration, if it is any consideration at all. If there is to be a redistribution of electoral boundaries, it should be on that basis. The State should be divided into electorates with the number of electors in each being decided and determined on the wealth produced in the electorate and the value of the electorate to the State.

At times I have been sickened when listening to debates in this House. I know that politics is a grubby game, but I have never been sicker than when I listened today to the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I do not know how in all seriousness and decency—if they have any political decency—they could have said one-fiftieth of the things that they did. All they wanted to do was to drive a wedge between the Liberal Party and the National Party. They probably remember the old western adage—and any doctor will tell us that it is true—that if a wedge cannot be driven in, a splinter should be driven in because it might fester and, if it does, it may destroy the body into which it is driven.

No concrete suggestions were made by either the Leader of the Opposition or his deputy. I do not know how many more Opposition members are to speak, but I feel certain that the honourable member for Archerfield will stand up to bemuse us with his soft, mellifluous tones. All that the Opposition wants to do is to use this Bill

as an instrument to drive a destructive wedge between the Liberal Party and the National Party.

I cannot bring myself to believe that members of either the Liberal Party or the National Party will fall for the blatant trap that the A.L.P. is trying to set. I believe that, in the final analysis, they will not worry about the other side of their coalition, their personal feelings on the matter, their own aggrandisement, or their own prejudices. They will say, "Let us look at this matter from the point of view of the preservation of Queensland as the premier State of the Commonwealth of Australia." The only way to maintain Queensland in its present fortunate position is to continue the coalition, get rid of all the arguments of the dissidents, let the State continue in its happy, cohesive condition and let the A.L.P. stew in its own putrid juice.

**Mr. PORTER (Toowong)** (2.48 p.m.): What arrant hypocrisy is contained in Labor's amendment! Not for a moment do I reflect on the Chair, but I wonder how this can be seen as an amendment when, in fact, it is a negation of the Bill. Is it genuinely motivated by noble ideals? Is the A.L.P. suddenly displaying an ardent desire for electoral justice for the voters? Of course it isn't! If it were, we would have heard of this move at the introductory stage, which was the proper time to consider wiping out the Bill totally. The move comes at this stage because, over the week-end, some more injudicious words have been said by people representing the parties on this side of the House which the media gloat over.

The Opposition seized this as an opportunity to exploit a temporary disagreement between the parties. The Opposition has no more noble motive than that of trying to make political capital out of the current situation. It is akin to someone taking a knife to a wound, putting the point into it and deepening and enlarging it hoping to see the blood flowing more freely. That is all we are getting from the Opposition on this. That is a legitimate, political tactic, if that is the way the A.L.P. likes to act, but for goodness sake do not let it pretend that it is motivated by concern for the electorate. Its record just does not let it aspire to such pretensions.

We have to remember that many people are anxious to pretend that here in Queensland we have a very poor form of electoral arrangement.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** That is an understatement, and you know it.

**Mr. PORTER:** It is an overstatement, as I will demonstrate to the honourable member. It is a myth that is being subscribed to by the media—and, of course, vigorously by the Opposition. I quoted at the introductory stage—and I mention it again today, because it does not seem to have sunk in—a contribution that was made to "The Courier-Mail", no less, on 12 April last year, just

on 12 months ago. It was made by Professor Colin Hughes, who is a professorial fellow of the Political Science Department of the Research School of Social Science of the Australian National University, Canberra. Professor Hughes used the figures of the electorates in this and other States to point out that, on a comparison of the differences between the mean average of the smaller seats in Queensland and the larger seats and the same arrangement in the other States, Queensland was in a better position than any other State in Australia with the exception of New South Wales. In other words, the method is to take one more than half of the Queensland electorates, that half being those with the smallest enrolments, and ascertain the percentage borne to the total enrolment. In Queensland the 42 smaller seats have 42.2 per cent of the total enrolment. In the other States it varies from 44 per cent down to 31 per cent in Western Australia. One more than half of the South Australian smaller seats contained just under 40 per cent of the total electorate. So in every other State of Australia except New South Wales the disparity in enrolments between the smaller electorates and the larger electorates is greater than it is in Queensland. I state the case on statistical fact so that everybody who keeps on pretending that we have such a dreadful system in Queensland—the worst in Australia; so horrible that parties are denied electoral justice—can discover that it is not true. It is not just my statement; it is the statement of of an academic who has been doing this sort of investigation and analysis for years and who can in no sense be regarded as an apologist for my side of politics—quite the reverse, as a matter of fact.

Colin Hughes makes it quite plain that one cannot properly attack our system on the ground that the disparity between electorates is improper or notably unfair. This is not to say, of course—as he admits—that one would not like to see some improvements; but it is a far cry from suggesting that we have the worst electoral system in Australia. We have not. In terms of that disparity, it is the best electoral system, second only to New South Wales. I will be interested, if any of the Opposition speak on this proposition, to hear them prove otherwise.

This Government, which has a very proud record of achievement in this State, has enemies in some rather surprising places—some surprisingly high places. These enemies look at the argument on the redistribution of electorates with a kind of gloating anticipation. We had the pundits acclaiming with drooling relish over the week-end that there is a deep, unbridgeable rift between the coalition parties, that nothing now can paper over the cracks and so on. Of course these people, who profess friendship to us but in fact are inveterate enemies, are not concerned with what is best for the voters. They are

only feverishly awaiting the dissolution of the coalition and trying to help it along.

Talk about making mountains out of mole-hills or “Much Ado about Nothing” or the wish being father to the thought! This is it exemplified. It is a little bit like Mark Twain who, when he read the report that he had died and his funeral arrangements had been made, wrote to the paper concerned and said, “The report of my death is greatly exaggerated.” I want to say to the Opposition and to the outside world that the reports of the dissolution of the coalition Government are greatly exaggerated. It was never on and it is not likely to be on.

I myself have been through this a number of times before, so I have a sort of phlegmatic, philosophical approach to it. It will work out, as of course it has done on every other occasion. The coalition won't dissolve. The differences will be reconciled, because that is the nature of things. It is almost a formal ritual dance—“one step forward, two steps back, one step to the side, bow to your partner and come back to your places”.

I have been through it often before and it will work out. It had better come out right because all parties have to recognise that we are not in this Parliament merely to promote ourselves or the parties whose endorsement we carry. We are here because we represent people. We are here to do what is in their best interests. We — and I refer particularly now to the Liberal Party and the National Party — have always to remember that we are surrogates for the 500,000 people who voted for us at the last poll. Those people want us to be a firm shield against all that Labor represents. They want us to be a firm shield against all that they abhor, loathe and detest. They do not want to see us concentrating on pushing our own barrows to the exclusion of the interests that we are supposed to represent on behalf of the electorate. We all need to remember that when we get a little carried away and decide to take steps that the electorate most certainly would not want us to take.

I must confess that I read the Press each morning with a little trepidation. There is an old aphorism that a politician is merely a figure of speech. There have been too many figures of speech used over the last couple of weeks. This applies to both the political field and the organisational field of parties and to both the National Party and the Liberal Party. There has been altogether too much talk. Late last night I was watching a television programme of the Rugby union match between Queensland and the New Zealand Barbarians. At one stage there was a scuffle and fisticuffs and the commentator said, “Oh, there's an exchange of pleasantries going on.” It's a bit like that in politics.

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

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Gunn): Order! The honourable member for Archerfield is not in his usual place in the Chamber.



**Mr. PORTER:** We should be very careful of exchanging too many bruising pleasantries. My own strong recommendation is that there should be a moratorium on caustic criticisms from all of us.

I say to a great many people that, in the endeavours to achieve a redistribution and to get it close to the aims which some of us profess to serve, it is both dangerous and singularly unfair to denigrate the Premier. There is much done and said by people in my party and by our alleged friends to suggest that the Premier is a very peculiar sort of chap, a kind of vicious, vindictive, dictatorial person. Those of us who have been in politics for a long time and are the veterans of many party meetings at which several vital matters have been discussed know that this is not true at all. One can only point to newspaper headlines alleging it. Nobody can point to a fact to prove it. From my side of politics I make it quite plain that people embroiled in this redistribution should never forget the debt that this State—and in my view the whole nation—owes to the Premier. He foresaw with total accuracy, much earlier than most people, what was going to come from the Whitlam experiments.

**Mr. Moore:** And Whitlam is still licking his wounds.

**Mr. PORTER:** That is quite true. There is no doubt that history will say that the Premier was the rock on which the Whitlam argosy foundered. At the stage we started fighting Whitlam, many people in high places in my party and in other parties said, "Oh, they have been elected. We have to go along with them. We must not always be difficult to get along with." But thanks to the Premier's leadership we took an obdurate, unyielding, undeviating, firm stand. That stand, which was laughed at in the other States during the early stages of the Whitlam years, was almost revered by them later on. We assumed the leadership of the free element of Australia and we demonstrated that leadership in a most unmistakable fashion at the polls. In every poll test—Federal election, State election, Senate poll and referendums—we have set records for the defeat of Labor unknown in this country since the beginning of federation. There is no question therefore about what we did and whether what we did was right.

Equally, there can be no question about the role that the Premier played in all of this. I know, because I was one of the earliest on my side of politics to rally to his support. I will always rally to the support of anybody who fights for the principles in which I believe deeply. Without doubt, the preservation of a federal system and individual freedom against the forces of socialism and centralism was a very deep and abiding principle and just as I fought for it in the past, I will fight for it in the future.

I want to warn people who tend to use the redistribution issue as a platform from which to do some sort of sophisticated character assassination that this does all of us no good at all. It is unfair; it is wrong in fact; and it will not go down with the electorate. It is high time that certain sections of the media started thinking about culpable bias and asking themselves what reason there is for this sort of behaviour.

**Mr. Moore:** To sell papers.

**Mr. PORTER:** Probably the major reason is that they do not think along the same philosophical or political lines as we think and our success in some way outrages them. They cannot imagine how their intellectual capacity can be so inferior in terms of results achieved to ours as shown by what we decide to do.

I condemn the amendment as merely a poor and shoddy gimmick by the A.L.P. to try to exacerbate what it believes to be a major difference but which in my experience is only a minor difference between the parties on this side of the House.

**Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (3.2 p.m.):** If one is around this place long enough, it is amazing the changes that one sees. I suppose the most outstanding example of this would be the remarks now coming from the bastion of liberalism in this State, a former organiser of the Liberal Party in Queensland and one who formerly led the ginger group on the back benches of this Chamber in fighting and campaigning for liberalism throughout this State. What do we hear from him today? The honourable member for Toowong carried the torch for the National Party Premier. He spoke not for the Liberal Party for which he fought on so many occasions. I suppose if there is one thing I have to do today it is to congratulate the Premier on the way in which over the years he has succeeded in completely breaking up the Liberal ginger group who were on the back benches of this House at the beginning of his Premiership in this State. He certainly has been very successful in getting the old gingers coated with sugar so that they are now bits of lolly who are prepared to do whatever he requires.

The Liberal Party has now had its chance. It had its chance last week to show how strongly it really stood for the principles that have been espoused by the Liberal Party through the years. St. Patrick's Day 1977 will go down as the day on which the Liberal Party in Queensland died. It will go down as the day on which the Liberal Party in this House committed suicide.

A few months ago, only the Premier and the secretary of the National Party in Queensland (Mr. Evans) were speaking of a partial redistribution. Of course, the Liberal Party felt that it was not getting justice in Queensland; it was not getting a fair deal. Its convention at Toowoomba a few months ago therefore took certain decisions to give it the

opportunity to become, as it saw it, the senior party in the coalition in Queensland. This is, incidentally, the only Parliament in the Commonwealth in which the Liberal Party has to play second fiddle to the National Country Party. At that conference the Liberals decided to nominate candidates against some National Party members. They decided to revert to so-called three-cornered contests in which they would nominate candidates against Country Party members who, in the opinion of the Liberal Party, had not been doing a proper job in this House. They decided that some of these National Party members should be replaced by Liberals who they felt would do a much better job than would the National Party members.

**Mr. Lamont:** That's not right; you haven't done your homework.

**Mr. CASEY:** Why would they want to replace a member of this Parliament unless they thought he was not doing a good job? That is what happened and that must be the only reason why these so-called coalition partners—and "partners" is the term they use—would oppose each other.

But the Liberals have now seen a way in which they can get around this situation that they have created in order to save their own skins, and that is by not opposing the Premier—their parliamentary leader—in this Assembly. They are following this resolve to such an extent that last week we even saw the Deputy Premier introducing this Bill for and on behalf of the Premier, and all the Liberal members, including the ones who over the years have been objecting and protesting and putting forward their own ideas, followed suit. They followed like sheep because they are concerned not with their own party or the electors of Queensland, who are the most important people of all in this issue, but with self-preservation.

Instead of standing up to the Premier for and on behalf of the people of Queensland, they have since that day been running around Parliament House with maps working out how they can survive. One can go round the corridors and into the rooms here and see them poring over maps. They are not concerned with how any redistribution resulting from this Bill will affect the people of Queensland; they are concerned only with how they will be affected. They voted for the Premier on this occasion because they knew full well that if they did not they would be the ones who would get the chop.

We know full well that here in the south-east corner of the State there are several Liberal-held seats that are well below the quota and will be affected by a redistribution. They will probably be run into one another. If these electorates are left in their present state, they will revert to the Labor Party at the next election. These are the electorates that will be split up, and the members representing them are interested only in how they will be affected, not the way in which the people and communities will be divided.

In order to make sure that they did not get the chop, these Liberals decided to go along with the Bill. The parliamentary Liberal Party is now dead. It killed itself off last week, and as a party Liberals have become merely camp followers of the National Party in this State. I would remind Liberal and National Party members that we are here as representatives of the people of Queensland. We are here to do what the people want, not just what we want. We are here to do not what we might want to do in order to preserve ourselves, but to bring about a fair and just redistribution so that the people of Queensland can be properly represented. I believe that the only way in which we can get a fair and just redistribution is to adopt the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, which would bring about a fair and equitable redistribution under a commission headed by a Supreme Court judge, someone who is completely above the hurly-burly of politics. But because of the instinct for self-preservation which Liberal Party members have shown in this Chamber in recent weeks, we are not going to see this.

And what thanks did they get for sacrificing themselves at the altar of the Premier? He called them "scabs" and "hypocrites", not on one occasion but two days in a row. That is the only thanks Liberal Party members got; that is the only thanks the ginger group got for completely subjugating themselves to the Premier over the past few years. That is exactly what he thinks of them. I accept that a man in his position would think of them in that way because of the way they carry on. He sees the way they are grovelling now in order to preserve themselves.

One other point is that the Premier knew, and this is the truth of the matter, of several members of the Liberal Party in this State who were prepared to join the National Party if the Liberal Party did not go along with this measure. At least six Liberal back-bench members of this Assembly had been approached and were ready to cross over and join the National Party in order to achieve that end.

**Mr. Byrne** interjected.

**Mr. CASEY:** The honourable member for Belmont was not one of them. I will not put him in that category. However, he knows who they were. Some of them are not very far away from him and their electorates are not very far away from his electorate. They are the electorates that will be in doubt.

The Bill is not a Bill designed to bring about electoral redistribution. It is to ensure that the National Party keeps power in this State. In order to retain power, the Premier is pulling into line his camp-followers—the Liberal members of this House. What they do not realise is that, by supporting the Bill as they are, they are killing off democracy. Never again will an electoral redistribution

Bill of this type have to come before the House. Whenever someone in charge of the affairs of the State wants a redistribution of a small area of the State or of the whole of the State, he can have one without referring the matter to the democratically elected representatives of the people of Queensland. If any blame is to be apportioned for that, it must be laid fairly and squarely at the feet of the Liberal Party in Queensland.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (3.11 p.m.): I have just listened to the honourable member for Mackay supporting a party that actually excommunicated him because he was of a different religion. It seems extraordinary to me that that should take place.

There have been many emotional outbursts about the Bill, not only from members of this Assembly but also from the Press and television—that section of the media that gets into our homes at night when we are relaxing. We hear cries of “gerrymander”, with members quoting electoral figures to prove their points. Other members then rise in this Chamber and quote figures to prove the reverse. The main theme of the media is that members are opposing the Bill because they are frightened of losing their seats. That is farthest from the minds of most members of this Assembly.

Members on this side of the Chamber realise what the real purpose of the Bill is. It is a simple Bill, and it will do exactly what it says—correct an error in drafting. That will be plain to anyone who reads the Bill. Under the Act, a redistribution could not be made within 12 months of the completion of the rolls. With computerisation, it will now be possible. That is all the Bill provides—nothing else.

In 1948 an A.L.P. Government under Ned Hanlon introduced a Bill to gerrymander the electorate and make sure that Labor was returned to office. In 40 years under Labor rule, Queensland degenerated into a backward State. It did not have a university and students had to go to Sydney to undertake university courses. The State had very little secondary industry and depended almost wholly on primary industry. It is only because of the advent of the coalition Government in 1957 that Queensland has progressed to its present position.

Most socialist members of the A.L.P. are trying to use the Bill to sow discontent with and distrust of the Government in the minds of the electorate. When one looks at the present coalition Government, one might well ask, “Why is it so popular?” It is popular because it has political integrity and honesty. That is the real basis of its popularity. The people of this State are not interested in fancy political theories. They are interested in the ordinary daily bread and butter returns, and the Government has given them those returns.

The impression of integrity and honesty emanates mainly from the leader of the Government. I have been reported in the

Press recently as having called the Premier a monster. Again my words have been taken out of context. What I said was that if you irritate people they may become bigger than they appeared in the first instance. That is exactly what happened in the case of the Premier. The Premier is not the small man that Whitlam and most of the socialist A.L.P. members thought he was. He is a man of immense intellect, dedication and determination. He does not deviate. I am quite sure that if he had been in the same position as the honourable member for Mackay was, he would not again be on that side of the Chamber. He would be by himself or somewhere else, not over there.

What has the coalition given to the State? It has given us prosperity and an image in the whole community, not only in this country but throughout the world. In the East people say, “Gee whizz, Queensland is a sensible State. That fellow Joh Bjelke-Petersen is a brain.” They look for leadership; they don’t look for a gerrymandering type of political manoeuvre. If our administration is accepted in the East and on the Continent as sound, sterling Government, I can see no reason for distrust of this legislation. There will not be any gerrymandering or misuse of the Act.

There will be no appointment of a judge. Why does the Opposition want a judge appointed? He would be a person completely divorced from political science or political sense. If a judge were appointed, he would probably act as a judge knowing nothing about political legislation. Probably he would know more about criminal law than political science. I can see no reason for any support for the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. BYRNE** (Belmont) (3.17 p.m.): Once again at this stage there is a definite endeavour by the Opposition to confuse and confuse members of the Parliament generally—it has been singularly unsuccessful in that regard—and it is also trying to carry that confusion out into the minds of the public.

At the introductory stage I referred to the situation in 1957. Although honourable members opposite may not have learnt anything from that, I am quite certain that other people have. The A.L.P. has never achieved 50 per cent of the vote since it decided to tear itself apart in 1957. I can understand that the A.L.P. in this place would like to see a situation like that develop in the coalition Government in Queensland.

The honourable member for Mackay presents the A.L.P. point of view very well. Indeed, he presents it more capably than any other member of the Opposition. No doubt he is the rejuvenation of the A.L.P. in Queensland, but I do not wish him the greatest degree of success in the future. I point out to him that it is very clear that the A.L.P. has decided to do whatever it

can to embarrass this Government, and to tell the Press and the public that the coalition is divided. As to the Opposition's suggestion that this Government does not possess the confidence of the people, it needs but small reflection to realise that in 1974 this Government was elected with the largest majority and the greatest support of any Government in the history of Queensland. That circumstance indicates something quite clearly. It means that over 20 years the people of Queensland have maintained a great respect for this coalition Government. They appreciate that the interests and responsibilities of the two parties enable the broadest possible spectrum of representation. They are aware, and were aware in 1974, having seen the disaster and the fiasco that Whitlam brought to Australia federally, that the A.L.P. was not able to represent, and was not interested in representing, all facets of the spectrum that the two parties in Queensland represent most adequately. In 1974 two political parties in Queensland achieved great success, namely, the National Party and the Liberal Party.

The taste of that success obviously brings within the political parties themselves a desire to achieve something more. Through the media we have become aware that various representatives of the major political units in Queensland have expressed on behalf of their members a desire to further the interests of their own party. That is a perfectly understandable point of view. It is their responsibility as political units to try to increase and advance their circumstance and their power. But once we try to transfer what political parties are trying to achieve into the realm of government and Parliament and say that therefore the political parties in Parliament should be doing exactly the same thing, we totally misread and misunderstand the situation. The primary goal of a political party once it is in Parliament is not to achieve, maintain and increase its power, but rather to see that the people it represents and governs are better represented and governed and to ensure that it achieves what is best and most beneficial for the people.

While political parties are understandably anxious to further their own political interests, once they are in office their responsibility alters. The responsibility imposed on them is not that of politics and power for their own sake but good Government and sensible management from the people's point of view. The public is not very much concerned about which political organisation is paramount in the Government. It is concerned mainly about what sort of government the parties once they are in Parliament, and, particularly in Government, will give. The public know that the Queensland coalition Government over 20 years has given the State the greatest boost and boom it has ever seen.

In 1974, while there was a rejection of the Labor Party's attitude at the Federal level, there was also just as much a statement

to the State Labor Party that it was not offering, and did not appear able to provide in the future, the sort of government that the coalition Government in Queensland had offered over the previous 17 or 18 years. We should reflect on that because our responsibilities as members of the Government are threefold.

One responsibility no doubt relates to ourselves and seeing that we can maintain representation in our own electorates believing that we have something to offer our people. But that is not the primary consideration.

Another responsibility rests on the fact that, because we are members of Parliament we are here to represent the philosophical bases and established premises that our parties have to offer. But once again that is secondary to the primary purpose of our being in Government.

The primary circumstance is to see that Queensland maintains what it has had for 20 years, that is, effective, stable government—government concerned with the development of Queensland through economic development and sensible management. The people of Queensland are aware of that. They know this circumstance exists and they are concerned when they see in the media that politicians in this place and various people in the community are trying to imply that the Queensland Government is falling apart—and that is why we see an outcry by our own political organisations at the moment. One does not have to be very old to realise that in 1971, when the redistribution question arose, similar statements were made. If honourable members were to read the newspapers of that time they would see articles and headlines similar to those appearing today, such as, "Our State Government near collapse", "Coalition ready to break up" and, "State Government in crisis".

It is very easy to understand the existing circumstances. When two political parties outside of the Parliament are trying to further (and quite rightly so) their own particular powers and bases for establishing themselves as political units, it is quite right and reasonable for the Press to comment on it, but the Press seems to think that there is no differentiation between the political wing and the parliamentary wing in political organisations. To make that wrong judgment is to completely confuse the entire situation. That is what has happened and that is the situation that the A.L.P. is using in trying to continue to confuse the public.

We are told by Opposition members that passing the clause in the Bill would be tantamount to disaster for us. I shall point out to Opposition members the circumstances that will exist even if this clause were not passed. A redistribution can be set up now irrespective of whether this clause goes through. Admittedly if there were to be an election this year, it would not be held on those boundaries.

**Mr. Houston** interjected.

**Mr. BYRNE:** However, the new boundaries would operate after this year. Therefore, the redistribution would become effective at some future time—unless, of course, the unusual situation should arise of a different party finding itself in Government, and I assure the honourable member for Bulimba that there is no reason for him to contemplate that happening.

**Mr. Houston:** You would still be subservient to the National Party.

**Mr. BYRNE:** I can understand why the honourable member says the Liberal Party is subservient to the National Party. That is all he has to offer in his attempt to point to disunity and disharmony in the coalition.

**Mr. Casey:** Why did Joh say you were scabbing?

**Mr. BYRNE:** The newspapers rang me up and said, "What did you think of the Premier's comment that the Liberal Party was scabbing on the Government?" I said to myself, "I haven't been in politics for a great period of time, but I have been associated with many articles in newspapers and I cannot recall a single one relating to me that adequately represented what I had actually said." So I said I intended to make no comment about it, because I did not necessarily believe what the Press has written; I would rather talk to the man myself and see what he meant when he said that, if he said that at all.

**Mr. Houston:** He admitted it the next day.

**Mr. BYRNE:** Once again, expressed by the media. I have not had that expression made to me, and I am quite certain that is not an expression that we of the Parliamentary Liberal Party will hear expressed about us.

Once again I point out to Opposition members that they should not confuse or confute the differences that exist between the parties on the political wing and on the parliamentary wing; their responsibilities are clearly different. One deals with gaining power and the other deals with effective government and effective management of the State's economy.

**Mr. Casey:** Did you support three-cornered contests in Toowoomba?

**Mr. BYRNE:** Do I support three-cornered contests in Toowoomba?

**Mr. Casey:** Did you support them in Toowoomba?

**Mr. BYRNE:** I do not know of any circumstance where there was a three-cornered contest in Toowoomba. I have not been associated with a three-cornered contest in Toowoomba.

I point out that the passage of this amending legislation will not in any way mean that we are enabling a redistribution that could not otherwise have been made. A redistribution could be made tomorrow and an election held on those boundaries early next year. On the other hand, an election could be held this year on the existing boundaries, and the boundaries resulting from the redistribution could apply after the new year.

I ask honourable members to note how patently absurd it would have been if the Liberal Party, on a quite sensible motion, were to go to the public and say, "We think that it is worth while creating enormous coalition disharmony; we think it is worth while trying to break up a Government—over the tiniest technicality, which only brings the Electoral Districts Act into a common-sense stance." Because we have computerised our electoral roll, we can now carry out a redistribution on the most up-to-date figures. The A.L.P. may not like to have a redistribution based on the most up-to-date figures—and I wouldn't be surprised at that, because the people who are increasing the numbers on the rolls are the sort of people who would not be supporting them.

What becomes very clear is that there is a total misunderstanding by the Opposition even as to what is involved in the Bill before the House. The amendment moved by the Opposition is, I contend, of a totally different substance altogether from the proposed amendment to the Act. It talks about a fair and impartial redistribution, whereas the Bill before the House relates to a mere technicality, enabling a redistribution, if there is to be one, to be based on the most up-to-date figures. How stupid people in this Parliament would appear to be—what buffoons they would appear to be—if they went out to the public and said, "We oppose legislation enabling redistribution to be carried out on the most up-to-date figures." That is effectively what the Opposition said when it opposed the introduction of this Bill, and it is effectively what it is saying now by moving this amendment, which has absolutely nothing to do with what is proposed in the Bill itself. I find it difficult to comprehend how such an amendment would even be acceptable to the Parliament. The situation is clear. Whether this Bill is passed or not, a redistribution could occur today or tomorrow.

**Mr. Houston:** You know that isn't true.

**Mr. BYRNE:** It is true. Through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask the honourable gentleman whether it is a fact that commissioners could be appointed to set up a redistribution this week.

**Mr. Houston:** No, because you can't redistribute the Mt. Isa or Mackay electorates. They have to remain as they are.

**Mr. BYRNE:** In order to explain to the members of the Opposition, the question I asked was—

**Mr. Houston:** That's not a redistribution; it's only a partial one.

**Mr. Lamont:** It is quite obvious that the answer to your question is, "Yes". You don't ask donkeys difficult questions. They have not done their homework and they don't know.

**Mr. BYRNE:** The honourable member summed up the case fairly succinctly.

I suppose I should not waste my time arguing with members of the Opposition. So far in this debate today, at the introductory stage and during previous debates in this place, what I have had an opportunity to do in most of my speeches has been to correct the mistakes, miscalculations and incorrect statistics that members of the Opposition, and particularly the honourable member for Bulimba, bring before this Parliament. I do not know on what research they base their statistics but on nearly every occasion one, if not more of them, uses totally incorrect statistics.

Two things are clear. The Bill before us does not deal with redistribution and does not in any way change the circumstance as to whether there can be any more of a redistribution than would be possible whether the Bill goes through or not. That is what I am saying. I am not saying that a full redistribution is being set up. The Bill will enable nothing more to happen than could have happened if it did not go through, except that it will enable the redistribution to be based on the most up-to-date statistics. That is very important for the honourable member for Bulimba to recall.

I hope that honourable members and the public know that Labor wants a redistribution based on out-of-date figures. I am not surprised. It would probably be of assistance to Labor because most of the policies it brings to the public and everything else with which it is associated are out-of-date. The exception is that it has tried to revamp itself by taking in an independent member to give itself a new Leader of the Opposition in the future. While that is most commendable and while the Labor Party members showed great finesse in choosing a man of higher calibre than they are, I can assure them that it will not be of any great benefit to them in the future because their out-of-date policies are not attractive to the electorate and the economics they offer to the people have been rejected continually and will be rejected in the future.

It is the Government's desire to ensure that the people of Queensland enjoy the economic management that they have experienced for 20 years and have shown in election after election that they desire to see maintained. That is very clear.

The amendment is inconsistent with what is being proposed in the Bill and therefore I oppose it. It is a clear attempt to create in the Government a division which does not exist and to try to make the media repeat the sort of speculation it advanced in 1971, which is destructive of the Government because it makes the people feel incorrectly that we are ill at ease. We are not ill at ease. The Government is firm and stable in its resolve and realises its responsibility is not for power but for the electorate—to see that Queensland remains properly, sensibly and economically managed now and in the future.

**Mr. LAMONT** (South Brisbane) (3.35 p.m.): I propose to make a statement in the form of an accusation. I accuse the Opposition of total and utter hypocrisy in supporting this amendment. Everybody in Parliament House, from the Premier down, knows very well that the Leader of the Opposition and his cricket team want the Bill as it is to be passed. All know very well that if the Liberal Party or if any back-benchers belonging to either party on this side of the House had voted against the Bill last Thursday, or if it ever looked as if more members would be sitting on that side of the House than on this side, they would have selected two or three bunnies to go to the George Hotel and not be here when the count was taken. They are absolutely determined not to do anything to disrupt the passage of the Bill. I make that accusation and I would be very interested to hear a properly argued denial.

Today the Opposition moved an amendment which has very properly been described by previous speakers as totally and utterly irrelevant to the Bill. Because Opposition members have thrown in references to someone as impartial as a Supreme Court judge and used the words "fair" and "impartial" they seem to think that they will be able to trick us into being hustled over to the other side of the Chamber. They know very well that we on this side are too clever not to see through those tactics.

As the honourable member for Toowong has already said, there has been in the Press and among the public much ado about nothing. The Bill addresses itself to amending a technicality, and that technicality has to do with computerisation. The Bill, if it is passed, will have no effect one way or another on whether or not there is a redistribution this year. It means that there could be an election on redistributed boundaries, but that is not relevant to the passage of the Bill.

Members of the Opposition and some sections of the Press have been at great pains over the past 10 days to paint a backdrop of redistribution to this Bill. I am not referring to all sections of the Press; some reports have been very accurate. They, however, were the ones that were overlooked because they were not dramatic enough to be built up. That backdrop of redistribution to which I referred is totally out of place on the stage at this time.

I am not unconcerned about some implications of redistribution. It has been said that my electorate could be one to be abolished, but I will meet that problem if and when it arises. I have faith that my friends and neighbours where I live and work will support me irrespective of the boundaries of the electorate in which I have my home and office. I am not worried about that; I will meet that problem when and if it arises. But let our remarks now be relevant to the debate.

This A.L.P. amendment is sheer gimmickry. As I have already said, the word "fair" has been thrown in. It is a word like "motherhood"—everybody likes it. Because Labor members throw in the word "fair", they think that they must automatically gain the support of Liberals. I support a fair redistribution—incidentally, what I think is fair is very obviously different from what the Labor Party thinks is fair. I have seen redistributions for which the Labor Party was responsible in the past. If they were fair, I certainly do not support the Labor Party's understanding of that word.

We might all support a fair redistribution, but how is that in any way related to a suggestion that the Bill should be withdrawn? This Bill as brought down by the Deputy Premier last week does not stand in the way of a fair redistribution. I go so far as to say that it does not even stand in the way of the appointment of a Supreme Court judge as an electoral commissioner if that is what is required—although I doubt that it is. The Bill does not stand in the way of a fair redistribution or in the way of the A.L.P.'s amendment. But the amendment is totally unrelated to the Bill, and, other than as sheer gimmickry, I wonder why the A.L.P. has bothered to move it.

A.L.P. members have not given a single reason why the Government's Bill should be withdrawn. They have not spoken to their amendment at all. They have used their amendment to open up the question of redistribution so that they can say things that they forgot to say last Thursday. Their argument has been a torrent of abuse at the Premier and the Deputy Premier. It has been a careless traipse through the history of redistribution in this State (but only since 1957). Honourable members will notice that none of them referred to redistributions which occurred when the A.L.P. was in Government.

As my colleague from Belmont so rightly said, this Bill is really about the machinery of elections, and these changes that are suggested in the Bill were brought about by the administrative change-over to computers. We are simply saying, "This is 1977. Computerised rolls are available. Let us not have a section of an Act which prevents the use of the most up-to-date means of giving

us proper, prompt and accurate rolls." That is all it says. On introducing the Bill the Deputy Premier said—

"It is now a practical proposition that electoral rolls may be prepared by means of computer print-outs as they are required instead of at particular predetermined dates."

The predetermined date is 31 December, and now we have computers that can give us rolls—we all know this because we all receive amendments to those rolls in computer print-outs as they are required, and this Bill simply facilitates that. It only goes to show how much members of the Labor Party and its former Federal president, Mr. Burns, who was once the puppeteer and is now a puppet, are living in the past. They want us to stick with an electoral situation on the printing of rolls which is not relevant to 1977. They do not want the most up-to-date services that the administration can give us. This is really what they are saying—or what they are pretending to say, because we know privately that they are very happy for the Bill to go through and that under no circumstances would 11 of them be sitting where they are if 30 of us were to cross to the other side of the Chamber and join them. They are completely hypocritical about it. They have been all huff and puff.

The Bill certainly does not allow a redistribution where before there could not be one. Without this Bill going through, there could have been a redistribution and an election could have been held six weeks later on the old rolls and on the old boundaries. It would have been a curious situation, but it could have happened. Without this Bill going through, there could have been a redistribution and the Premier could have called an election at the end of January.

**Mr. Moore:** On 1 January.

**Mr. LAMONT:** Yes, on 1 January, for that matter. Now he has the option of calling one as early as possible after the rolls are printed, which will probably only be December, so in fact all the Bill is doing is giving the Premier an extra month, or two at the very outside, to manoeuvre, and why should the Liberal Party, as members of a Government, want to close the Premier's options on when he can call an election? What a curious proposition for the Opposition to suggest.

**Mr. Frawley:** It doesn't matter when he calls an election.

**Mr. LAMONT:** That is right, but these are the facts Opposition members are pretending they do not grasp. But we know that they do grasp them. We know their stand is all hypocrisy and a facade. They are really at great pains to paint a split in the coalition Government in this Assembly. I am not talking about what presidents of organisations do outside; I am talking about

this place where the Government is. A.L.P. members think that, because organisations have differences, therefore there is a split in the Government. They think that because they are so used to being in a political party where the organisation controls them. They are only puppets; we are in fact representatives of the people. They are only representatives of the puppeteers at the Queensland Central Executive, and because they have that mental block they think that an organisational difference of opinion must also be reflected amongst the members down here, and that is where they make their fatal mistake.

**Mr. Frawley:** They are kicking in 3½ per cent of their salaries to retain their endorsement.

**Mr. LAMONT:** That is right; they have to pay their executive to retain the goodwill that they have. What we do to retain the goodwill of our executive is to provide good Government in Queensland.

All the Bill does is provide means by which we can have very prompt computer print-outs of rolls and, if necessary, an election soon after a redistribution. That will be facilitated by new administrative techniques, namely, computers. Would the Press, the public or the Opposition really expect any party to break a coalition for that? The A.L.P. is a party that splits on irrelevancies of that sort. It makes mountains out of molehills and puts petty jealousies before good government, but we do not. Quite frankly, Mr. Acting Speaker, I am more concerned about the education meeting that is to take place later today than I am about this petty, hypocritical and facile amendment that the Opposition does not want to see passed and knows very well will not receive the support of anyone but Labor puppets.

**Mr. Wright:** You are only trying to save your own seat.

**Mr. LAMONT:** I am not trying to save my own seat. As I said earlier, if and when a redistribution comes I will see whether my seat is in jeopardy. That is a further imponderable. If a redistribution comes, then I will look to my laurels and ask my party to judge whether or not I have served it and my people well. I would suggest that I have much less to worry about from the people south of the Brisbane River than the honourable member has to worry about from the judgment of the people on the Tropic of Capricorn, because my people know that I am not the servant—the servile slave—of a political organisation. I do not jump when I am told to jump; I do what I believe to be right for the people of South Brisbane. If the honourable member were not a slave to the Queensland Central Executive of the A.L.P., he would not be worried about redistribution.

**Mr. Wright:** Me worried about it?

**Mr. LAMONT:** Yes, you. But let me get back to the Bill. The Labor Party is desperately trying to show a semblance of a split, and it has the help of the media. Last week I gave an interview to a representative of the Press. I found that the report as presented was the exact opposite of what I had said. That is the pains that some sections of the Press are taking to give a totally false picture. I was asked was I disappointed in Mr. Knox. I said, "Certainly not. He has done exactly the right thing." I added, "I would be disappointed if I were to lose my seat in the long run, but at the moment he is doing the right thing and he is showing us strong leadership." The first part of the statement was clipped out, so was the last part, and I came across as saying that I was disappointed.

Why is the A.L.P. at such pains, at this point of time, to provoke a split? I will tell you, Mr. Acting Speaker. It is because it realises that at the moment the public is detecting—

**Mr. Jones** interjected.

**Mr. LAMONT:** I suggest that the honourable member listen to this because it affects his future. Members of the public are detecting a crack in the image of Tom Burns. Because of that, the A.L.P. is at great pains to try to find something else to distract public opinion.

The A.L.P. recently had a "Bank on Burns" campaign, and it went bankrupt. It did not even cover the administrative costs of the appeal. That is why he is known in some sections of the A.L.P. as "Bankrupt" Burns.

At a recent meeting of the Q.C.E. we saw the face of "Terrified Tom". "Terrified Tom" went to the Q.C.E. meeting and found that the man he wanted to run for Everton against Mr. Lindsay, the present member for Everton, was so aware of the feeling in that electorate that he decided he could not beat the Liberal member. So he searched round for another job and decided that he would run for the position of secretary of the Queensland Central Executive. "Why be a puppet when I can be a puppeteer?", he thought. The former member for Everton decided that he would not take on Mr. Lindsay because Mr. Lindsay had done too good a job. "Terrified Tom" thought, "My goodness, we can't have a bloke as crook as that as A.L.P. secretary. We have to stop him somehow." "Terrified Tom" deserted "Bankrupt" Burns for his real image. He cracked under pressure and threw his resignation on the table.

The popular Press did not come out with that story, they merely leaked a whisper of it, and it was totally denied by "Bankrupt" Burns. It has gone right through the electorate. Everyone knows that his resignation really hit the table, but stories of that kind are not played up by the popular Press. The



Press does not want Labor Party dirty linen. They would much rather print up ours, even though when they look into it they will find that it is remarkably clean.

We have the remarkable spectacle of the Leader of the Opposition, having an endorsed candidate for a seat too scared to run and trying to take on the role of puppeteer instead, and cracking at the sheer thought of the enormity of Gerry Jones as party secretary. He actually went to the point of threatening to resign, but when he found that the executive was not going to back down he thought, "I had better scurry back and get that resignation off the table because it might be accepted." So he came out and denied that he had cracked under pressure, as he did when he stepped off the front bench of the Labor Party a couple of years ago because he was under too much pressure then. He has never yet led in a State election. He can see himself leading an election campaign for the Labor Party, but he sees himself failing as he is coming under pressure and he is cracking up, so we get this enormous effort by the A.L.P. to pretend that there is a split in the Government ranks.

Let us get back to the real point—not the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, not Gerry Jones, not the Leader of the Opposition but the real point. Computer print-outs can now be provided by the Electoral Office. There is no reason in the world why we should have a provision in an Act which is not up to date with the administrative machinery available. So we come back to the point that this Bill is not relevant to redistribution. It does not change the position whether or not a redistribution could or would take place. I will give a prize of a Government ballpoint pen to the journalist who gets that story straight.

I also come back to my major point: the hypocrisy on the opposite side of the House lies in the very fact that last Thursday and today those honourable members have been determined that the Bill will go through unchanged. If in fact as a Liberal Party we had voted against it on Thursday, they would have had three or four of their boys at the George pub when the bells rang because they knew very well they were not going to provide the numbers to defeat the passage of the Bill. I condemn their action today as hypocrisy. It is wasteful of the time of a good Government that has more to do in governing the State than to put up with the sort of nonsense, fabrication and facile argument presented today by those poor, poverty-stricken puppets of the Australian Labor Party.

**Mr. JONES (Cairns)** (3.53 p.m.): I support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition that the Bill be withdrawn and redrafted to provide for a fair and impartial redistribution of the electoral boundaries within the State of Queensland. The Bill

will clear the way for a dissolution of principle and a redistribution of retribution. It provides the opportunity for a technical retaliation by the National Party against the Liberal Party's action in deigning to seek to contest electorates on a three-corner basis and to threaten its coalition partner and its position of power as the greatest numbers-holder on the Government benches. Never have I witnessed in this House or outside it so much distrust of an ally since Yalta.

Obviously the Bill is going to be passed, with Her Majesty's Opposition dissenting. What I am most concerned about is that the Bill will clear the way for a redistribution without further reference back to this Parliament and without consultation with this Parliament. The redistribution will take place without any further challenge at all. It will take place without the opportunity for any recourse to law and without any provision for appeal. With the Government's technical amendment to the Act, which will allow it to appoint its commissioners, the matter will come under Executive control. In effect the Government is abrogating the rights of this Parliament to Executive control. Whatever recommendations the commissioners may make, decisions and amendments will be made finally by the Premier and Cabinet. Anybody who has seen Cabinet in action in the past few months clearly understands exactly who would be in control of any future redistribution. If the Liberal Party has been subjugated to the stage where it believes that it will have any say in future line drawing, I can only say that it has been sadly hoodwinked.

**Mr. Lamont:** Of course we are not. The commissioners will do the drawings.

**Mr. JONES:** The honourable member for South Brisbane protests too much. He said that it was a technical problem and the Act has not been changed; the lines have been drawn and it is simply a technical amendment.

But what happened in 1971? The electoral commissioners made their recommendation, which was taken to Cabinet and altered about 40 to 45 times. Government members saw what happened in 1972 and 1974. In effect, as parliamentarians, we are abrogating our rights by allowing the Executive to make the decision on our behalf. In this Parliament, a Lower House of elected representatives, the Liberals are abrogating their right as elected representatives by allowing the decision to be made by the Executive. The Executive is elected, by choice, by the dominant partner in the coalition—by one man. Unless members are subservient to him, they are not recruited. Since the resignation of Sir Gordon Chalk, the Premier of this State has been nominating and selecting members of the Liberal Party to make up his Cabinet.

**Mr. Frawley** interjected.

**Mr. JONES:** The honourable member for Murrumba should consult with the honourable member for Chatsworth or almost any other member. The Premier will not deny that he tells the Liberals whom he wants in Cabinet. The Executive is in a singular situation. Liberal members may say that they believe in the Westminster system but in my opinion it is being undermined, wittingly or unwittingly, by the Liberals if they vote for the measure at this stage. Liberals, by not opposing the measure and supporting the amendment, will allow this situation to prevail. As elected members under our democratic system they will be precluding their right to participate.

The honourable member for Toowong said that we on this side are pretending. We are giving the Liberals an opportunity to support the amendment. I accuse the honourable member for Toowong of pretending that he is vigorously motivated by puritanical principles. So far as I can see, he is engaging in duplicity. This afternoon Liberal members have only been concerned about trying to get on the right side of the Premier in order to save their political hides.

**Mr. Lamont** interjected.

**Mr. JONES:** The honourable member for South Brisbane is the worst offender. He knows that, unless he follows the line directed by the honourable member for Toowong, he will be the first one to go. He is busily trying to clamber aboard the trolley in order to save his own political hide. It is rather humorous from our side of the House to watch the machinations of those on the Government side trying to save their political hides. To be able to sit here and watch the coalition partners in their dilemma is quite humorous.

They pretend that all is well and in no sense is there any disparity between the parties. There is no criticism by the Liberal Party of their pals in the National Party. They are denying suggestions of any rift and all the nasty things that have been said. I was shocked that the Premier deigned to use the word "scab" against his coalition partners. I did not think he would use that terminology, but he has done so. It is on record.

Once again the pattern is set. The Liberals are busy racing to ingratiate themselves with the Premier to make sure that they are the next nomination by the National Party for the Liberal vacancy in the Cabinet. They are pleading reconciliation. It is enough, as the honourable member for Townsville said in a different context, "to make you puke". He even came straight out and said that it is dangerous—these are his words and they can be checked in "Hansard"—to denigrate the Premier. Paradoxically, the Premier did not hesitate to call him and his mates some very unkind names.

The honourable member for Townsville said that it is a simple Bill; that it is only to correct an anomaly. Those remarks were reiterated by the honourable member for South Brisbane. When the provisions of section 23 and section 16 of the Act are read, it is obvious that the amendment is a technical one, merely changing the terminology "annual roll" to "general roll".

**Mr. Lamont:** Can we have that in writing?

**Mr. JONES:** If honourable members opposite are naive enough to believe that the amendment is nothing more than is contained in the Bill and that in politics one must not learn to read between the lines, then I suggest that they think again.

The honourable member for Belmont complained that we are endeavouring to confuse the issue by our amendment, which simply seeks to provide for a fair and impartial redistribution, headed by a Supreme Court judge. If that is confusing to the honourable member, then his speech was the epitome of confusion. Government members should not fret. The public are not being confused. They are no longer confused. With the way the Government parties have been carrying on in the last few weeks—and will be carrying on in the next few weeks—the public will become fully aware of what is going on.

The honourable member for Belmont is only a transient from the D.L.P., anyway. I hope that he and his ilk do to the Liberal Party what they did to the Labor Party in 1957. They set in the dry rot; they white-anted it; they wrecked it from the inside—and are they ever following that pattern today! If the Liberal Party follows that type of member, boy oh boy, is it in for a shock! If it is to follow that type of member in telling it where to go, what direction it should take and that it should support the National Party, the Liberal Party is a spent force in Queensland politics. The political commentator on the news who said that the Liberal Party has become the metropolitan branch of the National Party could not have been more correct in his assessment of the situation. The Liberal Party resembles an innocent puppy waddling along at its master's heel. It does not have an ounce of backbone to stand up and seek what the people of Queensland want, which is the opportunity at any time to change the Government. It will allow the situation to prevail. It has been said in this House—and I support the principle—that, when the people of Queensland are ready, they will change the Government, no matter how or where Government members draw the lines.

The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads makes no bones about it. He comes straight out and says, "If you want the boundaries rigged, give me a pencil and I will rig them and we will never lose office." He does not talk about technicalities in the

legislation. But even he makes a mistake. I see the Premier and the Minister for Police smiling at my remarks. They think we are being humorous. The humour is there all right.

**Mr. Newbery:** What you are saying is stupid and laughable.

**Mr. JONES:** The people of Queensland will make the decision—and Government members will not think that is laughable. We have only 11 members at present, but after the next redistribution we will be stronger than the Government imagines. The swings in British Commonwealth countries have been very strong and when the swing comes here, nothing will defeat democracy. There will be a swing, irrespective of what Government members do.

They can amend the Act as much as they like; they can partially redistribute any or all of the zones; they can retain the zones that they have tied up in the belief that they can win without any trouble; they can draw the lines as they wish—but when the people go to the ballot-boxes the vote will be against the Government and we will come in on the tide and become the Government.

Government members can go through the motions if they wish. They can say, "We will have a redistribution. We look like remaining as the Government. We of the National Party will make the decisions." That is the terminology used during the past few weeks. They might fool some of the people some of the time, and that adage is as true today as it was in Lincoln's day. They can claim that the Act was not designed to prevent a redistribution; they can talk about discovering an anomaly or a technicality; they can believe that we are naive or that the voting public are naive; they can create all the rumpus in the world; they can laugh as much as they like about the people deciding—but in the end the people will decide, the National Party will be annihilated and the Labor Party will be back in power both because of what members of the National and Liberal Parties have done and in spite of what they have done. As Yvonne McComb said, the voice of the people will be heard.

After all, what are the Government parties trying to do? Do they want the whole shebang? Are they trying to draw the lines so that they will have it all? What is their goal? What are they after—majority rule? Or do they want this Parliament to be like the Malaysian Parliament, where everyone sits on one side? If they are trying to do that, what a paradox? They talk about the Communist Party, in which there is no minority voice. Yet the forces on the Right are doing exactly the same thing.

The redistribution is going to be carried out in such a way as to try to ensure that the Government obtains the majority of

seats. The whole system is being turned round, and is the rock on which the Government will founder. The threat is not to the National Party, the Liberal Party or the Labor Party; it is to the Westminster system and democratic government. The fundamental positions of the respective political parties do not mean much at all.

If the Bill is to clear the deck for dictation by party officials and to determine how boundaries will be drawn, and if Parliament is to have no right of scrutiny and the public no right of appeal, it will bring almost the death in this State of the Westminster system. If supremacy at all costs is the cry and the National Party is in full flight, I wonder what is its destination and its estimated time of arrival. What should be sought, but what the National Party is not looking for, is electoral justice. If electoral justice is to be sacrificed for expediency and if the aim of the National Party is to govern in its own right and humble its coalition partner, then so let it be. But I do not believe that holding office is more important than maintaining the principle of the Westminster system and preserving democracy.

Is the National Party trying to destroy a minority voice? The Premier likes to be known as the Lone Ranger and he has quite ruthlessly stilled the minority voice of the Liberals in Cabinet, as he silenced any opposition in his own party room. Now he has achieved a similar coup in the House by destroying the principle of the parliamentary system and putting power back in the hands of the Executive. The Deputy Premier has prostrated himself before the altar of expediency to retain his office. He has subjugated himself and obeyed the Premier without question. The ruthlessness of the National Party has been supreme and the subservience of Liberal Party members is quite obvious.

You are going to submit now, and without a fight. We have given you the opportunity this afternoon to declare yourselves politically and to come out on the side of democracy. But you won't accept the challenge. I believe that this afternoon you have committed political suicide for the benefit of some persons in office in your party. You will never be able to question again; you will never be able to disagree. You will submit and surrender and become a prisoner of the present situation. As the honourable member for Mackay said, the Bill will not come before the House again, and if you think that you will win in the party room with your numbers—

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! I suggest the honourable gentleman address his comments through the Chair.

**Mr. JONES:** Certainly, Mr. Acting Speaker. I believe there is small comfort for the Liberal Party in the predicament in which it finds itself today. Its members will be

subservient and their party one of second-hand glory forever more. They are prisoners in the Bastille of expediency and will remain only as second dick. That is all they are and that is all they will ever be. They have been defeated. The Deputy Premier is merely a cardboard caballero, like one of the figures at the rear of a Warana procession. That is how he will always be regarded. In a rain storm he would collapse in a soggy mess. He has no backbone. Yet Government members have all supported him. They have not even queried his actions; they have let him have full rein.

**Mr. Moore** interjected.

**Mr. JONES:** The honourable member for Windsor is one of the greatest protagonists in the Liberal Party, yet he watched his leader lapse into brandishing a papier-mache sword and fall to the floor in a pile of soggy cardboard, a pile of nothing. There is no backbone in him.

The Liberal Party has no future in him, in the honourable member for Windsor or in anybody else in the parliamentary wing of the Liberal Party today. Of course, while the Deputy Premier is brandishing his sword against his Canberra cohorts he is falling in a heap so far as his responsibilities to Queensland are concerned. The first sign of a political storm, and what happens? He collapses in a political heap. The worst feature of it is that Liberal members have swallowed it lock, stock and barrel. I would not have believed it could happen.

I have no confidence in the Electoral Districts Act or the amending Bill before the House; nor have I confidence in the purveyors of this rort—and a rort it is.

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** What about calling it a day?

**Mr. JONES:** The sooner the Premier calls the election day, the sooner we will see him on this side of the Chamber. The National Party, through the Premier, exudes confidence. Its members really believe they have the Liberal Party in the palm of their hand and can thus dictate to the people of Queensland. They believe they can draw a line around little areas of voting strength and that this will enable them to achieve the majority they seek; that it will not only give them assurance of office but will protect their rotten borough electorates and will ensure their political survival. Of course, we will see the Liberal Party coming forth as apologists for this policy. All that this Bill will do is ensure that there will be no opposition to the National Party in the coalition and that for past and future favours the Liberal Party will remain a lapdog of the National Party. As I said, like its leader the Liberal Party will fall into a soggy mess at the hands of the National Party.

**Mr. MOORE** (Windsor) (4.18 p.m.): The honourable member for Cairns waffled on for so long that I lost concentration. I do not know whether I can make a speech for one minute or 10. I do not have a prepared brief presented to me by my party, and now I have been kicked out of the union I cannot even go to the Trades Hall for one. So I find myself in a cleft stick, or in Queer Street or in that sort of state.

When one looks at the background of this amendment and at the 11 miserable Opposition members who support it, one wonders what they would attempt to do with it if they took control of Parliament and passed the legislation. Heaven only knows. It is a weak-kneed piece of pretence that pales into insignificance when one looks at the motive behind it. All they are doing is sparring for time. The last thing they want, of course, is a redistribution because with any redistribution they would pass into oblivion. They have been throwing out challenges for an election. I remind them that before the last election they challenged us to hold an early election. If we took up the most recent challenge I just wonder how many of them would return. So I suggest that Opposition members be careful about challenging us and giving us an excuse to go to the people, because we might just take it.

We have heard a lot of talk from the Opposition about a so-called division in our ranks. Today's debate is a classic example of the so-called division! Which members on this side showed the slightest sign of any division. There were none. True, there were a few things said by members opposite, but it was all about our organisation—an organisation which, in our case, has power to suggest things to us but cannot direct us. Not only can't we be directed; we will not be directed. We in our wisdom, with thoughts of Queensland at heart, and the part Queensland plays in Australia, will make the decisions for the benefit of Queensland—no splits, no stupidity such as happened in the A.L.P.

I saw the A.L.P. blowing itself to pieces when that party split. When Gair was Premier, I was working in the railways. Virtually all the people in the railways were members of the A.L.P. I said to them at the time, "If you split, you will be in Opposition for 25 years." They said, "No. We might lose the election, but we will win in three years' time." I said, "Don't be stupid. You will never be back, or at least you won't be back for a quarter of a century." A quarter of a century is coming up, so we must look at the realities and ensure that we do not make the same silly mistake. However, in all honesty, I cannot see intelligent people such as we have on this side of the House ever doing such a stupid thing.

The amendment speaks about the Bill being redrafted and providing for a fair and impartial redistribution. The A.L.P. was in office

in Queensland for 40 years. Looking back over 10 elections in that period, the A.L.P. really won only four. It lost six but still retained the reins of office by gerrymander.

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

**Mr. MOORE:** What is the honourable member saying? He weakens as soon as I accept his interjection.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Under the A.L.P., electorates were democratically adjusted, and you know it.

**Mr. MOORE:** The electorates were democratically adjusted so that the A.L.P. could win with 43 per cent of the vote. We know that by "democracy" honourable members opposite mean to win at any price and never lose the reins of office once you have them. The honourable member for Archerfield is showing us that. I hope that Government members learn that lesson. Whatever we do, we will act responsibly.

**Mr. Jones:** You have even got your own members laughing at that.

**Mr. MOORE:** That is all right. We do not even know that there will be a redistribution now, and I personally believe that there will not be. Because all honourable members here at present will be returned on the present boundaries, I hope there will not be one.

There has been talk of putting a Supreme Court judge on the commission. What part could he play? He would be completely out of his field. What would he know about this system? Sensible people do not pluck doctors out of their profession and put them into engineering or make school-teachers cooks. That is what the Opposition is trying to do. The members of a commission for electoral redistribution must be people who know something about the subject—about weighing and a fair redistribution taking all matters into account. With the best will in the world, a Supreme Court judge would not know that. He is involved in criminal trials and in giving judgment upon various Acts, and so forth. It is not his field and he would be like a fish out of water. Not only that, Mr. Acting Speaker, but we would be inflicting something upon him that he would not want. I do not know one Supreme Court judge who would volunteer for the job, and I doubt whether we could recruit one.

**Mr. Lamont:** It is a "motherhood" word.

**Mr. MOORE:** As the honourable member for South Brisbane says, it is a "motherhood" word—a very nice word. When anyone hears it, he thinks, "We have to be kind; we have to support it because it is such a kindly thing." That is what motherhood connotes.

The A.L.P. is changing its attitude, of course, now that it has only 11 members in the House. While it was in office it did not

do the things it is now advocating, and it will never do them if it ever gains office again. For a fair redistribution it will be necessary to have weighted electorates. There is an old saying, "What is just is equal, but what is equal is not necessarily just." I say in these circumstances that what is just is equal. There has to be justice in a State the size of Queensland where we have electorates covering 200,000 square miles. Imagine the difficulties of a member representing an area of that size. How can he meet his constituents, considering the distance between the small country towns and the properties in between them? He cannot fly to every country town. How can he know what is going on in an electorate of 200,000 square miles by flying over it in an aircraft? That is not the way members of Parliament want to operate when they have problems in their electorate. In this modern age they need to travel in a four-wheeled vehicle.

An electorate of 200,000 square miles takes one hell of a lot of covering. The electorate of Cook covers almost that area. It includes areas of water and islands, few of which have an airstrip. So it is necessary for the member to plug along in a boat at about eight knots to visit electors. How could it be said that there should be no weightage in such an electorate? Of course there has to be weightage in such an electorate. If the people are to have fair representation, country electorates must have some weightage. We have no argument with our National Party colleagues about that.

There is a little bit of heat at the moment in the speculation about a redistribution before the next election. We don't want to see one. We are concerned about the survival of our colleagues, who are excellent members. Although people may be transferred from one electoral roll to another, votes are not necessarily transferred. For reasons of survival I say I want to see no redistribution before the next election, but rather one quickly after it so that all our members who are returned can look after the new territory with a view to keeping Labor out for ever. That is my idea. If there is an enemy in this House it is made up of the 11 members opposite. Personally I like them, and if they go into the bar later I will buy them a beer, but on election day they are the enemy.

A redistribution concerns only parties and politics. We are in office to legislate for the benefit of people and to provide progress and jobs. Anyone who has been out of Queensland for some years is amazed on his return at the development that has taken place. When I went to Adelaide in July, not having been there since World War II. I found that nothing had changed. There was hardly a new building evident. South Australia is virtually the way Tom Playford left it. He developed it to a certain stage, but the A.L.P.'s dead hand has done nothing to improve it. Honourable members opposite would know that what I am saying is right. They have only to go there to see for themselves.

**Mr. Houston:** When did Playford go out of office?

**Mr. MOORE:** A fair while ago. Nothing has improved since then.

**Mr. Houston:** You said that you had not been there since the war.

**Mr. MOORE:** That's right.

**Mr. Houston:** Playford was there for years after the war.

**Mr. MOORE:** Of course.

**Mr. Houston:** What did he do?

**Mr. MOORE:** The Playford Government—

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Even in a very wide-ranging debate I think the virtues of the Playford Government are just a little bit removed from the Bill.

**Mr. MOORE:** I suppose so, but we are talking about a redistribution Bill, and one can take into account what happened in South Australia with its redistribution Bill. If 41 votes had gone the other way, the present South Australian Government would not be in office. It's a dead old show.

Our main interest is looking after people. The Premier is interested in freedoms and in Queensland and its development. I commend him and emphasise that there is no division in our show.

The honourable member for Mackay expounded on the virtues of the A.L.P. He got the axe from the A.L.P. some time ago, but he put himself up for sale and was taken back into the A.L.P. He is now trying to lick the boots of the A.L.P. hierarchy in the hope of getting a Cabinet post, should Labor ever attain office. The A.L.P. members have said that we should be fair and do this and that about the redistribution. Do they mean that, to be fair, they should allow the Communists in? The day that they allow the Communists in will be their last chance. There would be no democracy after they got in or after the A.L.P. got in.

I commend the Premier on all the good jobs he has done for Queensland and on the sensible and sane attitude he has adopted.

**Mr. MULLER (Fassifern)** (4.31 p.m.): I do not intend to delay proceedings but I have some comments to make in this debate. After listening to members of the Opposition I believe that we would do well to remind ourselves of the business before us. At times it has been very difficult to relate comments to the Bill. In saying that, I point out that I do not cast aspersions on your rulings, Mr. Acting Speaker. However, on this occasion you have allowed a very wide debate.

Whenever redistributions have been discussed while I have been in this House, considerable reference has been made to gerrymanders. I have come to expect such

statements by members of the Opposition. The last redistribution took place in 1971, and after the 1972 election the A.L.P. came to this House with 34 seats. In 1974—although there had been no further redistribution—the A.L.P. came into this House with only 11 seats. Surely that is food for thought. If I were a member of the Opposition and found that my party had lost so many seats without a redistribution, I would start to analyse my party's policies. I am sure that the A.L.P. has been affected in some way by the calibre of its candidates. I make specific reference to the honourable member for Archerfield, who saw fit last week to say that the Fassifern boundaries were, "a colossal gerrymander." I think those were his exact words.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** That is true.

**Mr. MULLER:** The honourable member agrees.

In 1971, when the boundaries were realigned there were 12,000 electors in Fassifern. We now have 18,700 and the number is increasing by about 1,800 a year. I suggest that the increase has been caused by the progressive policies followed by the Government.

During the last election campaign some members of the Government were assisted considerably by members of the Labor Party. The honourable member for Archerfield came to Boonah, the heart of my electorate, to campaign. I knew immediately that my majority would be increased, but I did not think it would be increased as much as it was. To emphasise my point I say that, as a direct result of his participation in the campaign, my majority increased to 8,500. I extend a very hearty and cordial invitation to him to come back to Boonah and to visit all parts of my electorate during the forthcoming campaign. He will be extremely welcome.

The remarkable growth that has taken place can be attributed to the Government's policy of establishing a considerable number of industrial estates in the fringes of the city of Brisbane. The result can be seen in school enrolments. Two-and-a-half years ago there were 400 students at the Kingston school. Now there are 1,200. Waterford West State School was opened by the Minister for Works and Housing as recently as last November with 281 students. A letter on my desk informs me that the number is now 431 and that by the end of the year, as the enrolment is increasing at the rate of five children per week, a school attendance of 600 is expected. Where there are children, naturally enough there are parents. Consequently, we feel that we are obliged to have a redistribution on the basis of increased population.

A lot of nonsense has been spoken in this House about gerrymanders. It has been complete and utter drivel. That argument does not hold any water at all. Members

of the Labor Party have always promoted the idea of one vote, one value. That has been their policy. I have never subscribed to that philosophy. The fact of the matter is that they have continued to complain that members of the National Party have represented trees and broad acres rather than people. I want them to know that on the south-eastern sector of Brisbane, between here and the Gold Coast 175,000 electors are contained within eight electorates, six of which are held by the National Party. Consequently, we as members of the National Party are not ashamed that we have initiated this plan for a redistribution.

I think it would be fair to say that there could be a measure of disagreement about the timing of the redistribution. Admittedly, questions have been raised about that. It is not a matter of whether a redistribution is necessary, but rather when it should be. I do not think it matters very much when it is held. The fact of the matter is that, as a result of representation by members of the National and Liberal Parties, without a doubt we will be returned to the Parliament and will retain the reins of Government.

A number of anomalies exist in other regions, but I feel that I can be most constructive in my remarks if I refer to those areas which vitally concern me. Electorates north of the city of Brisbane are similarly affected. I believe that it is necessary and desirable that a complete overhaul should be made of electoral boundaries.

There has been talk of gerrymandering. I have had a look at the possibilities, and I will be quite frank and open when I make my statements. It is not a simple matter to look at a map and decide where lines should be put on a map to surround a group of people who it is believed have a favourable political persuasion. Members of the Opposition would readily agree that prior to the election of 1957, when the Labor Government lost office, they had a redistribution. They lost after a redistribution of their own; so that surely indicates how difficult it is to "gerrymander". It has been said on many occasions that if there are experts in the fields of skulduggery and gerrymandering, the members of the A.L.P. would be the most highly qualified.

I indicated earlier that it was not my intention to delay the business of the House. I support the legislation and I entirely oppose the amendment, which is completely puerile and unnecessary.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER** (Archerfield) (4.39 p.m.): I enter this debate briefly this afternoon to speak on the proposed Bill and the amendment moved by my leader. It is quite obvious—and it is also a political truism—that the overwhelming majority of electors in Queensland are seeking a fair and equitable distribution of boundaries in

this State. As well as supporting the amendment moved by my leader, I support the principle expressed in the motion that the electoral commission appointed should be headed by a Supreme Court judge.

**Mr. Frawley:** Lionel Murphy.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Lionel Murphy would certainly have a big advantage over Mr. Archer.

**Mr. Frawley:** Murphy would be one of the biggest crooks out.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I am looking at one of the biggest crooks in the House. If the honourable member nods, I will point.

The appointment of a judge to head the commission would provide a lot of judicial and political balance. Usually the Premier appoints one of his very good friends to chair the commission. Mr. Archer, the last chairman of the electoral commission, was a personal friend of the Premier's. It is also quite obvious that he repaid the Premier's friendship by gerrymandering the boundaries in Queensland to suit the Premier's party.

**Mr. Frawley:** Do you know what a gerrymander really is?

**Mr. Casey:** Yes—the National Party.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Yes, that is true.

The commission, with a judge as the chairman, would provide for the excellent democratic adjustment of electoral boundaries in this State, which is long overdue. It is quite obvious that a judge of the Supreme Court certainly would not prostitute his integrity by perpetuating the rotten boroughs that exist in this State and, without the cynical rigging of the electoral system, the National Party would not be the senior member of this sleazy coalition Government.

No other person and identity than Sir Gordon Chalk was reported in "The National Times" as saying that while he won the race, he did not get the prize. He was alluding to the fact that during the 1974 elections the Liberals received a far greater number of votes than the National Party received but won the fewest seats. Members of the National Party and some members of the Liberal Party who are on the extreme right, and whom I describe as being on the lunatic right—

**Mr. Prest:** The Premier called them scabs.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** That is right. From my vast experience in the industrial field I know that when a person calls another person a scab he does not work or operate with him. The Premier called the members of the Liberal Party scabs, yet he is prepared to sit with them in the coalition Government. He compounds the felony by being prepared to accept it.

**Dr. Lockwood** interjected.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I could not pick up the interjection from the honourable member for Toowoomba North. He has a very light voice. On another occasion I said that he is a rectum speaker, that he speaks through his seat. It is obvious that following the next State election he will have to return to his medical practice full time.

The Liberal Party members are so gutless that they are prepared to allow the National Party to remain top dog in the coalition Government and they are prepared to continue to toady to it for a number of years.

The system is weighted against the Labor Party and it is rather amusing that it is also weighted against the Liberal Party. The Liberals are prepared to accept that and they will certainly be the junior member of the coalition Opposition for years following the next election.

I have heard speakers today, including the honourable member for Windsor, say with tongue in cheek that there is no rift in the ranks of the coalition. They should tell that to the electors, who would laugh at them.

As the Leader of the Opposition said this morning, "The Courier-Mail" and the "Telegraph" have always supported the Tory parties in this State. Yet even they have too much to swallow at the moment. To put it colloquially, they cannot cop it and they are criticising the squabbling coalition Government and showing up its weaknesses.

It is a cold, hard fact of life that the Liberal Party is on the decline in Queensland. This has been brought about by its decadence and its subservience to the neo-Fascist National Party.

**Mr. Lamont:** Tell us about the split in the A.L.P.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** There is certainly no split in the A.L.P. I am coming to the honourable member for South Brisbane. It is sickening to see and hear members of the Liberal Party rise, one after the other, and mouth pious platitudes in support of the National Party leader.

The honourable member for Toowong is on the extreme Right in this State. As a matter of fact, he made speech No. 23 from his rather limited repertoire. One could almost make his speeches for him. He spoke in his cold, measured way, with his tongue in his cheek and, in his best overbearing, supercilious manner he made his usual vitriolic attack on the A.L.P. He did this to support the Premier in an attempt to perpetuate the gerrymander in Queensland. It will be interesting—this is only speculation, Mr. Acting Speaker—to see, when the split eventuates and the chips are down, just where the honourable member for Toowong goes. I

would be prepared to wager a large sum of money that he will come down on the side of the National Party.

The honourable member for South Brisbane, who is in danger of being gerrymandered out, gave a sickening example of political toadying and crawling to the Premier in an endeavour to protect his worthless political hide. I am told on good authority that when the honourable member was a member of the Police Force in Hong Kong he arrested a poor old decrepit Chinese gentleman for using abusive language and when he got him down to the police station to book him he found that the poor old fellow was deaf and dumb.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the honourable member to return to the matter under discussion.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Yes, Mr. Acting Speaker.

**Mr. Alison:** That's terrible.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Of course it's terrible.

**An Honourable Member:** It could have been a Thursday Island policeman.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** It could have been a Thursday Island policeman but in this case the honourable member for South Brisbane was a Hong Kong policeman.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! I have asked the honourable member to return to the Bill.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Yes, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I should now like to touch briefly on the remarks of the honourable member for Fassifern. He stood up in the House a few moments ago and told us that the electorate of Fassifern was not gerrymandered. I think you will recall, Mr. Acting Speaker, that I related quite eloquently last Thursday how the electorate of Fassifern was the most gerrymandered electorate in the State. I will say of the honourable member for Fassifern that, although he is very Right Wing, he is usually very gentlemanly when he speaks. He is not known as a bucket tipper. Nevertheless, he is extremely reactionary. He said that the electorate has increased from 12,000 electors to 18,000. What he omitted to tell the House was what a rotten borough Fassifern is. I told honourable members last week that it commences on the fringe—

**Mr. Jones:** He said there are too many people in his electorate.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** That is true; he wants more trees and cows. He does not want goats, because there are enough of them in the National Party. Fassifern is the most gerrymandered electorate in Queensland.



Whilst I am on my feet I might say that it is a fallacy that the National Party gerrymander is perpetuated in the Far West. That is not so. It is perpetuated within a radius of 150 miles of Brisbane in, for example, the rotten-borough electorates of Barambah and Cunningham. I cannot see the honourable member for Cunningham in the House; he made an interjection earlier. It is quite well known that he has never done an honest day's work in his life. He was born with a silver plough in his mouth.

**Mr. Frawley:** Tell us about Murrumba.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** There is no need for us to go to Murrumba; the electors will deal with the honourable member at the next election.

As I have already said, the gerrymander is perpetuated in the rotten boroughs within a radius of 150 miles of Brisbane. It is not so bad out in the bush although the seat of Gregory is a lulu. It stretches from Aramac in the north down to Hungerford on the South Australian border, encompassing all the towns between.

**Mr. Glasson:** You'd get lost in it.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** As a matter of fact, I did get lost in it. The honourable member got lost in Quilpie at one time when his plane broke down.

National and Liberal Party members get up here and mouth pious platitudes in support of the Premier. But one has only to go into the house of the devil—the bar—to hear some members of the Liberal Party attack the Premier. That is where one hears the truth. I have heard some very interesting things when I have been there drinking my usual glass of milk. I have heard various members make bitter, vitriolic attacks on the Premier. They say that he is a dictator. They say, "We can't do anything because if it comes to a vote, four or five of our Liberal members will cross the floor and vote with the National Party."

I do not want to delay the House any longer. I say in conclusion that I wholeheartedly support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition and, if it is carried, it will certainly result in justice and democracy for the people.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (4.50 p.m.): I would like to thank honourable members, particularly my colleagues, for their very worthwhile contributions. I also appreciate the very kind references they made to me from time to time. I want to assure honourable members opposite that we on the Government side are a very strong and close-knit group of people. When the crunch comes, honourable members opposite will feel the effects of it.

**Mr. Casey:** Why did you call them scabs?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** That is what I would like to talk about. The honourable member deserted and went over to the socialists. That is what I would call his action.

Today there has been a tremendous amount of talk about redistributions and gerrymanders. I have been a member of this Assembly for 30 years and I have seen a number of redistributions. I recall the days when I sat opposite and experienced what members opposite now speak about so knowledgeably. They have had so much experience that they are the real experts. If I could show honourable members the electoral maps drawn in the days when their party was in Government, they would see they were a real jigsaw puzzle. The Premier in those days was Mr. Hanlon, of whom honourable members opposite speak very highly. He was the man who introduced the zonal system which we follow today. He must have been a terrible rascal from the way members opposite today spoke about the zonal system. He must have done some outrageous things in his day because we have just followed the pattern he set. I do not know whether members opposite meant to condemn him, because they do not usually speak other than good of the dead.

I think Mr. Hanlon was a very able Premier. Of course, honourable members opposite seem to completely forget that the present system stems from the time of the last Labor administration. I have in my room all that was said on the subject by Mr. Hanlon and I would have loved to repeat it all to honourable members opposite if I had had the time. It would have been edifying for them. They would find that what he said is completely contrary to what they are saying now. I think we have to be mindful of the people in the remote parts of the State who produce the great wealth of this nation. Today we are not really talking about a redistribution. Many Opposition members have spoken about a redistribution, but as has been pointed out by my colleagues, particularly the honourable member for South Brisbane, this Bill has nothing to do with a redistribution. Honourable members opposite sought to suggest that a redistribution could not be held unless this Bill was passed, but that is quite wrong. We did not need to introduce this Bill to effect a redistribution, as honourable members opposite know, or should know.

**Mr. Casey:** Are you bringing this in so you can have a redistribution?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** There is no need.

**Mr. Casey:** Why are you bringing it in, then?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** It has to be introduced sooner or later to bring the legislation up to date, as the honourable member knows. What is wrong with that? Honourable members opposite talk about a fair

and impartial redistribution, but when I cast my memory back to the days when they were in power it all sounds so hypocritical and airy-fairy. We all know that a judge could be appointed to head the commission, but the A.L.P. never tells the people what sort of guide-lines would be laid down for him. The A.L.P. would have them in a race like cattle going up into a slaughterhouse.

**Mr. Burns:** They are in there now.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** That is where the honourable member is when he talks about a fair and impartial redistribution under a judge.

**Mr. Burns** interjected.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The honourable member can pick anybody he likes, but the whole thing is the ground rules that are laid down, and he would make his own ground rules.

I just want to reply to the comments of the honourable member for Archerfield about Mr. Archie Archer, who I think is a very good friend of all of us in this Chamber. I could not accept that he would do anything to help the National Party because he is a friend of mine. I do not think that is fair to Mr. Archer. He is a man above that, and is held in very high regard in the community. I have no further comment other than to say that naturally we do not accept the amendment.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (Mr. Burns's amendment) stand part of the question—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 58

Akers	Kyburz
Alison	Lamont
Armstrong	Lane
Bertoni	Lee
Bird	Lester
Bjelke-Petersen	Lickiss
Bourke	Lindsay
Byrne	Lockwood
Camm	Lowes
Campbell	McKechnie
Cory	Miller
Deeral	Muller
Doumany	Neal
Edwards	Newbery
Elliott	Porter
Frawley	Powell
Gibbs	Row
Glasson	Scott-Young
Goleby	Simpson
Greenwood	Small
Gunn	Sullivan
Gygar	Tenni
Hales	Turner
Hartwig	Warner
Herbert	Wharton
Hodges	
Hooper, K. W.	
Hooper, M. D.	
Kaus	
Kippin	
Knox	

*Tellers:*  
Ahern  
Moore

NOES, 11

Burns	Wright
Casey	Yewdale
Dean	
Houston	
Jones	
Melloy	
Prest	

*Tellers:*  
Hooper, K. J.  
Marginson

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen's motion)—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 58

Akers	Kyburz
Alison	Lamont
Armstrong	Lane
Bertoni	Lee
Bird	Lester
Bjelke-Petersen	Lickiss
Bourke	Lindsay
Byrne	Lockwood
Camm	Lowes
Campbell	McKechnie
Cory	Miller
Deeral	Muller
Doumany	Neal
Edwards	Newbery
Elliott	Porter
Frawley	Powell
Gibbs	Row
Glasson	Scott-Young
Goleby	Simpson
Greenwood	Small
Gunn	Sullivan
Gygar	Tenni
Hales	Turner
Hartwig	Warner
Herbert	Wharton
Hodges	
Hooper, K. W.	
Hooper, M. D.	
Kaus	
Kippin	
Knox	

*Tellers:*  
Ahern  
Moore

NOES, 11

Burns	Wright
Casey	Yewdale
Dean	
Houston	
Jones	
Melloy	
Prest	

*Tellers:*  
Hooper, K. J.  
Marginson

Resolved in the affirmative.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 10, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ANSWER TO QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

**Hon. T. G. NEWBERY** (Mirani—Minister for Police) (5.12 p.m.): I would like to clarify a portion of an answer I gave in this House this morning in response to a question without notice from the honourable member for Barron River regarding the future of two police officers convicted of offences in the Cairns Magistrates Court. In the final portion of my answer I indicated that the time allowed for the two officers to lodge appeals against their convictions had not elapsed. I am now advised that that period has expired but that such period may be extended at any time by the court.

#### COAL AND OIL SHALE MINE WORKERS (PENSIONS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Energy) (5.13 p.m.): I move—

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

I thank honourable members for their initial approval of the contents of the Bill as

explained at the introductory stage. Now that honourable members have had the opportunity to examine the Bill in detail, I feel that there will be a general acceptance of the merit of the amendments proposed.

I feel that at the introductory stage I gave a sufficient explanation of each individual provision contained in the Bill, and consequently I do not propose to use up the limited time of the House on any further detailed explanation of the provisions at this time.

However, I have studied the suggestion made during the introductory stage of the Bill that consideration should be given to a reversion to the principle of paying retirement benefits in the form of pension payments rather than the present form of lump-sum payments, and I would like to explain to the House the background to the adoption of the principle of paying lump-sum retirement benefits.

I feel that all honourable members will appreciate that no pension or superannuation scheme can provide the variety of types of benefit desired by individual contributors. Over the years the Government has endeavoured to provide the type of benefit thought to be the most commonly preferred by the majority of contributors. When the lump-sum-benefit principle was adopted in 1970, it was on the joint recommendation of the mining unions and the Coal Owners Association.

While the weekly pension principle is still in operation in New South Wales, I understand the scheme is currently undergoing a complete revision and that serious consideration is being given to a conversion to the lump-sum principle in that State. However, the final outcome of that review may not be known for some time.

Personally I would feel some reluctance towards a reversion to a weekly pension scheme in this State because in many ways the lump-sum-benefit principle seems to have advantages over the weekly pension principle. For one thing the mine worker's retirement benefit is proportionate to the service he has rendered to the coal-mining industry, and I feel that the long-term or career mine worker has this moral entitlement.

I feel that I have covered the major points of the proposed amendments and I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. MARGINSON** (Wolston) (5.16 p.m.): As I said at the introductory stage, the Bill appears to be a very good one and we on this side of the House support it.

Since its introduction I have had discussions with the officials of the Queensland Colliery Employees' Union and the secretary of the retired mine workers' fund. They support me in my remarks. They feel that the Bill is quite a good one.

I would support the proposal to have weekly pensions only if it was at the discretion of a retired mine worker whether

he accepted a lump-sum or a weekly pension payment. As the Minister said, I believe that the majority of retired mine workers and mine workers presently in the industry would prefer the lump-sum payment.

We support the Bill.

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Energy) (5.17 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Wolston for his support of the Bill. I am sure that the coal miners in his area and particularly those working in the West Moreton field will be appreciative of what we are doing in respect of the pension payments.

Motion (Mr. Camm) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA BILL

##### SECOND READING

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (5.19 p.m.): I move—

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

This Bill is a short and simple measure which has as its sole objective the change of name of the Church of England in Australia to the Anglican Church of Australia.

From a perusal of the Bill it will be seen that the change of name necessitates some consequential changes where the name of the church is referred to in other Acts or instruments or in church canons, ordinances or the like. Where the name of the church appears as a title to an Act, then an amendment is made in the Bill to that title so that the new name can be accurately cited when making a reference to that Act in the future.

A savings provision has been included in the Bill out of an abundance of caution so that the change of name will not prejudice or affect the continuity of any church corporation or of any legal proceeding by or against any such corporation.

As I have already indicated, this Bill was presented to the House at the request of the authorities of the Church of England in Queensland. It is a worthwhile measure which will assist the church.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (5.20 p.m.): At the introductory stage I gave some details of the activities that have been carried on by the church for some length of time. I do not intend to repeat them; I believe that all members would agree that the church

has played a major role in not only the spiritual area but in fields such as social welfare, health and education. In fact, it has played a pioneering role in opening up our State.

The Minister said that the Bill is a technical measure. It does not require a great deal of debate and the Opposition supports it.

Motion (Mr. Lickiss) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 6, both inclusive, schedules 1 and 2, and preamble, as read, agreed to. Bill reported, without amendment.

### QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS TRUST BILL

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (5.23 p.m.): I move—

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

Having entered into some detail when the Bill was introduced, it is necessary now only to recap on the general provisions of the Act by stating that the proposed cultural centre at South Brisbane will include a centre for the performing arts and it is therefore necessary to establish a body to operate the centre.

The Bill sets up and incorporates a Queensland Performing Arts Trust of nine members, of whom not fewer than four shall be persons who are knowledgeable and experienced in the performing arts. Members will be appointed for four years but there will be reappointment of half the trust every two years to provide a consistent core of membership. The appointments will be made after consultation with various persons and groups “as the Minister deems fit”.

The main purpose of the trust will be to manage the performing arts centre and to present performances in it. However, the trust's objects do permit it to undertake wider educational and promotional roles. The trust will be a body corporate employing a director and staff. As is the case with the Queensland Theatre Company, they will not be subject to the Public Service Act. The trust's budget will have to be approved by the Minister; it will have to report annually to Parliament; its financial accounts will be audited by the Auditor-General; and it will have the power to borrow.

The trust will have the power to make by-laws while the Governor in Council retains the power to make regulations. There are provisions to protect the property of the trust, with penalties for destruction of or damage to such property.

The provisions contained in the Bill are generally standard ones for this type of organisation and are largely modelled on

legislative provision for similar bodies. In its Parts the Bill provides for the constitution and membership of the trust; the objects and powers of the trust; and the meetings, proceedings and business of the trust. The financial provisions cover funds, accounts and budget, and borrowing powers as they appertain to the trust.

The Bill has been perused by the Treasury and the Auditor-General's Department, who are in agreement with the proposals. I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (5.25 p.m.): During the introductory debate I pointed out on behalf of the Opposition that we were supporting the legislation but that we also wanted to have a very careful look at it, and over the week-end Opposition members did this, myself especially. We still support the proposal before the Assembly but there are some questions that need to be asked, and rather than take them clause by clause and spend a lot of the Assembly's time, I would like to raise these generally. If the Minister cannot answer the queries himself, he might be able to get some information so that the whole issue can be clarified.

The Minister made mention of the membership of the trust and he talked about nine persons, one of whom is going to be appointed. This person would probably be the Director-General of Education or his nominee. He went on to say that there will be others, four of whom must themselves be involved in performing arts. I am always sceptical about simply having Government appointees on these various groups. I think that with hospital boards we would sometimes be far better off having people from the community elected by the community, as we do with, say, ambulance boards and so on, rather than Government appointees. There is always the status symbol aspect, but I am not always sure that we get the best persons for the jobs. I would like the Minister to give us some explanation as to who these people will be, although I am not asking him to name them. Are we looking to see that they cover every aspect of the performing arts? Are we looking at community leaders and are we going to see representation from the city council?

If members read the Bill that was introduced in South Australia back in 1971, they will see that when the trust there was first set up the local authority was given two representatives on it. Again, I believe there is some value in having local authority representatives and not just people who themselves are involved in the arts.

The Bill itself refers to people being not older than 70 when appointed. I should hope that we would not have people much older than 70 on the trust, although regardless of age, many people can still make a contribution. I was in National Fitness for many, many years. We had people who got on the State council and stayed there and

stayed there year after year. At one time the average age would have been about 63 or 64, but common sense finally prevailed and people who could no longer carry out their role stepped down. Today we have a very energetic State council made up of all age groups from all walks of life.

I agree with the Minister's idea on the terms of appointment whereby virtually every two years half the trust will come up for reappointment. We must have some continuity to ensure that the trust management will continue properly, but such a provision allows for new blood. Possibly the most important part of the legislation itself relates to the objects of the trust, and this point was expounded at some length by the Minister in the introductory debate. He stressed the importance of promoting performing arts activities throughout the State. The general powers outlined in the Bill are very wide when it comes to employment of personnel, the hiring and purchase of various articles and the right to title to land. I believe all this relates very closely to the amount of money that is going to be available, because, although it is great having a wonderful Bill and being able to say, "Yes, these are going to be the functions and powers," if the trust does not have the physical capacity to carry out those functions the Bill is not worth the paper it is written on.

Whilst we note on page 9 of the Bill that moneys are to be appropriated from Consolidated Revenue and placed in the general fund, and also that there is to be a trust fund and a loan fund, we have to make sure that finance is available, because it is the extra money that is going to benefit the country and provincial city areas. The cost of promoting these activities in some of these regions is very high because of accommodation and travelling costs, so whilst the costs may not be high if it is in Brisbane, they are certainly going to be of some magnitude in country areas. Whilst the trust has the powers, and the objects are worth while, I would ask the Minister to ensure that the money, too, is going to be there.

I should also like to know exactly what type of allowances we are talking about. There is no mention of how much they will be. The Bill simply says that each member shall be paid such allowances, if any, as the Minister from time to time determines. I accept the need for some type of incentive. In fact, a similar idea has been put forward for a new National Fitness Council structure so that there would be some incentive for people to play their part on the various councils. However, we should not waste money in this way, because I think most people would be happy to serve for nothing. Again some explanation is needed, and I express the hope that money will not be wasted.

Overall the Opposition supports the measure, though there are some aspects of concern when it comes to money. There is

one final point that I overlooked. Perhaps the Minister could answer it. How will the trust's powers involve existing organisations such as the Queensland Theatre Trust? We already have legislation relating specifically to that organisation. Will this Bill provide overriding power, or will organisations of that type still be independent? Other questions might arise as we debate the measure, but on the whole we support it.

**Mrs. KYBURZ** (Salisbury) (5.31 p.m.): In supporting the Bill, I say at the outset that I am particularly pleased that this is one of the areas in which the Government has been so forward in spending money. It has not only introduced the necessary legislation but has also pushed within its own departments, particularly the Education Department, for improvements. I cite as an example the Queensland Cultural Diary, which contains many articles and items of interest. If members of the public care to go through that diary, they will see, as will members of Parliament, that there are very many interesting things to do and see.

Referring particularly to the Bill, I point out that Division II—Objects and Powers of Trust—mentions so many desirable objects. I have in mind particularly children and young people, and paragraph (c) says that one of the objects is to teach, train and instruct persons and promote education and research in the performing arts. Possibly one of the reasons why Australians are so traditionally lacking in culture—and, of course, that is a comparative statement relating to the European tradition—is that we have not instructed our young people to make it educationally fashionable, for want of a better term, to be interested in cultural achievement. Relatively speaking, we have pushed cultural achievement into the background in favour of other things that were more necessary in early colonial days. But I think that the time has now come when we can afford to promote our writers, artists, ballet dancers, and potters. It should no longer be considered to be beyond the average person to see the ballet, and we should start that line of thinking among young people. Fortunately, we are now doing that.

Paragraph (f) says that another object is to promote and encourage public interest and participation in the performing arts. I am particularly pleased to see that, because I think it is time that members of the public apart from those who have already been weaned into the cultural scene should begin taking an interest in what is going on around them. Many groups are not only performing in this field but also encouraging public participation. I cite small pottery groups and craft groups of various kinds, even down to macrame workshops, which are having a great deal of effect on suburban life.

Paragraph (g) says that it is an object of the trust to promote and encourage either directly or indirectly the knowledge, understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the

performing arts. That is a wonderful principle to be followed, and I hope that the Queensland Performing Arts Trust will be able to put it into effect. I wonder how in fact it will do it. It will require a hard-sell campaign if it is to go over well with the public.

So many people—I am referring mainly to men—consider it a waste of money to go to, for example, an orchestral concert or to the ballet. It may cost \$7.50, as it will cost to see the ballet that is starting soon. Yet for a night's entertainment and a widening of one's cultural experience \$7.50 is relatively cheap, when compared with the cost of a dozen bottles of beer. I will not expound on that theory.

Clause 17 deals with the general powers of the trust. Subclause 2 (g) states—

“to publish works and to license their performance in any form.”

I should like to ask why the trust is going to be empowered to publish works. I presume that that means particular writings. I realise that the question should be asked at the Committee stage, but I wonder whether we are doing the right thing in encouraging our own publishing company in Queensland.

As to the performing arts in general—as a representative of an outer-Brisbane suburb, I am particularly glad to see that in so many country areas, not only the provincial cities but also small towns like Proserpine and Stanthorpe—I suppose the members concerned do not think of them as small towns, but I do—many activities are engaged in. That is really wonderful. When I read through the Queensland Cultural Diary I was amazed at the number of exhibitions and Arts Council visits that these towns are receiving. Without doubt the country towns and provincial cities deserve as much visiting culture as do the major cities.

Some groups are probably better received in the provincial towns than in the capital. I have heard that various groups which visited Brisbane were disappointed at the attendances and therefore decided not to return to this city. Had they gone to centres like Rockhampton and Cairns, probably they would have had a far bigger roll-up.

One thing that has pleased me about the Cultural Activities Department is that it is encouraging organisations to apply for Government assistance. I do not know how many groups have in fact applied for assistance, but it is a wonderful thing that after-school activities are financed by the Government and that so many fruitful things can

be found for children to do after school. For example, I note Project Spearhead, which cites new theatre projects for the Queensland Theatre Company.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is straying away from the Bill.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I am trying to indicate to the House how beneficial it has been to set up the Department of Cultural Activities and how wonderful have been its achievements.

The proposed by-laws for the trust are quite wide. The trust is going to be given the general management and control of any property occupied by it. Does that mean, for example, that it is going to make laws about the manner of dress, age and entrance fees? If a rock concert was being held at any one of the theatres in Brisbane would it be able to require patrons to attend in a particular manner of dress? I am particularly anxious to see theatre brought down to the level of the average person, whatever that may be. Going to the ballet ought not necessarily entail the wearing of a black tie and tails by a man and the wearing of a long dress and ghastly white gloves by a woman. This is just passé. People should be able to wear what they like. If a person wants to wear jeans and a T-shirt when he attends the ballet, that is fine by me.

I should like to see cultural activities in Queensland, particularly in Brisbane, become what they are in London, where there are just so many places to go and so many theatres to attend, all reasonably priced, that the mind boggles. Take, for example, the ballet Coppelia. It will be played in Queensland at the end of March by the Queensland Ballet Company. At such a production in London the audience would be about half male and half female, and their dress would be very casual and informal.

I hope that the trust will be able to make very simple by-laws. Item (e) under the heading “By-laws” reads—

“the conditions upon which any performance or any item or other part of any performance may be presented;”

I presume that means the trust will be given the right to decide whether or not certain groups can perform. I hope it will not make arbitrary decisions whereby a group of female African dancers, for example, could be forced to wear bras. I hope it will not indulge in such trivia. But I presume that could be entailed, as the powers are wide, and encompassing.

I congratulate the Minister, Mr. Creedy and the Education Department. I suppose that they need a pat on the back because the section of the Education Department that assists cultural groups is not publicised sufficiently by members of Parliament. We should go to our cultural groups and community organisations and tell them of the assistance that is available to them. We should try to stir the public conscience to get behind the Performing Arts Trust.

**Mr. PORTER** (Toowong) (5.41 p.m.): Probably I should have spoken on this Bill at the introductory stage but I was not quite alert enough. It is nice to know that we have people in this House who are deeply concerned about culture. Usually when aggressive people talk about their desire for better defence activities we refer to them as hawks. Obviously when we describe those who are advocating culture we should describe them as vultures for culture, and most of us could be so termed.

The trust set up by this Bill has considerable responsibilities. It will administer the new complex on the south bank of the river. Those of us who have taken the time to look at the plans and thought about what will be done in those buildings recognise that we will have something here for Queensland which will stand comparison with what is being done in other States, including the enormous, magnificent Sydney Opera House. While our buildings will not have the same opulent magnificence they will be fine buildings, which will do a great deal for the city, facing as they will the city proper from the southern bank of the river. We can be very proud of what has been started and what will eventually happen.

I have a small warning to sound. I hope that when these buildings are erected and the trust is functioning, the cultural complex does not become an exclusive club for the superior few with somewhat esoteric tastes, whether it be in the field of drama, dance or art. We simply must not ever allow ourselves to fall victims of the snob-culture doctrine whereby people believe that opera must be uplifting merely because it is opera or that odd forms of artistic presentation must be good because they are odd or difficult to understand.

I have always believed that the art field is very much like the Hans Christian Andersen story concerning the emperor's clothes in which con people suggested that the emperor was wearing such a magnificent suit

that something was wrong with people who could not see it. Everyone knew that the emperor had no clothes on but it took a child to say it. Critics in all the areas of art act in much the same way and try to persuade us that something is new, magnificent and superb, or of such transcendent beauty that only the initiated can understand it. Never believe that! Culture which has become a rare pinnacle of art is not culture at all. It belongs to the very few people who are making some sort of cult of it.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Do you think we could be persuaded into buying another "Blue Poles"?

**Mr. PORTER:** We would be up the pole if we ever fell for that one.

It has to be remembered that this cultural complex will need a subsidy to keep it going. If I remember rightly, the Sydney Opera House started with a Government subsidy of between \$3,000,000 and \$4,000,000. It is running at from \$6,000,000 to \$7,000,000 at present. So we have to expect that what is done in this complex will not be self-supporting. I imagine that we will be paying from taxpayers' money not less than \$1,000,000 to keep the complex operating.

It follows for me—and I hope that the trust will bear this sort of thing in mind—that if the taxpayer carries the venture, then the venture must be used in such a way that it tunes in on his wavelength. I am not suggesting that there should be a perpetual season of ABBA or anything like that; but certainly, being founded, built and carried along on his money, it should not be used to force-feed him with an alleged culture that only the eclectic few can understand. By that I am saying that we want plays that are not consistently sleazy and sordid and sexual. This applies to many forms of the modern dance, too. They seem to be aimed at the genitals rather than at the emotions.

When I was a young radio playwright, using this to eke out a somewhat precarious living, we were taught the importance of the catharsis of drama, that one should use the interplay of characters and the development of plot to arrive at a denouement, which meant a purge of the emotions—the catharsis of drama. I sometimes wonder whether the catharsis of drama has not just become another sort of manifestation of the orgasm. A tremendous number of plays are just plain dirty tripe. But the experts tell us

that these are good, that these are clever. Unfortunately, there are not enough of us around who are prepared to say that this is rubbish.

This is one of the reasons why there are so many requests for the State to rescue playhouses that have fallen on evil times. They have fallen on evil times, in the main, because they do not provide the sort of material—the performances—that people want to go and see. It is as simple as that. The same thing applies to movies also.

I make this very minor contribution, but also I want to make these points, in the hope that the trust, when it is established, will ensure that the magnificent set of buildings that we will have on the south bank will really do those things that will inculcate culture in all of us. I hope that they will manage to institute those activities which ensure that more and more people learn what good ballet is, what good opera is—perhaps, to start with, what good operetta is—what good plays are, and so on. I hope that workshop operations will be taken into the schools so that children will learn something and so that they will be given a sense of taste and a sense of form and balance for these various types of artistic productions. I repeat that culture is not just a matter of catering for the tastes of the few so-called sophisticated experts. It is a matter of ensuring that the liking for good art permeates through the whole of the community. This is an operation that has to start at the earliest age.

I wish the trust well. I certainly believe that what it will do and the place where it will operate will be a credit to this State for many years to come.

**Mr. DEAN** (Sandgate) (5.49 p.m.): Having had the opportunity of studying the Bill since it was printed last week, I find myself in accord with the honourable member for Rockhampton, who led the debate for the Opposition. We are quite happy with the Bill. There are, however, a few minor things that I wish to comment on as a reflection of my own personal feelings about it. Basically, the Bill is a good one and will certainly fulfil the purpose intended.

I do not agree with my colleague when he said that he thought it was a good idea to have a retiring age of 70 for the members of the trust. I have never subscribed to that theory and I never will. From time

to time we seek the assistance of people who are in their 70's. We seek guidance from their wisdom gained out of the great experience that they have gained over many years. I sometimes think it is stupid for our society to downgrade age. We are forgetting about wisdom and experience. We forget that if a person is healthy enough and mentally alert enough, he should be allowed to carry on for as long as he feels physically able. I am afraid that by bringing in provisions such as this one we are throwing aside some great experience and some great wisdom. That is my personal view.

One gentleman who comes to mind immediately is Sir Reginald McAllister. How often does the Government seek his assistance? He is only one of many such people in the community. I come into contact with him quite often in various organisations. Over many years this Government has made great use of Sir Reginald's great experience and great wisdom. Again that is my personal view, but I have held it for many years.

Another small point in the Bill concerns the representation on the trust. I do not offer this as severe criticism. The Bill is a good one and I am not criticising it. I feel that the representation could be a little more specific. It could be spelt out more clearly that there should be representatives of painting, opera and various forms of music such as choral work, and brass and concert bands.

I compliment Mr. Creedy and his staff. I was very pleased to hear the honourable member for Salisbury mention the Cultural Diary, which forms part of our culture. It gives a comprehensive run-down and wide coverage of forthcoming cultural events throughout Queensland. It is a very welcome addition relative to our cultural activities.

I find myself in disagreement with the honourable member for Salisbury on her statement that Australians lack culture. I hope she meant some Australians. I do not think that she meant that all Australians lacked culture. The Australians who are most lacking in that regard are public representatives. I attend many concerts and presentations because I spend the greater part of my private life in the musical and cultural world. I am amazed at the absence of many public representatives, even those who might have received complimentary tickets. Over the past 12 months the honourable member for Wavell is the only honourable member I have seen at any concerts. He and his wife attend some concerts in the



city. If we are to brand people for lacking in culture, I think we should start close to home.

As I mentioned at the introductory stage, we should remember that many people in our community kept the flag flying for many years. The Minister's portfolio brings this home to him. He comes into contact with the public-spirited people in the community. They are not always paid for their services; they give them freely. This applies in the musical and drama fields and especially in the training of young people. I hope and feel sure that the trust will pay due regard and give high priority to the training of young people in our community. It will be complementary to the conservatorium and will be of great assistance to the Australian Broadcasting Commission, which has played a very important role in our cultural life.

In conjunction with my colleagues on this side of the House, I support the Bill fully. I feel that Government members will also support it because it will enhance the cultural life of our city. It will bring great prestige to Queensland generally and not only to Brisbane, which is the capital of the State.

One of the most important functions of the centre will be to help many of our young talented people from the far-flung parts of Queensland. Talent does not reside only in Brisbane as you, Mr. Acting Speaker, well know. Many talented young people come from the North and the West and do great credit to themselves and Queensland. I am very happy about the setting up of the Queensland Performing Arts Trust.

**Mrs. KIPPIN** (Mourilyan) (5.55 p.m.): Naturally I think that for metropolitan members and their constituents the setting up of the trust and the formation of the whole cultural complex in South Brisbane will be marvellous. I hope that country people, particularly schoolchildren, will take every opportunity to make use of these facilities when they come to Brisbane.

**A Government Member:** They will.

**Mrs. KIPPIN:** I am sure they will because the project has received a considerable amount of publicity. Despite what has been said in the House about the lack of publicity about cultural activities in Queensland, knowledge of them is widening. Through the school music programme schoolchildren are being made more aware of the joys of not only listening to music but playing it. I think that the Cultural Centre will become

one of the main attractions for young people when they visit Brisbane.

However, the Bill confers very wide powers and one part that concerns me is section 16, which deals with the objects of the trust. It reads—

“The objects of the Trust are—

- (a) to produce, present and manage the performing arts in the building occupied by the Trust at the Queensland Cultural Centre as defined in the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust Act 1976 or any other building;”.

The words “or any other building” are of particular concern to me. I know they have been included so that the trust can encompass other performing arts centres should occasion to do so arise. I would, however, hate to see that section used as a lever by the trust to take over and control performing arts in other centres throughout the State. I know that that is not the Minister's intention as I have discussed it with him and he has given me an assurance on this point. But he will not always be the Minister for Cultural Activities and we know that the personnel of the trust will change from time to time. That is why I am disturbed. We have the Minister's assurance and we will now have to keep a very careful eye on this sort of thing.

I am particularly concerned because there is in Innisfail the North Queensland Conservatorium. It is funded directly through the Minister's Department of Cultural Activities and this system has worked very well. We co-operate and work very well with all other arts and crafts in the State; we share in visits by artists and we pride ourselves that we run a very good programme throughout the whole year. In fact, Innisfail features prominently in the list of activities in the Cultural Diary that has already been mentioned by the honourable member for Salisbury. This conservatorium has become established as one of the cultural centres of the North. I have already mentioned the school music programme. It is doing a great deal in the training of musicians which will allow us eventually to set up and establish our own orchestras. We have a North Queensland Sinfonietta. This is a group of young people centred on the conservatorium and they have brought joy to many people over the last couple of years.

The fact that there is a conservatorium in Innisfail makes it easier to attract musicians to the district so that some really talented

artists are available to teach our children. In a centre so far from Brisbane, that is most important. Innisfail has become a musical centre for all North Queensland and people travel from Cairns, the Atherton Tableland and Townsville to Innisfail to combine in orchestras and for ballet and opera performances. Our opera season has become particularly famous. I spoke about it in the House last year.

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

**Mrs. KIPPIN:** In closing I would like, as other members have done, to thank Mr. Creedy for the interest that he has shown in my area. He takes a very active and personal interest in the North Queensland Conservatorium and in our other cultural activities, and also in our endeavours to attract to the North noteworthy artists, and I am sure he plays a big part in seeing that we get the right people. I am not happy with clause 16 (a) of the Bill, which is drafted too loosely for my liking. However, I am sure that the Minister will give me an assurance that my fears are without foundation.

**Mr. Burns:** What are your fears?

**Mrs. KIPPIN:** The Leader of the Opposition has heard what I have said—that I do not want to see the Queensland Performing Arts Trust extend its activities into country areas and take over our performing arts centres.

**Mr. Burns:** That is not the intention.

**Mrs. KIPPIN:** No, it is definitely not the intention of the Bill but, as I said, I feel that this clause is very loosely drafted, and that is what concerns me.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (7.17 p.m.): This is a Bill dealing with what the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities is pleased to call the performing arts. I have no doubt that one or two members have touched on what they are pleased to call culture. I would like any one of them from the Minister down, and he would probably know as much as any of the speakers, to tell me just what is culture. What do they consider to be cultural?

I have knocked around the ridges for quite a long time and I have seen many fine examples of what I consider to be culture and the performing arts. I have seen men like Ned Porter and Nigger Telfer, the

greatest prestidigitators this State has even known. Anyone who has seen either of those gentlemen or people in the same category or the same, shall we say, grouping playing with a thimble and pea or doing the three-card trick would consider that nothing could be better than that, nothing could be more cultural, nothing could be more artistic and nothing could be more graceful. Yet that is not considered to be culture.

People go along to various places and look at hideous daubs that are classed as paintings or some other things that an old broken-down goanna would not drink out of described as cultural pottery. They look at other things that look like nothing on earth—something between a broken-down race-horse and a pachyderm—but are termed sculpture. Whether an object is described as art or culture depends entirely on the taste of the person viewing it. This Bill deals with the performing arts. There again we run into all sorts of peculiar opinions and an amazing diversity of opinions, too. If someone goes along to hear opera, he is supposed to be steeped in culture. Anyone who is interested enough to find out about opera will find, as I have found, that opera is perhaps the most pornographic work that has even been written.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** That's why I like it.

**Mr. AIKENS:** That is why they like it, and that is why the snobs go to it. That is why they put on the long dresses, the black coats and the bow ties.

One of the most famous operas of all, Verdi's *Rigoletto*, has in it murder, rape, fornication, adultery, sodomy, treachery—anything at all goes—and it is the same with all the operas. Read the stories of them and you would not get worse in some of the paperbacks that people buy in bookshops down in the Valley or elsewhere where they are alleged to be circulated. I have never known of an opera written about a clean, decent subject. There is usually seduction. As a matter of fact, seduction is the main theme of any opera.

**Mrs. Kyburz:** What is wrong about it?

**Mr. AIKENS:** If that was the honourable member for Mourilyan and she asked me what is wrong with seduction, I would say, "Well, it depends entirely on who is going to be the seducer and who is going to be the seduced."

**Mr. Tenni:** It was not the honourable member for Mourilyan.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Then it was the honourable member for Salisbury. It is a very pertinent question, coming from such an attractive and desirable young woman. What is wrong with seduction? There is nothing wrong with seduction. My only regret is that the remorseless passage of the years more or less cramps my style.

If an opera is staged, the fouler it is, the more fornication, murder and sodomy there is in it, of course, the more highly regarded it is among the upstart people. The difference between an opera and an operetta is that in an opera every word is sung and in an operetta some of the words are spoken. Whether you can understand them or not does not matter, but that is the difference between culture and non-culture, apparently. Some of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, some of the musical comedies such as *The Student Prince* and *Oklahoma*, are wonderful to listen to. Everyone enjoys them; I do not know of anyone who does not. But no-one goes along to see *The Student Prince*, *Oklahoma* or *The Pyjama Game* dressed in white tie and tails—in a monkey suit—looking like a waiter in a high-class Greek cafe. They go along in their ordinary clothes. But when the opera comes, it is entirely different. The red carpet goes out, the posies, the boxes of chocolates, and so on, are handed round, and that is culture.

I do not know what the trust is going to do. Let us hope that it is not going to hand out money willy-nilly on the same basis as it was handed out, left, right and centre, by that peerless personification of culture Arthur Creedy. The fouler the smuttier, the more stupid the play, the more undignified the presentation of anything, the more Creedy regarded it as a wonderful example of culture. I hope that the trust that is to be set up under the Bill does not have the same viewpoint.

I know a little about politics—very little, I will admit—but I am proud to say that I do know something about music, and I have been along to some of the big musical shows that are supposed to be steeped in culture. One night I went to hear a violinist that the A.B.C. had brought out with a great banging of drums and clashing of cymbals. Money is no object as far as the A.B.C. is concerned, of course. He was an infant prodigy, although he was no infant. He was 15 years of age and physically as

big as the honourable member for Archerfield, though he didn't look as well. He played, and the crowd, because they were told it was cultural, because they were told that this was high-class music, nearly clapped their hands off.

I was sitting with a member of the medical profession, a man who knew a great deal about music. He said to me, "Tom, I don't know much about music but there is something wrong with that playing. What is it?" I said, "The only thing wrong with it is that he is playing too many wrong notes. As a matter of fact he plays more wrong notes than right notes." They jarred on my ear. That violinist was applauded, and the next morning "The Courier-Mail" lauded his performance. If he had been an old battler who played the mouth organ particularly well, he would not have got into the City Hall; no-one would have let him in.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** I ask the honourable member to come back to the principles of the Bill.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Perish the thought that I should deviate one hair's breadth from the principles of the Bill.

As this is a Bill dealing with the performing arts, let us ask ourselves: what is art and what is not art? Is interpretation to be given by Mr. Creedy.

I would say that one of the finest arts that can be performed is choral singing, particularly a really well-balanced choir of any number from 40 to 100 with sopranos, tenors, bases and altos, backed by a good accompanist or orchestra. It is very enjoyable if they render something from Tannhauser or any of the music from Sir Edward Elgar. Indeed there are dozens and dozens of things they can sing. Of course, according to Mr. Creedy that is not culture. But if some half-witted, long-haired, tick-whiskered drunk tries to play something on the piano that nobody understands, as long as it is something from one of the accepted composers, according to Mr. Creedy that is culture, that is, as long as the right type of people are there to listen to it.

It is about time we put an end to all this stupid business. It is about time we laid down some simple rules as to what is culture and what is not culture—not in the opinion of the Creedys of Queensland but in the opinion of the ordinary, average citizens of Queensland, for instance, the members of this House, because they represent a good

cross-section of the people. I know very well that if the 82 members of this House went along to some of the shows that are advertised and paraded as cultural performing arts, they would walk out. If they had anything in their hand they would throw it on the stage before they left.

Let us try to get down to tin-tacks. It is like the argument we had the other day about the law, when judges ruled that such and such a thing was not such as would bring on the head of the perpetrator a prison sentence. Of course, they went on to say that there were some crimes, which even though committed by first offenders—

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. AIKENS:** Merely an analogy.

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** The analogy is not acceptable to the Chair.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Over at the Boggo Road gaol there is a very fine theatre. I have been to it. I have no doubt that under the present permissive system many of the prisoners turn on good performances. I do not know what the Whisky Au-Go-Go murderers sing, but I know that there were three female lecturers from the Queensland university who used to make regular visits to the prison. They were regarded as quite nice people until Stewie Kerr, who was then the Comptroller-General of Prisons—

**Mr. ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! I must ask the honourable member to respect the second-reading rules of the House.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I accept your rebuke. It is always very welcome because I like to be put on the line if I am wandering off it.

Let us end all this slobbering, sickening malarkey. Let us end all this dissimulation and casuistry. It is all very well to read in the Press and hear over the radio and on television that the Queensland Parliament passed a Bill to set up a trust fund to encourage the performing arts. But the people will want to know what I want to know; what performing arts are to be encouraged? On what performing arts will the people's money be spent? Will it be spent on some of the things that would turn our stomach sour to look at or hear?

I know that I cannot embarrass the Chair and that is the last thing I would want to do, but how often have you, Mr. Acting Speaker, gone to an alleged cultural performing arts exhibition and come away from it wondering what you were listening to? Yet

all the snobs and all those who purport to know something about the performing arts come out with their faces beaming and eyes glistening because they have been listening to something that they were told by someone else was performing arts.

When people attend a performing arts show far too many of them, unfortunately, listen with their eyes instead of their ears. They see the pianist, for instance, waving his hands like a praying mantis, and bashing the keyboard here and there, and they see a violinist giving an exhibition of digital dexterity with his bow on the violin strings. But that is all that happens. They do not hear the performance. They do not know whether the artist is playing music or something less than music.

We hear quite a lot about the performing arts and Aboriginal culture. What is Aboriginal culture? It is the artefacts or the corroboree dances, some of which are very tuneful? During corroborees some of the Aborigines sing a damn sight better than some of our opera singers. We must put an end to this. I know that we have quite a number of snobs in this House, a couple of whom are not far away from me now. They like to run with the snobs and go to shows such as the one I saw at the opening of the Schonell Theatre. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition was there at the time. It was one of the occasions on which I was prevailed upon to wear a black coat and tie. We saw a wonderful example of the performing arts! It had to be artistic and cultural according to Mr. Creedy because the university was staging it. If a gang of boilermakers or wharf lumpers had performed it, they would have been pinched. Incidentally, during the show each member of the 40-piece orchestra played his own tune, without any score. The musicians played their various instruments as they thought they should be played. Talk about a hideous cacophony! I have never heard anything like it.

I did not go to the final performance of this show but I understand that it took place about three weeks or a month later. I am not quite sure whether the honourable member for Bulimba attended.

I will say that none of the men and women players were dressed indecorously. They wore some sort of half-baked Grecian costumes. It is on record that in the final act, with the Schonell Theatre packed to

the footlights, the male members (there were about 20 of them) walked to the footlights and dropped their pants and stood there stark naked from the waist down. I want to know whether that sort of display will be covered by the legislation and whether the trust will dole out money for it. One lady said to me, "In my day men would have been ashamed to show those little blue-headed things." That is an example of the performing arts!

Let us end this stinking, slobbering, sickening snobbery. If we are to subsidise performing arts by establishing a trust fund to ladle out money to them, let us ensure that the arts are worth while seeing and listening to. If the Bill provides for that, I will support it, although my quick glance at it assures me that it does not, because this legislation has been sold to the Government and the Minister, who has all the good intentions in the world, but the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We have been loaded with this Bill which, when it becomes an Act of Parliament, will perpetuate all the stinking, slobbering, narrow-minded, introverted snobbery that has passed for performing arts down through the years.

**Mr. Lindsay:** I think you've got something there, Tom.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Of course I've got something. I am speaking, as I always do, from the viewpoint of the ordinary, sensible, average man and woman. I am not a poofster from the university, nor am I a queer from down at the fig tree in Eagle Street; I am just an ordinary, average, knock-about fellow—no better, no worse than the average man. As one who has been elected to ensure that the people's money is not misspent and that the people are not led up the garden path by these high-sounding phrases, I think it is about time that we put the peg in right now.

I suppose the Government is going to run on with this Bill; nevertheless, during the Committee stage we have plenty of time to amend it. I feel sure that, at some time after this Bill has been enacted and after it is found that the trust is ladling out our money in a way that we think it should not be ladled out, public opinion will force an amendment to the Act.

The honourable member for Mourilyan said a few words just before I stood up to speak. She could give this House a very fine example of what can be done by ordinary, average persons who have some musical

talent and who have the dedication to do for the people what the people want them to do. Up in the little town of Innisfail the people have, by sheer persistent effort and assistance from this Government, built a conservatorium of music. It is a tribute and a credit to them and also to the whole area. Various local firms and people made themselves responsible for furnishing the rooms. Every year, for a period extending over about a fortnight or three weeks, they stage an opera—one of the same old operas that I talked about. But at least the operas are not staged by great big, obese, egregious, waddling prima donnas with voices like a cracked cockatoo; nor are they staged by great big, beefy Italian tenors with whiskers right round their ears. They are staged by ordinary, decent North Queenslanders. A few good artists are brought up from the South. Those productions are well worth listening to. On one occasion I went along when Mr. Creedy was there. All he did was tell funny stories to a lady sitting next to him, until I very vociferously objected to it. I told him that I went up there to see and listen to "Carmen"; that I did not go there to listen to blue stories.

We have to guard against being carried away. The average person, I suppose, has a trace of snobbery in him and he allows himself to be carried away with all these high-sounding phrases about performing arts, cultural exhibitions and so on. Let us have an end to it. Let us get right down to what the people of this State—the ordinary, average people of this State—really need and let us give them what they need.

**Mr. LESTER (Belyando) (7.38 p.m.):** I would like to support this Bill. In doing so, I again state that a cultural centre in Queensland is very much needed. Even if we do not equal the centre in South Australia, the Myer Music Bowl in Melbourne or the Opera House in Sydney, we do need a centre for the performing arts in Queensland, or we will be left behind.

**Mr. Moore:** Never leave your mates behind.

**Mr. LESTER:** I wish to raise a few points that I consider to be important; but might I suggest that the culture of some members of Parliament could well be done without at the present stage. If they had any decency, they would allow me to talk and put forward my point of view. After all, that is what culture is all about.

This centre is going to cost us an enormous amount of money.

**An Honourable Member:** \$94,000,000.

**Mr. LESTER:** It will probably be more than \$94,000,000. Let us not argue about the cost. It will be a huge sum. I do hope that the members of the trust will not get carried away with all the developments here in Brisbane and forget about the country areas. I point out that we are getting a pretty good deal in country areas. Performing art shows come through country towns continually. We will remember Uncle Bill's Bicycle Band and, more recently, the Great Australian Pub Show. The Bicycle Band was so popular in the Central Highlands that it could not appear at the Civic Centre in Emerald; it appeared at the racecourse, where a special stage was built for the performance. Just about all of the adults and children of Emerald were there. They had a picnic tea and enjoyed that wonderful experience. Similarly the Great Australian Pub Show was a great success.

Every country schoolchild has the opportunity to see these shows as they come through the towns. I pay tribute to the people who travel all over Queensland to entertain us in the bush. When country people come to Brisbane, we want them to be educated and be able to appreciate the shows at the Cultural Centre. The only way they can do this is by being able to go along to see the art shows throughout the country areas. I hope that when the trust comes into being it does not have budgetary problems, which would be to the detriment of the country people.

We have our own theatres in the country areas, and I instance the Emerald Little Theatre. Not long ago one of its performances was attended by a Cabinet Minister—the very cultured Minister for Local Government and Main Roads (Mr. Hinze). It would have been noticed, since his return from the country and seeing that performance, how much more polite he has been. Clermont has the Myalla Little Theatre comprising, as the honourable member for Townsville South said, ordinary decent people performing on the stage and providing entertainment for the people. Again I would not like to see the loss of the help given to these people.

The honourable member for Toowong said that the Cultural Centre can expand its activities and go into the schools. As often comes

from that honourable member, that is very sound thinking. I hope that the Cultural Centre does not forget our country schools. History discloses the large number of important people who have come from country schools. They include Dame Nellie Melba and Sir Robert Menzies.

**Mr. Aikens** interjected.

**Mr. LESTER:** As the honourable member says, Gladys Moncrieff as well.

I should appreciate serious consideration being given to one aspect of the Bill—the age limit of 70 years for membership of the trust. I cannot see any fair reason for this. In this House one of the most brilliant members is about 82 years of age and, although I do not know his age, I understand that another member is well over 70 years of age. For the life of me I cannot see how anyone could argue that these are not important and good men. During the next election campaign we will be saying how good they are, yet in this Bill we are contradicting ourselves by precluding people from being trust members once they reach the age of 70 years. Isn't it reasonable to presume that important business people might retire at the age of 68 or 69 years and look for something to do in the community? I suggest that if such people have the necessary ability they should at least be given the opportunity to apply to serve on the trust. I would appreciate it if the Minister and this House would not limit appointment to the trust to people in the under 70 years of age bracket. I am quite sure that a lot of talent will be missed if we allow what I see as an injustice to remain in the legislation. The Minister could well remove that restriction.

**Dr. Lockwood:** They will still be able to perform; it is just that they will not be able to take part in its direction.

**Mr. LESTER:** I have tried hard to put forward some views on the cultural activities of country people and, indeed, people in general. It disappoints me a little that here in the highest tribunal in the land we cannot have intelligent interjections. Some that have been made in this debate have been most unintelligent. In fact, you have been very lenient, Mr. Acting Speaker, in allowing some members to ramble on as they have done. However, I appreciate being able to put forward the point of view of those who are interested in better cultural activities for every Queenslander, young, old and in between.

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (7.47 p.m.), in reply: From what has been said during this debate it is obvious that all members are in agreement with what is intended in the Bill, namely, the setting up of the Queensland Performing Arts Trust. Some members have sought assurances and perhaps I should do them the courtesy of replying to them and giving them those assurances.

The honourable member for Rockhampton raised the matter of the constitution of the trust. I think it will be agreed that there should be a representative of my department on the trust. Experience has also shown that the trust must include representatives of the arts and also people with business acumen. If the conduct of activities of this type were left entirely to people with a knowledge only of the arts, they would soon get into difficulties, as has been the case in the past, because their speciality is art rather than business.

**Mr. Aikens:** Can you define "arts"?

**Mr. BIRD:** I shall reply to the honourable member a little later. Such people may know a lot about the arts but unfortunately they are not businessmen. There must, of course, be representatives of the arts, but at this stage I do not propose to say what sort of people they will be. I believe they should be people with knowledge of the arts generally rather than one specific branch of art. There must also be business people because it will be necessary to keep a tight rein on the finances of the centre and the financing of any other activities that may be undertaken by the trust. The trust could not be composed entirely of business people because, with a lack of knowledge of the arts among trust members, the whole project would similarly get into difficulties. I believe there will be a very reasonable balance of arts and business knowledge on the trust.

I think it was also the honourable member for Rockhampton who asked about allowances. They are determined by the Public Service Board. They are in categories and they are already available. There is no problem there. I appreciate, too, his observation that many suitable people would probably be prepared to give their time voluntarily to the trust because of their interest in the arts and culture. Nevertheless the allowances are determined and they can be paid to those who are prepared to come forward and give their services.

The honourable member for Salisbury mentioned the value of the assistance that has already been given by the Government to the arts and to cultural organisations throughout the State. I believe that Queensland can indeed hold its head up and be justifiably proud of what it has done to foster the arts and various cultural organisations throughout the State. The honourable member also said that she appreciates that there is now an awakening to the value of culture and the arts.

Some members asked about the definition of culture and the arts. We must admit that here in Australia we do not have what we could call our own arts and culture. Most of these have been brought to us by people from other nations. We were sadly lacking in knowledge of culture and the arts for a long time, but now there is this awakening to the true value of these things by people from all walks of life.

It is true, as I said, that many small centres throughout the State have been assisted and the arts have been fostered. I have travelled very widely since I took over the portfolio of Education and Cultural Activities and the types of things that are being done in centres all over this State—from very small centres up to our provincial cities—have absolutely amazed me.

The honourable member for Mourilyan spoke about the Innisfail Conservatorium of Music. What is being done there shows the tremendous interest of the people in that area, and it shows what can be done by people in Far North Queensland. There is no doubt that the same thing can be done in other parts of this State if the same types of people like to come forward and foster them.

**Mr. Aikens:** We had a pretty raw deal under Alan Fletcher.

**Mr. BIRD:** I can give the honourable member my assurance that I will look at any request that comes forward and judge it on its merits. Those organisations that deserve something may be sure that assistance will be forthcoming.

I think it was the honourable member for Salisbury who sought an assurance that the trust would act in a responsible manner with respect to dress and admission charges to performances. I am sure that they will. I am sure that they will cater for all tastes and will ensure that there is a type of performance or a type of art that will meet the requirements of people from all walks of life. I have no doubt that they will ensure that there is provision for opera, operettas, musical comedy, pop groups for the young people—

**Mr. Aikens:** What about choral societies?

**Mr. BIRD:** Choral societies, and all those other organisations. The trust will ensure that tastes of all people are catered for. I am sure that they will also take into account the types of people who will be attending those performances and will make allowances for dress. After all, I do not think anybody would expect the youth of this State to attend a pop concert dressed in black coat and black tie. I am sure that a different type of dress will be acceptable on those occasions, and I am sure that the trust will also take into account the rate of charges to be imposed for those performances.

The honourable member for Toowong expressed concern that the centre may become an exclusive club. I have no doubt whatsoever that the members of the trust will ensure that this does not occur. As I said before, I am sure they will realise their responsibilities and ensure that there are performances which meet the requirements and the tastes of everybody.

The honourable member said he expected that it will be necessary to continue subsidising the centre. I doubt whether there would be anywhere in Australia, and possibly anywhere in the world, a centre of this type that does not require subsidy. But should we condemn it because of that? I do not think it was the intention of the honourable member for Toowong to condemn it. I think he wanted some assurance that, provided it is doing those things that we hope it will do, it will receive subsidy. I certainly hope that it will, and the honourable member may be assured that I shall do everything I can to ensure that, provided it is run in a business-like manner, it is catering for the needs of the public in the cultural and artistic field and it is spending its money wisely and well, it will continue to receive subsidy from my department.

**Mr. Aikens:** And I hope there will be no musical snobbery attached to it.

**Mr. BIRD:** I sincerely hope that there will be no snobbery attached to the activities that will be carried out in the Cultural Centre. As I said before, I am sure that those who want to attend an opera will attend an opera, those who prefer operettas will attend operettas and those who prefer other types of cultural activities and arts will attend whatever appeals to them.

The honourable member for Sandgate expressed concern about members being retired at the age of 70 years. I think that that provision should be in the Bill, because how often do we see people go beyond the age at which they are able to carry out their duties and a board saying, because of its sympathetic approach, "Poor old Bill; he is well and truly beyond it. He is senile, but he has given great service over the years and we could not possibly stand him down now."? But if an organisation thinks that a particular person still has much to offer although he has reached the age of 70 years, I believe that it should be prepared to put forward a case and that favourable consideration should be given to his carrying on beyond the age of 70.

**Mr. Burns:** Did not your party oppose this morning the 70 years retirement provision for judges?

**Mr. BIRD:** I haven't any idea. That has nothing to do with the Bill. I am giving the honourable gentleman my impression of what I think should be considered. However, I believe that the Bill should have written into it a provision for retirement at 70 years of age.

**Mr. Moore: Why?**

**Mr. BIRD:** To provide a safeguard for an organisation that does not like to say to somebody who has served it faithfully and well that he should indeed be retired.

The honourable member for Sandgate also expressed his appreciation of the work done over the years by the Director of Cultural Activities and by the Department of Cultural Activities.

I applaud those who have given their time in the past to train performers and to provide venues for performers. I wonder whether we would have had anything in this State in the field of performing arts or culture had those people not come forward and voluntarily given of their time to train performers and to ensure that venues were provided. Today, of course, they receive financial assistance, and that is an additional incentive to them. I should say that today many people would be prepared to work without any thought of payment or assistance and to continue to do these things, but I am proud that we now give as much assistance as we can to those who deserve it.

The honourable member for Mourilyan supported the concept of the complex in South Brisbane. She appreciates the value it will be not only to Brisbane but also to the whole of the State. As I said at the introductory stage, it will give a home to our cultural and artistic groups. She expressed concern about clause 16 (a). I wonder whether she was referring to clause 17 (2) (a) when she expressed concern that the trust may endeavour to take over other bodies and the buildings etc. they have. She may have been referring to that part of the clause which states "or any other person or body with a view to obtaining the right to occupy and use premises temporarily or permanently". That has been included to ensure that the trust can arrange for various performing bodies to perform in various places throughout the State. It must be given the right to occupy premises at least temporarily.

There may be times in the future when organisations find themselves in difficulties so that there is a need for the trust to take over those organisations and their assets. If we do not make such provision, an organisation might find itself in difficulties and an amendment to the Act might be required at a time when Parliament is in recess. By the time Parliament resumed and an amendment was passed, it might be far too late to assist the organisation. Therefore it is necessary to have that provision included in the Bill. I have no fears about it myself. I can imagine the public outcry there would be if the trust endeavoured to take over the assets and everything else of an organisation that did not want to be taken over. The public outcry would be so great that the trust would soon back off. I do not think the honourable member



need have any fears about that at all. I believe it is necessary to have that provision included so that if an organisation does get into difficulties the trust can come to its rescue very quickly.

The honourable member for Townsville South asked for definitions of "culture" and "art". I suppose that each and every one of us would have different views. We can say roughly what culture is and what art is, but every person asked might have a different answer. We all have different tastes. I would be the first to admit that what appeals to some certainly may not appeal to others. Some things certainly do not appeal to me although they are regarded as art and culture by others. Those people have a right to decide what they regard as art and what they regard as culture. We hope that the needs and tastes of those people will be met by the trust. I certainly hope that if the trust tries to cater for the tastes of a minority group with certain performances it allows to go on, and they prove to be dismally unsuccessful, the trust will learn a lesson very quickly and realise that that is not what the public requires and ensure that that type of performance is not put on again in the centre.

I do not think that any of us should try to define for another person what is regarded as culture and what is regarded as art. The people themselves have their own definitions and they will decide for themselves. I certainly have no fear about what will be accomplished by the Performing Arts Trust, and about what it will do not only in the Cultural Centre on the south bank of the river but in the schools and for the people right throughout country areas.

The honourable member for Belyando told us how pleased he was with the assistance that had been given to country centres. It is obvious from his comments that he takes a very close interest in many of the cultural activities in his electorate and, indeed, is involved in them. He has seen what can be done by people who are assisted by the Government and my Cultural Activities Department. He expressed the hope that the trust will not forget country areas and the schools. I am sure that once the trust settles in, it will give even greater assistance to country areas than has been given in the past. He referred to the 70-year age limit. As I said, I firmly believe that that provision should be in the Bill. If it is considered at any time in the future that a person is well and truly capable of carrying on beyond the age of 70, I believe that the organisation should put forward a case to be considered.

Motion (Mr. Bird) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

#### Clause 6—Membership of Trust—

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (8.8 p.m.): During the second-reading debate the Minister made some points about the position of the trust itself and said that its members will not always be persons involved in the performing arts. I agree with that. There is room for people with expertise in the business field to ensure proper financial management. I also believe that there should be representation of the Brisbane City Council. I ask the Minister to consider this matter and give an undertaking that he is at least prepared to invite someone from the Brisbane City Council to play a part. That is done in South Australia. If the Brisbane City Council was represented there would be not only co-ordination of the city's activities but also the necessary liaison with the city council itself. Whenever local authorities in country areas are involved in cultural centres, they are usually deeply involved and quite often they control them through the chairmanship of the mayor. An important part can be played by local authorities in this way. I ask the Minister to consider that point. I do not think that one member out of nine is too much to ask for.

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (8.9 p.m.): It would be more important for the city council to be represented on the Cultural Centre Trust. This provision deals mainly with the performing arts and what will be done over there, but I shall certainly give the matter consideration.

**Mr. DEAN** (Sandgate) (8.10 p.m.): I am referring to clause 6 (b). As I said earlier, I think it should be a little more specific in its application. It says—

"not less than four of the other members shall be persons who are knowledgeable and experienced in the performing arts."

Again it comes back to an interpretation of what constitutes a performing art. I think that should be spelt out a little more clearly. I will not go into the detail that I went into at the second-reading stage as to the different sections of the performing arts that I think should come within that category.

At some time in the future, after a Bill becomes law, we sometimes find that it has a particular weakness and we seek to amend it. That is the reason for a good proportion of amending legislation. That is my only comment. I have no other criticism of it. I do not think the term is broad enough to allow interpretation of the performing arts. If the Minister mixed among the people as I do, he would hear their different ideas on how they would restrict what is constituted

by the term "performing arts". It is amazing. I sometimes think that, in legislation such as this, these terms should be spelt out a little more clearly.

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (8.11 p.m.): There are, as the honourable member knows, very many groups who would consider themselves as coming within the term "performing arts". It would be very dangerous to try to list them all here this evening, for, if I missed some out, they would say, "The Minister does not regard us as belonging to the performing arts." The opera groups, musical groups and others of that type can be regarded as coming within the category "performing arts". It is obvious that the potters and others do not come within that category. Rather are they in the crafts. I do not think we should endeavour to spell them out. As I said earlier, what we need to do is to get the right type of person rather than the performing art that he represents.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (8.12 p.m.): Clause 6, of course, is the one that sets down the age limit of 70 years for members of the trust. I know that in general terms there is something to be said for the remarks made by the Minister for Education, and particularly his qualification of them in which he places the onus on the organisation to prove that a person is still mentally and physically competent to carry on a position on the trust. I really think that there should be something in the Bill to lay that down.

I am not breaking a lance for myself by saying that I am over 70 years of age, and yet I think I am just as well and hale and hearty, physically and mentally, as the majority of members in this Chamber. I think that I would bear favourable comparison with the Minister himself in either of those respects.

I would like to point out to him that there is a very old and wise saying that age is not a matter of how old you are but how you are old. For instance, if Churchill had had the 70-year restriction placed on him, we probably would not have won World War II.

If the Minister knew as much about art and culture as I hope he finishes up knowing, he would know that some of the greatest works of art—some of the greatest paintings that hang on the walls of the greatest galleries in the world—were painted by octogenarians and nonagenarians—for instance, Titian, Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. I think Titian was in his 90s when he painted some of his masterpieces. So it was with other men. How old was Verdi, the man who composed the greatest operas of all time? Verdi was an octogenarian when he was still at the peak of his composing powers. Yet, if those men were in Queensland today and wanted to become members of this trust, they would be barred from doing so unless the organisation that

sponsored them went along to the trust or to the Minister and put up a special case for them to be members on the trust. I think it should be the other way about. Anyone should be eligible for membership of the trust unless it can be shown by the trust itself that he is not mentally or physically capable of carrying out his duties.

I have always been virulently opposed, even when in the Railway Department, to laying down hard and fast rules based on chronology—the number of years a man has lived—because some men live for a long time and are still hale and hearty. When all is said and done, many men are old at 40 or 45 years of age. They are aged and decrepit, have given up the ghost and are broken physically and mentally. On the other hand, many nonagenarians are capable men. There are men such as the honourable members for Rockhampton and Cairns who are old in years but still virile and young in physique and mentality.

I can tell this story about the Premier because I know he is regarded highly by almost everyone in the community. The other day a very fine old lady said to me, "We hear a lot from Mr. Bjelke-Petersen. How old is he?" I said, "He is a sexagenarian." She said, "At his age he ought to be ashamed of himself."

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Row): Order! I hope that the honourable member will return to the clause.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I told that story because the Premier is almost 70 years of age and who would say that he is beyond his powers? Who would say that he could not sit on this trust? The Leader of the Opposition is not as old in years as the Premier but, compared with the Premier physically and mentally, he is the epitome of decrepitude.

I think something should be written into the Bill to place the onus on the trust to hold a man out rather than place the onus on the man to get onto the trust.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 15, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 16—Objects of Trust—

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (8.18 p.m.): When I suggested local authority representation, the Minister said it could be covered by the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust Act. It seems, on a reading of sections 21 and 22 of the Act, that there is a great overlap and it should be looked at very carefully. Clause 16 (d) of the Bill reads—

"to provide or assist in providing premises and equipment for the purpose of the presentation of the performing arts;

Section 21 of the Act I mentioned reads—

- “(a) to encourage and facilitate activities in artistic, scientific, cultural or performing arts throughout the State;
- “(b) to recommend to the Minister the buildings and other improvements that should be erected on the land and comprised in the Centre and the location of the buildings and improvements;
- “(c) subject to the rights, powers or duties granted to or imposed upon an occupant of any land, building or part thereof comprised in the Centre or any other Act, to control and maintain in good order and condition and to improve the Centre;”

Finally, (d) talks about the maintenance of the buildings.

Clause 16 of the Bill covers the promotion, encouragement and presentation of the performing arts. Who will be involved in the promotion and development of the performing arts? Will it be the board of the Queensland Cultural Centre or the Queensland Performing Arts Trust?

Section 22 (2) (a) reads—

“to make and carry out such contracts, agreements or arrangements as are in its opinion necessary or desirable to enable it to properly perform its functions and duties or any of them;”

Clause 17 (2) (a) of the Bill reads—

“to enter into leases, licences or other contracts with the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust as defined in the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust Act 1976 or any other person or body with a view to obtaining the right to occupy and use premises temporarily or permanently;”

Again there is an overlap and the Assembly should be told exactly who will be in charge.

There are two groups prompting cultural activities, there are two groups deciding who will be occupants of the premises, and there are two groups in the development of the arts. The Minister shakes his head to indicate the negative but I believe what I am saying to be so. Both sections are saying in effect, “We shall encourage, develop and promote the performing arts.” Admittedly the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust Act refers to the artistic, scientific, cultural and/or performing arts, but it still mentions the performing arts. So there is still this overlap and it needs clarification.

Another point that I believe needs clarification is the control that the trust will have over the new film industry. Surely if we are going to speak about presentation of the performing arts—I refer here to section 16 (e)—we are not only talking about the physical presentation on stage. Surely we must also be talking about the scientific approach such as the use of video tape today. Is there to be some control over the film industry that is expected to develop

in Queensland? I feel that there must be some sort of control over the performing arts. It becomes a matter of how far such control goes.

I therefore think that there should be some clarification of the way in which we are to overcome the overlap and how far the new board will have control of the presentation, development and promotion of the performing arts.

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (8.22 p.m.): I believe that the prime purpose of the Cultural Centre Trust is to provide the buildings and everything that goes with them. The Bill is to arrange for the performance of the various arts in that centre.

**Mr. Wright:** Section 21 (a) says clearly that it is to encourage and facilitate these activities.

**Mr. BIRD:** Yes, but the prime object of the Cultural Centre Trust is to provide that centre. Provisions were also included in the Bill to cover anything that the trust may find it necessary to conduct in the future. At this stage it is envisaged that the prime duty of the Cultural Centre Trust will be to provide the buildings. They will be not only the buildings of the Performing Arts Complex but also the State Library, the Art Gallery and the Museum. It will be responsible for them all.

If representation on the trust were given to the Brisbane City Council, surely every other local authority in this State would feel that it, too, was entitled to representation because the trust will foster art and culture over the length and breadth of the State. This is a matter to which I will give consideration, but I do not think it absolutely essential that the Brisbane City Council be represented on the Performing Arts Trust.

**Mr. Wright:** What about the film industry?

**Mr. BIRD:** At present that is only something that is being thought about.

**Mrs. KIPPIN** (Mourilyan) (8.24 p.m.): At the second-reading stage the Minister queried whether I should have been referring to clause 17 (2) (a). I should like to say that my reference was to clause 16 (a). I can see the purpose of clause 17 (2) (a). However, it is the words “or any other building” in clause 16 (a) that concern me. I should like to point out that in effecting take-overs the bureaucracy can often be very subtle. I can envisage one way in which a take-over of the North Queensland Conservatorium by the trust could be effected, that is, if the Cultural Activities Department could be persuaded to channel its funding through the trust rather than directly to the conservatorium. That would certainly be a very clever way of doing it. However, I am quite willing to accept the Minister's assurance that this is not the intention of the legislation. There is now a “Harbard”

record that this point has been taken and the situation will have to be watched very closely in the future.

Clause 16, as read, agreed to.

Clause 17—General powers of Trust—

**Mrs. KYBURZ** (Salisbury) (8.25 p.m.): I am particularly concerned about clause 17 (2) (g), which refers to the powers of the trust to publish works and to license their performance in any form. I do not believe that it should be the prerogative of a trust such as this to publish works. After all, the decisions which have to be made to enable any work to be published—I presume it refers to poetry and fiction and non-fiction prose—are too great for a trust, which is, after all, a trust appointed by this Government. In fact, I can see reason to be worried about political graft, for want of a better word, and gifts, favours and so on. Moreover, I just do not think it is the prerogative of the trust to make that sort of a decision. I am not sure what is meant by “to license their performance”. Does it mean that a performance may be given in other States and that we are going to have a copyright of a particular performance? If the members of a small theatre write their own plays, for example, will the trust then be able to publish the works and license their performance in other States? That is not very clear to me.

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (8.26 p.m.): The honourable member will see from clause 17 (2) (c) that the trust has the power to employ writers, composers, choreographers, designers, producers, directors, instructors, technical personnel and such other employees as it sees fit. If it is going to employ writers and composers, then it should have the right to publish the works that are prepared by those people and, indeed, to license the performance of works created by those people who are actually in its employ.

Clause 17, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 18 to 30, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 31—General fund—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (8.27 p.m.): I rise to speak to this clause because of what seems to be the open-ended commitment to the Cultural Centre and this Performing Arts Trust we are setting up. If we read the objects of the trust and its general powers, and listen to what members have said today in relation to clauses 16 and 17, the trust is going to be a grab-all and all-powerful body that can be involved in a tremendous number of activities. All that clause 31 says is—

“There shall be paid into the general fund all moneys appropriated by Parliament

in each year out of the consolidated revenue of the State for the purposes of and paid to the Trust.”

When we start to look at audits and accounts we find that all the Auditor-General has to do is check the books to see that they are in agreement with the books and accounts kept by the trust and in his opinion fairly set out the financial transactions of the trust for the financial year in question. He then gives the Minister a report which does not come to this Parliament. I raise this point because in the “Financial Review” of 8 February 1977 appeared a story about Queensland which stated in part—

“. . . the Golden Casket money that once went to hospitals being poured into a \$94 million cultural centre of theatres, an art gallery and opera hall.”

I remember a Cultural Centre Trust being introduced by Sir Gordon Chalk about 12 months ago and the cost mentioned was \$47,000,000. Now, we pick up the paper and find that it is \$94,000,000.

**Mr. Bird:** That was based on the value of the dollar at that time. It was never anticipated that it would be completed for \$45,000,000. It was \$45,000,000 on 1975 values.

**Mr. BURNS:** The point I am making is that although no-one is arguing that we should not have a cultural centre, we do not want it to be like the Sydney Opera House, which needed hundreds of lotteries to finance it. We in this Parliament should have some check on what is happening. The argument which I will be putting forward in the debate on the Financial Administration and Audit Bill is that we ought to ensure that the Auditor-General reports to us on whether we are getting value for money. It seems to me that under clause 31 it is a continuing commitment.

**Mr. Bird:** No.

**Mr. BURNS:** Well, it is a continuing commitment.

**Mr. Bird:** No.

**Mr. BURNS:** Look at the large number of things that the trust can do. Members have already raised them under clauses 16 and 17. It could be that it will make continuing demands on the Minister or the Treasurer of this State for more and more funds. Under clause 31, as I see it, we give the trust money and, later, under clause 34—accounts and audit—it makes a report to the Minister and the Auditor-General reports to the Minister. I do not think that is good enough. The people in this State, and people all over the world, are demanding more and more not only that Governments should have an accounting of whether money has been spent according to the dockets, and so on, but also that they should get value for money. In addition,

there ought to be a type of zero-based accounting. Each year we must see whether the commitment we have made to this new trust is such that we ought to begin saying to ourselves, "We ought to cut back."

In my opinion, either clause 31 or clause 34 ought to include a provision making the trust accountable to the Parliament, not simply to the Minister.

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (8.31 p.m.): I hasten to assure the Leader of the Opposition that he has nothing to fear in this regard. All the financial provisions in clauses 30 to 52 are standard for bodies of this type. They have been perused by the Auditor-General and the Treasury and found to be acceptable. The provisions cover the funds, accounts in the budget and borrowing powers. The following general points should be noted: firstly, the trust budget must be approved by the Minister; secondly, the accounts will be subject to audit by the Auditor-General; and thirdly, the trust will report annually to Parliament through the Minister. So there is an assurance that they are not going to be able to run riot, that they are indeed accountable not only to me but also to Parliament.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (8.32 p.m.): We also need a check each year that the commitment is not open-ended. The argument that I am putting forward now could also be put forward on the Financial Administration and Audit Bill. Having made a commitment to spend \$47,000,000 on the Cultural Centre or \$X million on the Performing Arts Trust, we ought to be able to say that that does not mean that we will continue that commitment for ever. We must have the right to cut it off if it becomes too heavy. What seems to happen is that from the day we give the first dollar a demand is made that we continue the payment of that money for evermore.

As I said, it probably is a matter that ought to be brought up on the next Bill under the powers of the Auditor-General. We need to know that we are getting value for money, and we need to have from such bodies a report each year showing not only that they have paid out according to the dockets but also that they are really living up to the promises made when the trust was first set up. I worry a little bit about some of these commitments. They grow and grow like Topsy, and we continually increase rates, taxes and other charges. Somehow or other, it seems that usually the poor old worker is the one who pays most.

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (8.33 p.m.): I am sure that the people who constitute the trust will be responsible people, that they will realise that they must be accountable not only to the Parliament but

also to the people of this State. Organisations such as cultural groups and art groups realise now that there must be a greater accountability, that there is not a bottomless bucket from which they can continue to extract as much finance as they want. There must be greater responsibility, and they realise that they have to be accountable.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (8.34 p.m.): I take the Minister up on that point. He says that they must be accountable. I note that in the clauses dealing with finance, from clause 30 right through to clause 52, there is reference to the loan fund. If we are to exercise control, I wonder why the trust needs to have a loan fund. It is going to get moneys from Consolidated Revenue and a special trust fund is being established for those people who wish to make gifts or appropriate money for some special purpose, yet we are going to allow the trust to borrow extensively. Admittedly, section 33 talks about the loan fund and the audit that is to be required, but then Division II goes on to deal with the power to borrow, not only from the Treasurer but also by the sale of debentures and so on. We need to know more about how much money this organisation will require.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Row): Order! Does the honourable member wish to debate another clause of the Bill?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I think we might take them together, Mr. Row, to save time. If we take them one by one it will waste the time of the Committee.

One wonders about the financial borrowing capacity of the trust. Are we starting to talk about many millions of dollars? The Leader of the Opposition mentioned that the centre itself could cost \$94,000,000. Admittedly that does not have much to do with the Queensland Performing Arts Trust as the overall capital cost goes back to the Cultural Centre itself. But why would the trust have to borrow? How does it repay those loans—out of Consolidated Revenue? Is it going to be like local authorities so that it will simply keep borrowing, with interest and redemption payments, so that one day they will reach 55 and 60 per cent of its revenue? Maybe we need a further explanation here.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (8.36 p.m.): Surely someone has said to the Minister, "The trust is going to cost so many million dollars a year" or "so many hundred thousand dollars a year." Is there any estimate of what the Minister expects to spend next year in the appropriation for this particular trust?

**Hon. V. J. BIRD** (Burdekin—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (8.37 p.m.): I certainly could not give tonight a figure of what is going to be required. At this time we have no idea how many of the

performing arts groups will want to use the centre when it is set up. As time progresses and the centre nears completion, each and every one of those groups will advise the trust how long it will want to book the centre. That will allow a budget to be framed.

**Mr. Burns:** You do not expect the trust to be doing any work in country areas before the completion of the centre?

**Mr. BIRD:** It is highly possible that it will. First of all it will have to formulate what it is going to do. We have not got a trust yet. The Bill authorises us to set up a trust. Once the trust is set up, those people will formulate their ideas on what they want to do. They will then prepare a budget. They will come to me in the first instance, and subsequently to Parliament, to seek approval of that budget covering finance to allow them to carry out their programmes. It is obvious that they will have to obtain funds from various sources. One of those will be from a loan fund. The trust will seek its finances in various ways, just as a local authority or any other organisation does. It will not all be outgoing finance; money will be coming in from the charges imposed on the patrons using the centre.

Clause 31, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 32 to 64, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

## FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT BILL

### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row. Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clause 1—Short title—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.40 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“On page 1, line 6, omit the expression—  
‘1976’

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—  
‘1977.’”

The short title of the Act will now become the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977, rather than the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1976, which was the year of its introduction. That is the only reason for the amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2—Commencement—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (8.41 p.m.): I understand that in order to facilitate the smooth introduction of any legislation, the date of commencement of the law may be delayed, but I understand from this memorandum that the target date for the commencement of this Bill is 1 July 1978. That disturbs me

somewhat. I do not believe that it should take 18 months to implement the Bill. I know the explanation is given that we have to set up internal audit organisations, make regulations under clause 82 and provide accounting manuals under clause 45, but it is fairly obvious that this measure has been under discussion for a long time. It is important that we should introduce a more modern system of accounting as soon as possible. I am sure that no-one is satisfied with the current system. It is fairly obvious that the Government is not satisfied; if it were, the Bill would not have been introduced. I wonder if we can get a clear explanation and if it is possible to implement the Bill this financial year.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.42 p.m.): I am quite sure that the Auditor-General and the officers concerned are very much up to date in every respect. No doubt changes are taking place from time to time in the whole system. The honourable member will have to contain himself on this point. As time goes on, there will no doubt be some change.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—Repeals and savings—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.43 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 2, omit all words comprising lines 33 to 38 both inclusive and insert in lieu thereof the following words:—

‘(4) The repeal by this Act of section 8 of The Local Bodies’ Loans Guarantee Act and Audit Acts Amendment Act of 1936 which inserted in The Audit Act of 1874 as subsequently amended section 30A and by that section 30A inserted in The Public Service Acts, 1922 to 1924 section 4A, and of The Audit Act of 1874 and subsequent amendments, shall not affect the continued operation of section 4A of the Public Service Act 1922-1976.’”

This amendment is merely a tidying up of the drafting by the Parliamentary Counsel and introduces no new principle.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5—Interpretation—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.46 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 3, line 20, insert after the word ‘for’ the words—

‘public property or other property.’”

The amendment is merely a tidying up of drafting by the Parliamentary Counsel and introduces no new principles.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.47 p.m.): I move the following further amendment—

“On page 4, omit all words comprising lines 8 to 11 both inclusive, and insert in lieu thereof the following words:—

“department” means a department of the Government of the State and includes—

- (a) the Railway Department;
- (b) where the case requires it, a sub-department, branch or section of a department;
- (c) a Crown corporation or instrumentality or a statutory corporation or instrumentality representing the Crown the expenditure of which is subject to appropriation by Parliament;”

Since the Bill was introduced, the House has passed the Electricity Act of 1976, under which the State Electricity Commission will no longer be a department of the State under the Public Service Act, with a permanent head or officers under that Act. This and correlated amendments have been moved to ensure that the provisions of the Bill will still apply to the State Electricity Commission and, indeed, to every Crown corporation or instrumentality (or statutory corporation or instrumentality) representing the Crown, the expenditure of which is subject to appropriation by the Parliament. Further, the amendment makes it clear that the Auditor-General will audit the acts of the commission and any other such corporation or instrumentality, and report to Parliament thereon.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.49 p.m.): I move the following further amendment—

“On page 4, line 47, omit the expression—

‘1974’

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—

‘1976.’”

Since the Bill was introduced, the City of Brisbane Act 1924-1974 was amended by the Electricity Act of 1976, and the short title of that Act is now the City of Brisbane Act 1924-1976.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.50 p.m.): I move the following further amendment—

“On page 5, omit all words comprising lines 28 to 30 both inclusive and insert in lieu thereof the following words:—

“officer” means an officer within the meaning of the Public Service Act 1922-1976 and includes—

- (a) an officer of the Railway Department;

(b) a member of the Police Force;

(c) an officer of a Crown corporation or instrumentality or a statutory corporation or instrumentality representing the Crown the expenditure of which is subject to appropriation by Parliament;”

Amendment agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.52 p.m.): I move the following further amendment—

“On page 5, line 48, omit the expression—

‘1973’

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—

‘1976.’”

Since the introduction of the Bill, the Public Service Act has been amended by the Electricity Act and the short title of that Act has accordingly been amended to read the “Public Service Act 1922-1976.”

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 10, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—Powers of Treasurer re Trust and Special Funds—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (8.53 p.m.): I rise briefly to express my reservation at the powers granted to the Treasurer. This clause gives him very wide powers with little means for an immediate check on his activity. Under the clause he may establish or close additional funds forming part of the trust and special funds and approve and allow interest of such an amount. The clause leaves the Treasurer with fairly substantial powers without, as I see it, any redress for the full Parliament. Some other additional check for better and more open government ought to be provided than the Governor in Council. What I am arguing about is what has been argued 100 times in this Chamber—Cabinet government as opposed to parliamentary government or responsibility to us. I place on record my concern over that particular matter.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.54 p.m.): This has always been the custom. There is nothing new associated with it.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clause 12—Departmental accounts subsidiary to the public accounts—

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (8.55 p.m.): The point I would like to raise at this stage—and perhaps the Premier might clarify it—relates to our moving into a completely new Bill dealing with the audit of the affairs of this State. Another very important move in the financial world is the trend to current cost accounting. This is being adopted by

the business world and it has received the support of various accountancy societies throughout the whole of Australia. There are strong moves to get Taxation Department and Federal Government approval of this method. It is a completely new concept in accounting.

Clause 5 now refers to Crown corporations and instrumentalities and statutory corporations and instrumentalities representing the Crown. Quite a number of these are operated as private business concerns. The Railway Department may be considered to be one of them although it is in fact different because it receives a large appropriation from Consolidated Revenue.

There are, however, other organisations such as the Totalisator Administration Board that do not receive major appropriations from Parliament but obtain their finance in other ways. As Crown instrumentalities or corporations, they are now acquiring considerable property. The T.A.B. headquarters at Albion is one such example. T.A.B. finances are invested in shops and buildings in various places throughout the State.

Under current cost accountancy a completely different approach to these activities is adopted. I should like to know if it is the intention of the Auditor-General to use the accountancy methods now being followed by the accountancy profession in his examination of these organisations. I think that is a fairly important question. A significant change is now coming about. The Premier will appreciate through his own business interests that, whilst most members of the accountancy profession know what is going on, many people who are themselves involved in business have no idea of the implications and complications of this new method of accountancy if it is approved.

I understand from people in fairly high circles that it is most likely that it will be approved. The Taxation Department is holding out. The whole idea is to bring about a more equitable profit system within the accountancy profession. Current cost accounting is a means of dealing more rapidly with problems that are created by inflation in the presentation of balance sheets and profit and loss accounts. There is also a constant revaluation and upgrading of assets and/or stock included in balance sheets.

That is the request that I now put to the Premier. I ask whether current cost accounting will be extended to Crown instrumentalities which are operated completely on business lines.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.57 p.m.): Current cost accounting has reference to accrual accounts. It has little reference to cash flow accounts, which are the basis of public accounts. If the honourable member wants to study the matter further, the case is argued at page 3 of the explanatory memorandum.

Clause 12, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 13 to 17, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 18—Departmental bank accounts subsidiary to the public bank accounts—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (8.59 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 12, line 6, insert after the word ‘all’ the words—

‘moneys with respect to.’”

The amendment is moved to clarify the meaning of the clause. It does not introduce any new principle.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 18, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 19 to 22, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 23—Availability of appropriations—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9 p.m.): Clause 23, which relates to the availability of appropriations, states—

“Every appropriation made for the supply services of any financial year shall be available for the services of that year provided that payments on account of those services are made during that year or within 14 days after the end of that year and the balance of any appropriation then unexpended shall lapse and shall not be issued or applied in any future financial year.”

One of the blights on Public Service activity in this State is the rush at the end of the year to spend money because if it is not spent it is lost to the department and goes back into the melting pot. So departmental officers ring up schools and ask “Have you got a fence you want repaired or some work done here or there?”, or people buy goods that they do not really need and stack them in stores. It is a sort of end-of-the-year rush.

**Mr. Moore:** They cut down the appropriation for the next year if they don't spend it.

**Mr. BURNS:** That is it. I am not an accountant by any means, but I read the section on programme budgeting in the explanatory memorandum that was handed to us and it seems to me that we ought to have a three-year rolling Budget and some sort of plan so that if a department does not spend the money this year it does not lose it—it does not go back into the pot.

If the Government said, for example, that Queensland should have a cultural centre and it allocated \$40,000,000 for that purpose one year and then because of rain or some other reason it spent only \$38,000,000, why should \$2,000,000 go back into the pot? If it really believed \$40,000,000 should have been spent in the first place why should



it not be spent? It seems crazy to be writing this sort of thing into the Bill now when each one of us at some stage in his parliamentary career has, I am sure, moaned to himself about this idea of rushing to spend the last little bit of money before the end of the year.

It seems to me that this is a waste of money, and we know it is a waste of money. We know that time and time again public servants have been told to find some reason for spending money so that the department does not lose it.

On page 6 of the memorandum I see that the Government has concluded that the function of programme auditing is not properly that of the Auditor-General. I do not know whether it is his function or not, but I believe that full programme auditing should be looked at such as is now applied in Great Britain, New Zealand, Canada, the United States and France. Canada has now established programme budgeting after a three-year phase-in, and all portfolios are looked at on functional and programme lines where policy makers and Ministers are held truly accountable to the people for the success or failure of their programme. In such forward estimates, programmes are ranked in order of priority and include current revenue and expenditure as well as capital expenditure.

I claim that this clause is only going to add to that rush every half year or in each June or July to spend all the money that has not been spent out of the appropriation. I do not believe it adds anything at all to the operation of the State Government.

**Mr. Casey:** Even if it was 30 days it would come within normal trading terms.

**Mr. BURNS:** As the honourable member for Mackay says, why 14 days? Why not 30 days, or 90 days? Why not allow some period in which it could reasonably be expected that the money would be spent if because of seasonal conditions or the non-supply of goods on order or if for some reason the contractors were not able to keep to a time-table, a department had been delayed? It does seem to me to be unreasonable and unwarranted to have such a provision in the Bill.

Clause 23, as read, agreed to.

Clause 24—Transfers between sub-divisional items—

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (9.4 p.m.): When speaking to one of the earlier clauses the Leader of the Opposition raised a query with the Premier regarding an alteration to a clause giving greater powers to the Treasury. In his answer the Premier indicated that there were no problems and that the wording used in the clause was normal.

However, the explanatory notes on clause 24 distinctly state that this clause is wholly designed to empower the Treasury to approve

transfers between items within the same sub-division in the approved estimates. Previously this power has been vested in the Governor in Council. It is now being taken from the Governor in Council and given to the Treasury Department. There is no question that it will mean that the Treasury will have increased powers. So we are beginning to build up in the Treasury system an elite set-up under which not only will the department have complete power over the funding of the various departments but also Treasury officials will take away from the Governor in Council the power to effect transfers between subdepartments of the various departments of funds set out by Parliament in the Appropriation Bill.

If a Minister needs to transfer funds from one section of his department to another section, I do not think that he should have to rely solely on the Treasury to effect that transfer for him. If he has a brief in that respect and he wishes to carry it out but the Treasury does not wish to allow him to do so, the Governor in Council must have an overriding power, as it always has in the past. I should like to hear from the Premier what he thinks of that. Does some clause of the Bill still give the Governor in Council overriding power to change a decision of the Treasury Department on that point?

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.7 p.m.): My officers have informed me that this is traditional procedure wherever the Westminster system of government applies. The situation in Canada and all other countries is identical. There is nothing new in it.

**Mr. Casey:** But it is new to Queensland.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** It is universal in the system of government under which we operate.

Clause 24, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 25 to 31, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 32—Payment of moneys by the Agent-General—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.8 p.m.): Clause 30 deals with the payment of public moneys from departmental expenditure bank accounts and lays down certain requirements relative to those accounts. Clause 32 provides specifically for preferred treatment of the Agent-General. I ask why the Agent-General is not required in the same way as other departments to submit the vouchers at regular intervals to the Treasury. I seek an explanation of why the Agent-General's office is treated differently from other departments.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.19 p.m.): All the Agent-General's moneys are not subject to the Treasury as such, whereas in other areas moneys are subject to the Treasury. That is the difference in that regard.

Clause 32, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 33 and 34, as read, agreed to.

Clause 35—Accountable officers—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.10 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 19, omit all words comprising lines 7 to 12 both inclusive and insert in lieu thereof the following words:—

‘(2) In the case of—

(a) a sub-department, branch or section of a department that keeps separate departmental accounts subsidiary to the public accounts;

(b) a Crown corporation or instrumentality or a statutory corporation or instrumentality representing the Crown the expenditure of which is subject to appropriation by Parliament,

the Treasurer shall appoint an officer thereof to be the accountable officer with respect to the appropriations for those services under the control thereof.’”

Again, this amendment is a consequence of the passing of the Electricity Act 1976. This empowers the Treasurer to appoint the State Electricity Commissioner to be the accountable officer with respect to the appropriations for those services under the control of the State Electricity Commission. Further, it empowers the Treasurer to appoint an officer of any Crown corporation or instrumentality or a statutory corporation or instrumentality representing the Crown, the expenditure of which is subject to parliamentary appropriation.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.11 p.m.): I move the following further amendment:—

“On page 19, line 18, omit the words—  
‘relating to’

and insert in lieu thereof the words—

‘for those services under the control of.’”

The amendment provides for an alteration in drafting in order to make the meaning clear. It does not introduce any new principle.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 35, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 36—Functions and duties of accountable officer—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.12 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 20, line 17, omit the words—  
‘permanent head’

and insert in lieu thereof the words—

‘accountable officer’.”

The amendment introduces no new principle. It merely clarifies that the provision applies to the accountable officer in his role as accountable officer and not in his role as permanent head.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.13 p.m.): Clause 36, dealing with the functions and duties of the accountable officer, seems to be the area where we should be spelling out quite clearly the guide-lines of departmental internal auditing. One of the problems I see in the Bill is that the Government seems to be looking at only income and expenditure, and as long as they balance, all is assumed to be O.K. We still do not get around to trying to find out whether we are getting value for money. If the legislation covering audit is being changed, this is one of the areas we ought to be looking at. This is the argument we put up about the Queensland Performing Arts Trust. Originally we were told that the cost of the Cultural Complex would be \$47,000,000; now we are told it will be \$94,000,000. It seems to be an open-ended commitment. Commitments are open ended in a lot of areas.

**Mr. Moore:** Another Opera House.

**Mr. BURNS:** That may be so. There are a lot of areas where we start off with a small amount of money but we seem to end up being committed to a large amount of money. This can happen in departments just as easily as it can happen with opera houses and in other areas. In the clause dealing with the functions and duties of the accountable officer, something should be provided whereby it should be possible to show whether we are getting value for money spent in the department itself. We should not be looking only to check that it is paid according to the docket or the appropriation.

We are missing a great opportunity in this Bill. When we introduce a Bill to change an Act after 100 years, we are presented with a great opportunity to put in checks and balances to ensure that we do not experience in the future any of the past problems in keeping check on the money we spend. Subclause 36 (1) (d) provides that every accountable officer “shall ensure that procedures within the department and internal checks afford at all times adequate safeguards with respect to—”. Guide-lines should have been provided there as to value for money expended, but no rules are stipulated for internal checks. Subclause 36 (1) (e) provides that every accountable officer “shall review regularly fees and charges for services rendered by the department having regard to the cost of providing those services;”. Once it is decided that the services are too dear or too cheap, what happens? Do we have a report through the Auditor-General to us or to the Minister alone? Why should not members of Parliament be

given a copy of a report by any accountable officer who has checked the fees of a department and said that they are too high or too low so that they may be aware of the financial ramifications of the department?

**Mr. Moore:** We would not have time to read it.

**Mr. BURNS:** Honourable members who want to find out reasons for increasing stamp duty and other charges, and why pensioners are charged a \$5 licence fee when registering their cars should surely be able to see reports on such matters that are produced by an accountable officer and given to the Minister. They should be brought to Parliament so that we may be aware of them.

**Mr. Casey:** We could have a Joint Parliamentary Accounts Committee.

**Mr. BURNS:** At both the introductory and second-reading stages we proposed a Joint Parliamentary Accounts Committee. It is well known that Queensland is one of the two States in the nation that does not have such a committee. Value for money is what people want from Governments today. It is too easy to say, "Everything is O.K. We have spent money according to the appropriation and have receipts for all money spent." In this and other provisions in the Bill we should have provided a value-for-money requirement.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.18 p.m.): Generally, responsibility for value for money rests with the departmental head or the Minister concerned. I think that is well catered for. I suggest to the honourable member that he read subclause 36 (1) (a) and subclause 36 (1) (c) (iii) to get a better understanding of the whole problem.

I move the following further amendment—

"On page 20, omit all words comprising lines 33 to 36 both inclusive and insert in lieu thereof the following words:—

'(4) Where the examination referred to in subsection (2) is conducted by The Commissioner for Railways or the accountable officer with respect to appropriations for those services under the control of a Crown corporation or instrumentality or a statutory corporation or instrumentality representing the Crown, The Commissioner for Railways or that accountable officer shall upon the completion of that examination take such action as he considers necessary to establish in the Railway Department or, as the case may be, such Crown corporation or instrumentality or statutory corporation or instrumentality representing the Crown an internal audit organization.'

Again this amendment is consequent upon the passage of the Electricity Act 1976.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 36, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 37—Departmental appropriation accounts—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.20 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

"On page 21, insert after line 19 the following words:—

'(d) all expenditure authorized by the Governor in Council to be charged to a stores suspense account or a special suspense account of the Loan Fund;'

This amendment makes it clear that all expenditure made by the several departments from the public accounts, including the expenditure made and charged to the stores suspense account or a special suspense account of the Loan Fund, is required to be indicated in the departmental appropriation accounts. This cures an omission in the Bill as presented to the Parliament.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 37, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 38 and 39, as read, agreed to.

Clause 40—Transmission of certain departmental trading accounts and balance sheets to Auditor-General—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.21 p.m.): Subclause (2) (d) says—

"A statement of accounts prepared in accordance with subsection (1) shall include a statement setting forth the accounting principles followed in the preparation thereof and whether those principles have been applied on a basis consistent with that applied in the financial year last preceding."

It seems to me that we ought to be laying down financial or accounting principles. I think that the principles referred to in that clause would best be spelt out in the Bill. A definite statement would avoid any confusion and guarantee exactly what the principles are.

If someone from a department is going to say each year, "These are the principles on which I have audited the books this year. They are different from last year's set of principles," those of us who are not accounting people and who are unaware of how the changes have affected the figures will never be able to compare one year's figure with that of another. The Government should lay down in the Bill a set of standard accounting procedures. The Parliament, I believe, should be able to set these procedures. It should not be left to an accountable officer in a particular

department to lay down the set of accounting principles or procedures under which he prepares the accounts or the transmissions. We ought to be able to lay down how we want them to be done so that I can look at activities of the Railway Department or any of our other business activities and compare one year with another in the full knowledge that it is a simple system. Isn't that what reports are all about—to make members of the Parliament and those people who are involved in trying to check the accountability of these departments fully aware of the principles under which we are operating?

I see no reason why we should leave it to the person concerned to prepare a set of principles and then add to the report each time, "I have changed the principles from last year and these are the new principles under which I am operating." I think it would be far better if we prepared our own and we had a standard set of principles.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.23 p.m.): The answer is that there are so many different accounts and so many different circumstances in relation to the accounts that it is not practicable to establish guide-lines right across the board and in every case. A wide variety of different circumstances affects different accounts.

Clause 40, as read, agreed to.

Clause 41—Power of Treasurer to invest moneys—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.24 p.m.): I am worried about the extension of powers given to the Treasurer under this clause. Very wide powers are given for the investment of moneys at the sole discretion of the Treasurer. Surely we should carry out a careful and extensive review of these powers, especially in terms of subclause (2) (d), "in such other securities as the Treasurer thinks fit." We must carry out a review. We do not want the Treasurer just speculating and losing. I know that the Premier and I sit on a particular trust together and we receive advice from experts; but I do not like the extension of powers to the Treasurer alone. I continue to argue that Parliament itself—and, through the Parliament, members of Parliament—should be involved. In all these areas I would rather see a provision that makes it obligatory on the Treasurer, once he had made certain decisions, to refer the recommendations to some other source. In this case I would be prepared to agree to its going to the Cabinet or the Governor in Council. However, I do not like the extension of power to the Treasurer alone.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.25 p.m.): So often and in such haste is the Treasury called upon to make decisions on investments that it would be completely impracticable to bring them to the Governor in Council, Cabinet or another group of men. From day to day

decisions are made and have to be made quickly on the short-term market. The Treasurer, whoever he is, must have considerable trust placed in him and has to live up to that trust, which he does. This is the system under which we work and to me it has always appeared to be satisfactory.

Clause 41, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 42 to 48, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 49—Auditor-General not subject to Public Service Act—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.26 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

"On page 26, line 43, omit the expression—

'1973'

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—  
'1976'."

The short title of the Public Service Act was amended to read the "Public Service Act 1922–1976" by the Electricity Act, which was passed by the House after the introduction of the Financial Administration and Audit Bill. That is why we need to pass this slight amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.27 p.m.): I move the following further amendment:—

"On page 27, line 4, omit the expression—

'1973'

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—  
'1976'."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 49, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 50—Rights of officers preserved—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.28 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

"On page 27, line 9, omit the expression—

'1973'

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—  
'1976'."

As I said earlier, the short title of the Public Service Act was amended by the Electricity Act.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.29 p.m.): I move the following further amendment:—

"On page 27, lines 10 and 11, omit the expression—

'1975'

wherever occurring and insert in lieu thereof in each case the expression—  
'1976'."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 50, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 51 to 54, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 55—Declaration by Auditor-General—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.30 p.m.): This clause deals with a declaration by the Auditor-General. This seems to me to be one of those areas in which the Government discriminates against public servants. I believe that if the Auditor-General, who is to audit the appropriations and decisions made by the Executive Council and by Ministers themselves, is to be required to make such a declaration, a similar declaration should be made by Ministers. The public servant who is going to audit these accounts is told, "You will have to make a declaration and tell us the amount of money that you have invested in various companies. You have to tell us the actions that you have taken to earn a little extra money on the side through shares and other activities." But at the same time we as a Parliament have never been prepared to say that Ministers should do likewise. I think an amendment should be moved to the effect that a similar declaration be made by each member of the Executive Council before taking up his office. If it is good enough to ask the Auditor-General to make such a declaration, it is good enough for me to suggest that Ministers also make such a declaration. I therefore suggest that the Committee might consider the following amendment:—

"On page 28, line 14, add the following words:—

'and each member of the Executive Council shall also make a similar declaration in the prescribed form before assuming such office.'

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.31 p.m.): The Auditor-General does have to make such a declaration just as Ministers make a declaration when they are sworn in. Ministers swear to administer their duties and offices faithfully and trustworthily.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.31 p.m.): Is it only a declaration that he will carry out his duties faithfully or is it a declaration that he will be involved in no other financial activities except those concerned in his office as Auditor-General? Does he have to make any declaration in relation to his own outside financial activities, or does he only declare that he will discharge his duties faithfully?

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.32 p.m.): I take it that he declares that he will discharge his duties faithfully and within the requirements of the law. I think that is all that we could expect of anyone.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.32 p.m.): In clause 53 we spell out that—

"(a) if he directly or indirectly engages in any paid employment outside the duties of his office or any other office to which he is appointed by virtue of his office as Auditor-General or in any trade or business except as a member of a body corporate consisting of more than 20 persons;"

he shall be deemed to have vacated his office. It is passing strange that this is required of the man who merely audits the accounts. It is unfair that this requirement should be placed on the Auditor-General whilst those who are making the appropriations and spending the money are not required to meet the same standards.

Clause 55, as read, agreed to.

Clause 56—Deputy Auditor-General—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.33 p.m.): I move the following further amendment:—

"On page 28, line 32, omit the expression—

'1973'

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—  
'1976'."

Amendment agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.33 p.m.): I move the following further amendment:—

"On page 28, line 36, omit the expression—

'1973'

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—  
'1976'."

Amendment agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.33 p.m.):

I move the following further amendment:—  
"On page 28, lines 36 and 37, omit the expression—

'1975'

wherever occurring and insert in lieu thereof in each case the expression—  
'1976'."

Amendment agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.34 p.m.): I move the following further amendment:—

"On page 28, line 42, omit the expression—

'1973'

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—  
'1976'."

Amendment agreed to.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.35 p.m.): I move the following further amendment:—

“On page 28, lines 43 and 44, omit the expression—

‘1975’

wherever occurring and insert in lieu thereof in each case the expression—

‘1976.’”

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 56, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 57—Audit of the public accounts and departmental accounts—

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (9.36 p.m.): Again I just seek a little information from the Premier in relation to the method of carrying out these audits. Does the Auditor-General have a system such as that operating in the banks in that there is no regular time for the carrying out of an audit? Does the Auditor-General just ring up and say, “Get everything ready” and that is it? With this internal audit system that is intended within the department I believe it would be far better if we had a snap check done by the Auditor-General whereby all of a sudden in walks an officer from the Department of the Auditor-General and says to the accountable officer, “Produce the books of the department and let us go straight ahead with our audit.” If the system is going to work as is intended, I think this would be an excellent thing to incorporate in the framework of the Bill. I do not think it presently exists but it is a system which the banks use and which works well.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.37 p.m.): The Auditor-General informs me that this is just what is done. Spot checks are made at any time. There is no set time; the Auditor-General exercises his discretion. Should it be considered that a spot check is necessary, that is what happens.

Clause 57, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 58 and 59, as read, agreed to.

Clause 60—Audit of accounts of Department of the Auditor-General—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.38 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 30, insert after line 7 the following paragraph—

‘A person who performs an audit in accordance with this subsection shall be entitled to receive in respect of such audit such fee as is determined by the Treasurer.’”

The amendment provides for the person who performs the audit of the accounts of the Department of the Auditor-General to be paid such audit fee as is determined by the Treasurer.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Clause 60, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 61—Audit of the public accounts—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.39 p.m.): Again the Opposition would like to voice its concern over the additions to this area. They provide only for honest spending checks, for fiscal accountability, integrity, disclosure and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. There is no managerial accountability and the clause is not concerned with efficiency and the economic use of personnel and other resources. In Queensland these areas are vaguely covered by the Public Service Board. There is no programme accountability concerned with benefits being attained and programme objectives being achieved.

Both of these two functions have been performed by the Auditor-General in the United States of America since 1921—for 56 years—and I ask when we will have the obvious benefits of that system. Now is an opportunity for the Government to implement such changes on value for money, but it has blown it. I rise to express the Opposition's concern that nothing has been done in that respect.

Clause 61, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 62 to 65, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 66—Power to administer and examine on oath—

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (9.41 p.m.): Again I seek information from the Premier. The clause empowers the Auditor-General to examine persons on oath. I wish to know whether this provision was included in the existing Act.

It seems rather an extraordinary power, but, from my reading of Auditor-General's reports, I am sure that, if it has been used, it has been used with great discretion. I do not think that there is any intention that the Auditor-General should take over the responsibilities of the courts or the police in carrying out investigations. It is simply to ensure that he gets the information.

**Mr. Bjelke-Petersen:** That power has always been there.

**Mr. CASEY:** Thank you.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.42 p.m.): Surely a penalty of \$500 is really a laugh. The imposition of a substantial monetary penalty, possibly with imprisonment, seems to me to be the only way of ensuring that the request of the Auditor-General to appear is complied with. The clause says—

“The Auditor-General may examine on oath (which oath he is empowered to administer) all persons whom he thinks fit to examine respecting matters and things

of any kind necessary for the due exercise of the powers and authorities and the due performance of the functions and duties conferred or imposed upon him by this Act or any other Act or law."

It then provides that a person who refuses to come before the Auditor-General may be fined \$500.

I do not believe that the Auditor-General would bring anyone before him and examine him on oath other than on a very important matter. In these circumstances, a simple way for a person to avoid doing so is to pay a \$500 fine. The Auditor-General is then in the position of having to try to prove his case without putting questions to that man under oath. Isn't that really what it is all about? I suggest that the Auditor-General probably is looking at big money if he brings a person before him to answer questions under oath, and \$500 seems to be small change.

**Mr. Moore:** The only way to get over it would be to order him along several times and fine him \$500 each time he refuses to come.

**Mr. BURNS:** I suppose that could be done, but it seems to me that there ought to be some threat in the clause. In days gone by, a person who did not pay maintenance to his wife was put into goal for some time. Here a person who refuses to attend to undergo examination under oath by the Auditor-General is liable to a fine of only \$500. In my opinion, many people today are fined \$500 for far less serious offences.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.43 p.m.): I have just ascertained from the Auditor-General that he has never had to question anyone under oath, and he does not recall any previous Auditor-General in this State having to exercise this power and authority. The mere fact that someone is likely to be called before the Auditor-General to explain his actions would in itself be a fairly strong deterrent. I do not know whether the fine would carry any substantial weight.

**Mr. Burns:** People do abscond with large sums of money.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** That is true, but in such cases the police take action. The Auditor-General does not use this power very often. In fact, it certainly has not been done, to our knowledge, in our time.

Clause 66, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 67 and 68, as read, agreed to.

Clause 69—Secrecy—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.44 p.m.): I wish to raise only one point. The clause says—

"The Auditor-General and every authorised officer shall preserve and aid in preserving secrecy with respect to all matters

and things that come to their knowledge in the exercise or performance of their powers, authorities, functions or duties under this Act and shall not communicate, save in such exercise or performance, to any person any such matter or thing."

I believe that this clause should be so drafted as to ensure that the Auditor-General is not barred at any time from reporting abuses to Parliament. The clause could be very much a restriction on what I believe to be true, open government and proper reporting by the Auditor-General if Governments stifle the Auditor-General from revealing abuses and informing the people. He must not be gagged. In essence I am asking if that clause is written in such a way that it does not provide any gag on the Auditor-General's reporting to us on any abuses.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.46 p.m.): I could not imagine any circumstances where it could be thought or inferred that this clause would be a gag on the Auditor-General. One of the very special privileges that are granted to an Auditor-General is the right to expose a matter or take whatever action is necessary. Of course, in his work he must obviously come across many aspects about which there is a necessity to remain secretive. That is what the clause applies to; it is not an attempt to gag him at all.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.47 p.m.): I have no objection to the idea that he has to maintain secrecy and ensure that certain matters that come to his notice are not made known to the general public. The same sort of question comes up in regard to clause 70 which states—

"Observations and suggestions so made that, in the opinion of the Auditor-General are of major significance shall be forwarded also to the Treasurer and the Minister concerned."

Again I believe that they should come to the Parliament. The Auditor-General should be required not to pass these matters on to the Treasurer or the Minister concerned but to say in his report to Parliament, "I have recommended to the Minister for Transport"—or some other Minister—"that certain actions be taken in relation to the audit or handling of accounts in his particular department." In that way we would be aware of the changes being made or the actions being taken by the Auditor-General.

Clause 69, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 70 and 71, as read, agreed to.

Clause 72—Auditor-General may obtain opinion—

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.48 p.m.): This clause should act on the same principle in covering the relationship of the Auditor-General to the

Solicitor-General. It ought to empower the Auditor-General to refer direct to the Crown Law Office and the police, not through any Ministers, matters of a criminal nature which warrant prosecution. What I am suggesting is that, if the Auditor-General found matters of a criminal nature in his audit, he should be able to take them straight to the police himself rather than go through the Minister.

That would remove any suggestion of political control or political manipulation over both the office of the Auditor-General and the office of the Solicitor-General with regard to the abuses uncovered by the Auditor-General and the prosecution for any possible criminal offences that may have occurred. There is always the suggestion that so-and-so was breaking the law but the Minister or someone in authority got him out of it. The Bill should be drafted in such a way that that sort of suggestion could not be made. It should provide for the Auditor-General to report direct to the police if he sees someone acting in a criminal way.

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.49 p.m.): The Auditor-General indicates clearly to me that if there is anything of a criminal nature that comes before him he reports immediately to the police.

Clause 72, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 73 to 83, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Schedule—

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (9.50 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 38, line 10, omit the expression—

‘Section 8’

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—

‘Part III (ss. 7, 8) and the heading thereto.’”

This is an amendment to the drafting; it does not introduce any new principles.

Amendment (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Schedule, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

## FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs) (9.52 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Fire Brigades Act 1964–1976 in certain particulars.”

Amendments to the Fire Brigades Act have become necessary or desirable for efficient

operation on several occasions. The Act provides that fire brigades boards support the superannuation scheme approved by the Governor in Council.

The scheme is presently administered by three trustees, that is, the chairman and secretary of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board and the chairman of the State Fire Services Council. Representations have been made for country fire brigades boards to be represented as trustees and for contributors to be represented other than by the secretary of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board.

In view of the difficulties in amending the trust deed covering the scheme because of the need for, and the time required to obtain, the consent of each board participating in the scheme, the Bill proposes that there will be five trustees appointed by the Governor in Council. The chairman of the State Fire Services Council and of the metropolitan board will continue to be trustees, with the former being chairman. In addition, the Queensland Country Fire Brigades Boards Union of Employers will be given the opportunity to nominate the chairman of a country fire brigade board. Two further trustees are to be nominated by the Minister from a panel of names submitted by each industrial union covering fire brigade employees throughout the State. The new trustees will hold office for three years.

Provision is made to fill casual vacancies and the action to be taken if an industrial union fails to make a nomination. Trustees' powers and duties are also laid down.

Provision is being made for the Minister to appoint deputy members of the State Fire Services Council who will attend during the absence of regular members.

The Act was amended in 1976 to provide that the State Fire Services Council is deemed to be a fire brigade employer and a party to industrial proceedings to the exclusion of fire brigade boards where the council forms the opinion that an industrial cause has arisen which affects, or is likely to affect, more than one board. This followed a similar system in the ambulance services and resulted from the fact that one section of the fire brigades service could commit another section to a variation of award conditions virtually without consultation and by a simple follow-on procedure. The Government now acknowledges representations by the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board and the Queensland Country Fire Brigades Boards Union of Employers in relation to their exclusion from proceedings. Consequently, the role of the council is being changed to one of intervention in industrial proceedings which affect or are likely to affect a fire brigade board, and for the council to be then deemed to be a party to the proceedings.

A machinery amendment is also proposed to bring provisions relating to returns to the State Fire Services Council by owners of property or the relevant insurance company in respect of risks within fire brigade districts



which are not insured with a contributory company into line with those applicable to Queensland companies as from 1 January 1978.

All fire brigade boards are concerned with the number of false alarms caused to a large degree by faulty equipment or the careless use of equipment. The Bill will make provision for charges to be fixed by regulation, not only with respect to fire brigade attendance at fires on uninsured property but also for brigade attendance at any property in response to calls arising from activation of fire alarm systems where a fire has not occurred.

This is a Bill which I commend to the Committee and on which I anticipate support from all honourable members.

**Mr. YEWDAL** (Rockhampton North) (9.57 p.m.): The Opposition considers at the outset that that part of the measure presented by the Minister which deals with the superannuation fund is only in line with what has been happening in many other industries and many other facets of public operations.

As to the aspect of the representation of industrial unions, though it probably leaves room for some argument as to those who are justifiably entitled to be included in that category, while two organisations are currently functioning within the industry it would seem that a decision has to be made on that basis.

In his introductory remarks, the Minister mentioned that the measure would help to improve the efficient operation of fire services in Queensland. In view of the fact that this is an introductory debate—the Bill has not been printed of course—I will make a few comments on and observations about the efficient operation of fire services in Queensland.

I personally feel that the personnel of the State Fire Services Council ought to be altered. I do not intend this suggestion to be in any way derogatory of those persons as individuals. However, I firmly believe that those who currently hold appointment on that council are predominantly people who have not worked in the industry and have not been actively involved in fire-fighting or fire services as such. I know that a couple of the personnel have to some extent, but the others have not. I feel the time is long overdue when responsible people should look at the complement of the board and endeavour to place on it people who have had reasonable experience in the industry, either as part of the fire-fighting services in this State or as officers or fire brigade chiefs who have personally had practical experience.

I would like to mention a couple of other matters relating to fire services in Queensland, although at this late hour I do not want to go into too much detail. However, I refer briefly to a number of police stations throughout Queensland that are constructed of

wooden material and that have watch-houses attached to them. Mention of such buildings has been made in the media. I believe that those buildings are dangerous potential fire hazards because of the type of material they are constructed of and I know that the Police Union has recently commented on them.

About the middle of last year the chief officer in Brisbane said that he believed that Brisbane was sitting on a fire bomb and he elaborated why. He said that the old buildings in the metropolitan area were not covered by the legislation introduced last year.

A further serious problem is the number of school fires. Recently the Minister for Works and Housing made a statement through the media that some \$300,000 a year was the overall cost of fires in school buildings. Fires of this nature are very difficult to prevent, particularly if they are lit with some deliberate intent. It would seem to me that many of them are the result of accidents or are not caused by design. As I have said in this Chamber before, a greater use of school facilities outside school hours and over holiday periods as well as a better lighting system in and around school buildings could be an increased form of insurance against this type of damage.

Another problem in the metropolitan area is the practice adopted when vessels enter the port. I am advised that there is not enough communication between this section of industry and the fire services concerning vessels carrying flammable cargo or cargo that could be considered to be dangerous. One incident related to me concerned the ability of the chief officer in Brisbane to overcome a serious situation only because somebody had the sense to advise him of it. Apparently there is a need to tidy up this aspect of fire protection in the metropolitan area.

The provision outlined by the Minister regarding the requirement of property owners or companies that have not been covered by insurance and the risks that are involved is a good move.

I reserve the right to make further comment on all aspects of the Bill when it is printed.

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs) (10.3 p.m.), in reply: The honourable member referred to what he believes is a lack of expert advice on the State Fire Services Council. When he looks at the composition of the council he will find that it is not lacking in expert advice on fire-fighting or any other aspects.

The honourable member referred to the remarks of the fire chief that as yet old buildings are not covered by the recent amendment to the Fire Safety Act. I explained it quite clearly when that Bill was introduced. I will simply say that, from my investigations overseas and also in Australia, our Fire

Safety Act is without peer in Australia and ranks very highly compared with similar precautions overseas.

Motion (Mr. Campbell) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

### FIRE BRIGADE CHARGES REFUND BILL

#### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs) (10.5 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to provide for the refund to policy-holders of certain fire brigade charges and for matters incidental thereto.”

As honourable members are aware, the Fire Brigades Act was amended last year to provide that contributions by fire insurance companies towards the operation of fire brigades would be based on insured risks in fire brigade districts from July 1978. This was to give insurers the opportunity to remove fire brigade levies from premiums paid by policy-holders outside fire brigade districts. It had been administratively impracticable to amend the basis on which insurance contributions were calculated earlier than July 1978 because of the need to prepare new, detailed fire brigade district maps and the introduction of a new statistical system from July 1977.

Although the legislative amendment recognised the inequity of the fire brigade levy, particularly where a service could not be provided, the Government has been concerned about the length of lead time to give relief to policy-holders outside fire brigade districts. The Government has therefore decided to introduce this stopgap measure to cover the 12 months' period from 1 July 1977.

Under this Bill, policy-holders with insured risks outside fire brigade districts will be entitled to a refund of a prescribed portion of the fire insurance premiums falling due in the year 1977-78. Application for the refund is to be made to the State Fire Services Council on a form that will be prescribed by regulation. The refund will not apply to motor vehicle policies.

The Bill also provides that if a policy-holder is levied by, and pays a fire brigade charge to, an insurance company greater than the refund to which he is entitled from the State Fire Services Council, the insurance company will be required to pay the difference to the policy-holder. Because of the different methods used by companies in fixing the amount of the fire brigade levy, it has not been possible to indicate an exact percentage of the refund. The State

Fire Services Council will not be able until late in May this year to fix the percentage of the fire brigade contribution in relation to insurance company premiums to enable the companies to calculate the levies.

Provision is made that if the insurance is cancelled before the expiry date, the refund will be pro rata to the period the insurance is in force.

In order to provide the funds from which refunds will be made, the liability is placed on fire insurance companies and owners of property to pay to the State Fire Services Council during 1977-78 an additional contribution of 10 per cent of the provisional amount assessed as the normal contribution to fire brigades. “Owners of property” are persons who insure with companies outside Queensland or any organisation which is a self-insurer. It does not prevent a company from making a contribution on behalf of the owner. The Bill provides for the establishment at the Treasury of a special fund into which the contributions will be paid, and also for insurance companies to make an extra contribution if the fund is in debit at its closure or to receive a credit of any balance against normal contributions for fire brigade purposes after claims have been paid. Provision is made for penalties on persons who obtain refunds as a result of false claims.

Honourable members will agree that this legislation corrects a most serious injustice. By formulating legislation which will speed redress 12 months earlier than would otherwise have been administratively possible, the Government is demonstrating both awareness and acceptance of responsibility. Government policy, of course, has consistently been and will always be directed towards the removal of anomalies, and in my view this measure is an excellent example.

Finally, I wish to refer to a report in yesterday's “Australian” purporting to convey the contents and purposes of this Bill. It contains so many glaring inaccuracies, particularly on the effect on fire insurance companies and their clients, that companies may wish to issue a correcting statement. I certainly hope they do, for it is quite important that the contents of this measure be widely and accurately known. It does not, for example, entitle policy-holders to obtain, as the article suggested, “full refunds retrospective to when their policies were taken out.”

As I said earlier, policy-holders with insured risks outside fire brigade districts will be entitled to a refund of a subscribed portion of fire insurance premiums falling due in 1977-78, and at the risk of repeating myself ad nauseam, this stopgap Bill takes effect from 1 July this year and will operate for one year, and neither it, nor the Fire Brigade Act that I brought down last year and that will apply from 1 July 1978, confers any retrospectivity. I commend the Bill to the Committee.

**Mr. YEWDALE** (Rockhampton North) (10.13 p.m.): I feel it appropriate that my opening remark to the the Minister is, "Better late than never." In saying that I believe the same would be said by the people who are going to benefit from this decision and will receive the benefit 12 months earlier than they thought.

I recall clearly that the last time this matter was raised in the Assembly a decision was made not to levy this charge on country people who were not receiving a service from fire-fighting facilities. I recall raising this matter in the Assembly and using the analogy of people in country areas who pay income tax but do not receive health services. They should not have to pay that tax, and I still think that is a fairly valid argument.

The Minister said that this decision has been brought forward because the charge was an injustice. The Opposition agrees that this measure is certainly welcome and acceptable and I am sure people in country areas would agree.

There is one point that I presume applies to this measure and that is that during 1976 the media reported that the amendment to the Act would not preclude the fire brigade boards from attending fires outside gazetted fire brigade districts and would provide for a charge to be made rather than the payment of a fire brigade levy. I presume that that still applies and personally I see no reason why it should not. I repeat that the Opposition has no objection to this measure and we are pleased to see that it has been introduced some 12 months ahead of time.

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (10.15 p.m.): Although I have raised this point with the Minister before, I wish again to remind him of it. We are now talking about adjustments to fire brigade levies and refunds that may be granted by the Government or by the insurance companies concerned, and I again draw to the Minister's attention the inequality and anomalies that exist relative to fire brigade levies paid by people in the cyclone areas of North Queensland who pay through the nose for storm and tempest protection.

Where premiums for normal household insurance are very high, the fire brigade levy is, of course, a direct percentage of those higher premiums. This means that people in the tropical cyclone areas are paying for fire protection far more than are people in, say, the dry western areas of the State that are subject to very hot conditions or in the urban area of Brisbane where conditions are far drier than they are in the North and people are building on hillsides that are subject to fires. In recent years, some of the worst fire damage to houses in Australia has occurred in the metropolitan areas of Sydney and Melbourne, and I believe that in future years a similar problem will occur in some of the suburban areas of Brisbane. People are building houses close

to each other in the middle of bushland and scrub land, and in very dry seasons fire is likely to destroy them.

The converse applies in northern areas, where people pay higher insurance premiums in order to be protected against severe wet weather and storm and tempest. Because of the conditions existing there, the risk of fire damage to premises of insured persons is less. In my opinion, the existing set-up handicaps people living on the coastal belt in North Queensland, which is prone to cyclones. Storm and tempest rates there are up to three times higher than those being paid on similar houses in the Brisbane metropolitan area.

In many instances the high percentage of fire brigade levy on very high storm and tempest premiums is the straw that breaks the camel's back. For example, pensioners are unable to afford the premiums and many of them are allowing their policies to lapse. This could be detrimental to them if a major cyclone occurs, because most of them are living in older houses in which they have lived all their lives. They simply cannot afford to meet the high insurance premiums that are now being foisted upon them, and it is anomalous that these premiums are being increased by the fire brigade levy, which is a straight-out percentage not of the initial premium but of the existing high storm and tempest premium. Because of the wet conditions in the North, houses must be less susceptible to fire, and I ask that the Minister look again at this particular problem when we are endeavouring to remove anomalies confronting other sections of the community.

**Mr. MULLER** (Fassifern) (10.19 p.m.): As a representative of a rural area, I have been concerned for some considerable time about the fire brigade levy. Naturally, I am interested in what the Minister is attempting to do, and I believe that the proposal he has put forward certainly has been put forward in good faith. However, quite frankly, I am a little bit concerned about its practical application in the final analysis.

As I see it, persons in country areas, because of their vocations, are at special risk because they are not being served with an adequate water supply. This has been appreciated over quite a long period by insurance companies. I am appealing to the Minister for some guidance at this stage, but I think that whatever decision is made in giving relief to these people, the leeway could well be taken up by the insurance companies. I fear that as they accept the risk involved in these circumstances they will increase the general premium.

It has been suggested by the Minister that a special levy will be imposed for the first 12 months. What concerns me is that we appear to be attempting to grant immediate relief for those unfortunate people but the practical application of the Bill indicates to me that we are going to impose a 10 per

cent increase on their present levy in order to build up a fund, which in time will be refunded to those not adequately serviced at the moment. I must be quite fair about this. If I operated an insurance company and wanted to run my business effectively and efficiently I would feel I was obliged to increase the charges in the areas of greatest risk. That has been happening for years.

**Mr. Casey:** Surely insurance is a covering of the risk over all areas, not just in one area.

**Mr. MULLER:** That is true, but from the statement made by the Minister a few minutes ago it seems that there is going to be an immediate 10 per cent increase in the levy for the first 12 months. In those circumstances those persons outside a fire brigade area would not respond very favourably to the Minister's submission.

Those are the only points I wish to make at this time. I am quite certain the Minister will clarify the matter for me. In the second-reading stage after we have seen the Bill we will be in a position to comment more intelligently on the legislation.

**Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (10.23 p.m.):** As I understand it the Minister's proposal is designed as a stop-gap measure in an endeavour to bring some relief to policy-holders outside of fire brigade districts before the 1978 phasing-in period referred to in the previous legislation. As I understand the Minister's proposal, it is totally designed to bring some relief in this area during the 1977-78 financial year. How it is proposed to be done is that there will be a 10 per cent increase in existing fire brigade levies, which will go into a pool to be supervised by the Fire Services Council, and to which policy-holders will be able to apply for a refund of their fire brigade levy.

As far as I can see at this stage, for the next 12 months this is a reasonable suggestion. As I see it, it will mean an increase in premiums generally. When companies make an extra 10 per cent contribution to fire brigades generally they are not going to do that out of the goodness of their heart but from moneys received from policy-holders. Those outside of the fire brigade districts will be able to apply voluntarily.

Of course we have this very considerable problem of public relations in getting the message across to all policy-holders. The task will fall on the shoulders of members of Parliament as well as the Minister's officers and the Fire Services Council to see that the public generally are made aware that this facility is available. I predict some administrative problems and many telephone calls to members of Parliament to check on whether buildings are inside a fire brigade district or not.

This massive exercise that we have embarked upon to bring greater equity to the financing of fire brigade services has

its problems, but we are aiming at a very realistic goal. The past system whereby fire brigade levies were imposed on all policy-holders, in spite of the fact that they might be miles away from fire services, was very inequitable.

When the full impact of these programmes is felt, the cost of fire brigade services to policy-holders in fire brigade districts will be too high. As legislators we must face the fact that the cost of fire brigade services has escalated tremendously. No doubt the Minister has accurate statistics, but I estimate that the cost of fire brigade services has escalated twice as fast as the C.P.I. The cost of fire brigade services has risen dramatically. In my electorate we have been looking into providing new fire brigade services but, in real terms, the cost of providing them is dramatic.

The Minister is to be congratulated on ensuring that the Fire Services Council has to recognise its responsibility for tempering increased costs in this area. Industrially, we have tried to bring some sanity to the escalation of wage costs in this industry. If the present trend continues we will be unable to afford fire brigade services. By tackling the equity provision, which wisely we have done, we may find that the loading of the total cost on to the few policy-holders in a fire brigade district will be too much.

The Minister has participated in some Federal committees with the idea of approaching the Federal Government to argue that the cost of fire brigade services should be financed from Federal Consolidated Revenue or in some other way better than simply loading the whole cost on to policy-holders because as a result of this legislation, from the start of the 1978-79 financial year the cost will be too high.

This proposal will result in increased fire premiums throughout the State. Any premium involving a fire brigade levy will be increased in relation to a 10 per cent increase in the present fire brigade levy component. That is to go to a pool to make refunds to policy-holders who apply for a refund and are eligible. That is a reasonable way of starting the project.

I hope that when we get around to doing this, the Minister assists members of Parliament and the public so that the message gets across to all eligible policy-holders, and so that we may have some way of knowing who is eligible in areas where there is considerable doubt.

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs) (10.30 p.m.),** in reply: The honourable member for Mackay amazes me. He purports to be an authority on so many things in this Chamber; yet he is completely ignorant of the import of the amendments which I brought in last year, which recognised the very fact of which he now belatedly complains. That is the reason why the levy was transferred from the

premium to the sum insured. I am amazed that the honourable for Mackay is not aware of the current situation.

**Mr. Casey:** The companies are still charging it that way.

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** Now the honourable member has put his foot in it much deeper. I was coming to the very valid point made by his colleague the member for Rockhampton North, who said that it is better late than never.

I gave a very clear and concise illustration when I introduced the legislation last year to give relief to those people who at present are required to pay levies on properties that have no fire brigade protection. At the same time I explained that the machinery to give relief from those extraneous matters not related to fire protection (such as storm and tempest, householder insurance and other ancillary items that are covered by a fire insurance policy) required the Fire Services Council to produce 250 copies of maps of all the fire brigade districts so that the insurance companies would be able to delineate those risks which were inside the districts and those that were not. It was for that and a lot of other reasons that it was not possible under last year's legislation for the relief to be given until 1 July 1978. I think by now most people are generous enough to appreciate the mechanics of that exercise.

However, our promise of relief to people living outside fire brigade districts, who for many, many years had been making contributions for a service that they did not receive, was not acceptable to people living in the country.

**Mr. Casey:** Bring it in for everybody, not just one section of the community.

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** The honourable member has already made a big enough fool of himself. He should not make himself a bigger fool. This is giving relief in three months' time. Such was the representation made to me by members from country areas that I felt some scheme had to be found that would give temporary relief. The member for Landsborough acknowledged that when he said it was a stopgap piece of legislation to overcome this problem.

**Mr. Casey:** It is very stop with a lot of gaps.

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** I think that would apply to the honourable member for Mackay. I do not suppose he has anybody in his electorate who is outside a fire brigade district. What he does not realise—and his face will be red—is that every policy-holder in his electorate who is inside a fire brigade district from now on will be paying a higher fire brigade levy to make up for the shortfall caused by those living outside fire brigade districts not having to pay the levy. I hope that the honourable member appreciates that.

I have answered some of the points raised by the honourable member for Rockhampton North. He said that fire brigades can attend fires outside fire brigade districts and that the policy-holder has to pay the fee. That is so. If he makes a claim on an insurance company, the insurance company will refund the fee. I think I am right in that regard; if I am not I will correct myself at a later stage.

In reply to the honourable member for Fassifern—I have dealt with the fact that, in giving relief in this area, the burden is transferred to people living within a fire brigade district. Fire insurance premiums are not covered by this legislation.

The honourable member for Landsborough has a very clear understanding of the measure. He was good enough to acknowledge that this is a stopgap measure until last year's amendment takes effect.

He referred to the cost of fire brigade services. No sector of government or semi-government is as costly as fire brigade services. On my recollection, their budgets have almost doubled in two years. The escalation has taken place because, of the total of fire brigade budgets, wages represent, I think, in the vicinity of 82 per cent.

The other point he made was the need to publicise this measure so that people will know their rights. It will be necessary for individuals to make a claim to the State Fire Services Council. It is not possible to do it in any other way. I venture to suggest that because so many have complained that they are paying an unfair levy they will not be lax in applying for their just deserts.

Motion (Mr. Campbell) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

### JUSTICES ACT AND THE CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL

#### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.40 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Justices Act 1886–1975 and The Criminal Code each in certain particulars.”

A review of various provisions and procedures under the Justices Act has been carried out and several amendments to the Act are proposed. In addition, some consequential amendments are being made to the Criminal Code.

Some difficulty has been experienced in relation to the issue of warrants and the arrest of prisoners who have escaped from custody whilst serving sentences in respect of convictions for simple offences. The difficulty arises when such prisoners are located in another State. Section 33 of the Prisons Act provides for the escaped prisoner to be arrested without the issue of a warrant. However, in order to extradite such a prisoner under the Commonwealth Service of Execution and Process Act, a warrant issued by a court or justice is necessary. Section 59 of the Justices Act presently provides for the issue of warrants in the first instance but provides that no such warrant shall be issued unless under the express authority of some Act in that behalf.

Consequently there is no power to extradite in such cases. The proposed amendment to section 59 of the Justices Act will overcome this problem by providing for the issue of a warrant in the first instance where, under the Act whereby the offence is created, there is authority either to arrest without warrant or to issue a warrant.

The powers of justices conducting proceedings in Magistrates Courts is not adequate at present to prohibit the taking or publishing of photographs of the court proceedings or of witnesses and parties attending those proceedings. The Bill will provide an offence for any person who takes or publishes photographs or produces pictures of those court proceedings or of people involved in the court proceedings in relation to those proceedings.

At present, where justices commit a person for trial on a charge of an indictable offence, the witnesses who gave evidence at the preliminary hearing are ordered to enter into recognizances to appear at the court at which the defendant is to be tried. On most occasions the witnesses are excused from further attendance at court upon the completion of their evidence and at the completion of the preliminary hearing, if the defendant is committed for trial, the witnesses are not available to enter into the required recognizances conditioned for their appearance at the higher court.

In most cases the investigating police officer is required to obtain the completed recognizances, locate the witnesses and take them before a justice of the peace to enter into the recognizances. This is a very time-consuming procedure and it is proposed to abolish it and replace it with a provision whereby in the event of a committal for trial the clerk of the court will be required to issue to each witness examined, and the maker of each written statement admitted in

evidence, a notice requiring that person to attend at the court at which the defendant is to be tried.

This proposal involves the repeal and amendment of some sections of the Justices Act and the insertion of a new section to replace the existing procedure of binding over witnesses.

Following the insertion of this new provision it is also necessary to make consequential amendments to the Criminal Code. These amendments also are contained in the Bill.

Difficulties have been experienced in relation to the issue of warrants for the imprisonment of unsuccessful appellants following the determination of appeals lodged pursuant to section 222 of the Justices Act. At present such warrants are issued by the clerk of the Magistrates Court. However, this procedure results in delays. Once the court hearing the appeal is closed, the appellant is no longer in custody and instances have occurred where unsuccessful appellants have disappeared before they can be taken into custody under the authority of a warrant issued by the clerk of the Magistrates Court. The proposed amendment will provide for such warrants to be issued by the court which heard and determined the appeal.

The very large bulk of complaints made under the Traffic Act, the Main Roads Act and other Acts and the increase in the number of these complaints in recent years have led to the introduction of simpler and speedier procedures to deal with such complaints before Magistrates Courts. The benefits derived from these procedures, such as the new procedure permissible in the absence of a defendant in certain cases as provided in section 142A of the Justices Act, have been enormous and have resulted in a great saving in time and expense for all concerned.

However, some problems have arisen, particularly where a small human error is made or delays have resulted in the communication of information. The result has been that on rare occasions a person has been convicted of a minor offence where the summons issued on the complaint has not come to his attention, or the same person has been previously convicted in respect of the same offence, or the conviction or order has been recorded against the wrong person.

At present many of these errors or mistakes can only be rectified by commencing proceedings by way of certiorari in the Supreme Court to have the conviction or order of the Magistrates Court quashed. This procedure is lengthy, cumbersome and expensive when

commenced in respect of some minor offence. It is therefore proposed to provide a procedure for Magistrates Courts to reopen proceedings and rectify convictions or orders that have been wrongly recorded.

The opportunity has been taken, whilst amending the Justices Act and including in the Bill some consequential amendments to the Criminal Code, to correct two anomalies in the Criminal Code. Such amendments are included in the Bill. I commend the Bill to the Committee.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (10.46 p.m.): I think we have just witnessed a very good example of the problems that face members of the Opposition. A Minister of the Crown can rise and, in a very few moments, rattle off some 15 or 20 changes that are being proposed in legislation and members of the Opposition then have to rise and try to debate these changes. It may be time we started looking again at the introductory debate. Whilst members look upon this stage as an opportunity for members of Parliament to speak about any aspect that pertains to particular legislation under debate, I think all honourable members realise the difficulties that we are placed in.

It would seem from what the Minister has just said that the main issue at stake here is the issue of warrants, but he referred also to the Criminal Code and problems confronting magistrates—in fact, he spoke about myriad issues. In the interests of getting some reasonable debate here, I suggest to the Minister that it would not be difficult on apolitical issues (and I believe these issues are apolitical) to give all members some indication of what is going to happen. The Minister knows that we do not try to score just for the sake of politics, and whilst it is probably better for him to keep everybody in the dark I do not believe it is in the interests of good legislation. The tendency is for members to branch off into other issues.

I have been well aware of some of the problems that arise because of the difficulty of extraditing prisoners from other States, and this has been mentioned at Attorney-General level in the Federal sphere. Mr. Enderby made the point a long time ago that the States ought to look at some sort of uniform legislation to overcome the difficulties. It would seem now that the Minister for Justice in this State is endeavouring to bring down legislation to overcome some specific problems.

The Minister has made some comment on the numerous areas under review not only in the Justices Act 1886-1975 but also in the Criminal Code. I believe the criticism that has been made of the Criminal Code is warranted. It would seem that we need

a total review of it. When we first codified our criminal law, we were praised and were said to be leading the way, but in view of the numerous amendments that are taking place, and this is happening every day, it would seem that the time is coming again for a review of our Criminal Code. All other States have not seen fit to follow our lead, but three or four have.

I would suggest that one area that needs to be looked at is compensation for injury. We have talked here very quickly about escapees, and very often when the escapee does get out he hurts someone. The Minister for Justice will well know of problems that arose at Etna Creek when two fellows escaped and bashed a woman. Although they were recaptured and punished, in that they were given longer sentences, nothing was given to the victim.

We have a system under sections 663A, B and C of the Criminal Code whereby compensation may be made available to the victims of violent crime. We also have a section which enables assistance to be given to those people who have been injured whilst trying to assist police officers in the carrying out of their duties. But from information given to me only this day by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General as to the number of claims for ex gratia payment under this section of the Criminal Code, it would seem that we need a total review. The Minister pointed out that there had been 89 claims for ex gratia payment under the Criminal Code, that 35 of these had been successful, 34 had been denied, 10 were still under consideration and another 10 were subsequently withdrawn. He pointed out also that \$38,025 had been paid since 1968. Actually, I think that provision came into force on 1 January 1969 although the legislation was introduced in 1968. The lowest amount of money paid was \$200, whilst the highest was \$4,000. I am not aware of whether it was the present Minister for Justice or his predecessor who increased the amount from \$2,000 to \$5,000 but, no matter who it was, the quantum is still insufficient.

It is time that we as a State gave more cognisance to the victims of crime than to the criminals. The community generally is saying, "Let's do something about victims. Let's put aside some of the rehabilitation programmes." I stand condemned here, because when I first entered this Chamber in 1969 my whole aim, being involved in the prisons portfolio, was to do something about rehabilitation. It is amazing how time balances one out, Mr. Miller, and one begins to realise that there is a real need to begin thinking of the victims.

Although we need to punish those who commit crimes, and to try to rehabilitate them so that they can come back into society as worthwhile citizens and, therefore,

not be a cost to the State, the real question that arises now is what compensation or assistance is available to the victims.

**Mr. Lindsay:** You are reading my maiden speech.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** If ever I read the honourable member's maiden speech in this Chamber, I would be kicked out of Parliament. His speeches are usually shocking contributions and they come from a member who does not know much about anything.

Let me come back to the point I was making. It is necessary for us to look at the present system of compensating victims. I do not blame the Minister, who has held the portfolio for only a short time, but it seems to me to be wrong that the total amount of money paid to the 35 successful applicants is \$38,025 when one reads in the newspapers of civil actions by persons who lose an eye or an arm in which \$90,000 or \$100,000 is paid for one incident. In this area the average claim, taking the mean, would be just over \$1,000, the lowest payment being \$200 and the maximum \$4,000.

So, although it is something of a turnabout for me from the days when I spoke in this Chamber of the need for rehabilitation, of the need to make better citizens of the fellows who are involved in crime, I think we must come back to caring for the victim. This is the type of speech that the honourable member for Townsville South would make. However, I have met a number of people who have been victims of crimes. A school-teacher friend of mine was viciously bashed. He was off work for a considerable time and, because of that, he lost promotion. He had facial injuries and needed spectacles after the attack. His whole attitude to life changed. In spite of that, after three years he still had not received any compensation.

That raises the point that the victims of crimes such as that need assistance at the time of the incident, not three or four years later. They need it immediately after they have been attacked, because no income is coming forward to pay hospital bills and to carry their wife through. Although the Minister said in the Chamber this morning that the procedure had been simplified where possible and that the average period for processing the claims is about three months, my experience indicates to me that that is not completely true. If one gets in touch with lawyers who have been handling these matters, who have submitted claims through the Attorney-General to the Governor in Council for some type of payment, one finds that in many cases payment has not been made for two or three years.

**Mr. Lester:** How do you suggest that we get quick payments?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** That is a valid question. In the first instance, we must realise that the person who is hurt has to pay doctor's bills. The maximum payment is \$5,000, so there is no reason why the victim could not be given an initial payment of \$500. At the moment, section 663A says that it must be determined whether or not the criminal can afford to pay. This comes back to common sense. Most of the people who are involved in these crimes do not own anything. They do not own their own car; they do not own their own lodgings; they have no money in the bank. Therefore, it is ridiculous to say that an attempt must first be made to obtain the money from the offender. We must say, "We know you are the victim of a crime. You are an innocent victim. Here is \$500 for you to use. We will review the position as we go along." Surely that is a reasonable approach. It assists the families of the victim, in particular, by giving them some money to pay medical expenses and fill the cupboards. I suggest that this is one area that should be looked at.

As to the points raised by the Minister, I will look at them when the Bill has been printed. As I have said before, on a non-political issue there is merit in circulating the proposed amendments. I commend the Minister for his recent interview with "Telegraph" reporters. It was rather well done. It was not so much an ego trip as an explanation of what he was doing to combat corporate crime in this State. In that interview he mentioned some aspects of pending legislation. If he is prepared to do that publicly then I believe he ought to do it within this Assembly, because that is in the interests of good legislation and good debate.

**Mr. LOWES (Brisbane) (10.56 p.m.):** The legislation proposed by the Minister covers the amending of the Justices Act and the Criminal Code Act, the schedule to which is what we know as the Criminal Code. Those two Acts cover much of the criminal law of the State. The Justices Act is an Act of 1886. It covers minor offences and the treatment by the Magistrates Court of offenders, with the exception of those charged with crimes of greater gravity. They are dealt with by the justices only by way of preliminary hearing and defendants are then committed to the Criminal Court.

The Justices Act has been amended fairly regularly because it deals with offences of a minor nature and offences which are more prevalent than those dealt with under the Criminal Code. On the other hand, the Criminal Code has been something of a sacred cow to lawyers in Queensland ever since it was first introduced in 1889. And so it ought to be. It is the work of a fine jurist, a man of great legal stature both in this State and in the initial federation of Australia.



In the accepted textbook on criminal law in Queensland by His Honour Judge Carter, probably one of Queensland's greatest legal annotators, it is not surprising to find in the foreword written by His Honour, as he then was, the Chief Justice of Queensland, Sir Alan Mansfield—

"Certain branches of the law have been expressed in the form of codes with consequential benefit to the community and amongst the most successful of these has been the Queensland Criminal Code, the product of that great jurist, Sir Samuel Griffith.

"It is, however, incorrect to suppose that any code can remain complete for long. Cases arise from time to time when its meaning is extended and modified by Judges, and every year produces a crop of legislation, some of which affects the provision of a code. Queensland is no exception."

In addition to the changes which come about through decisions by judges and by legislation there is the change which comes about in the thinking of the community. That, too, has its effect upon the need for amendment of such laws as the Criminal Code of Queensland. There has no doubt been this reluctance to amend the Criminal Code, and when it has been found necessary to do so it has been the result of a change in thinking in the community.

I refer particularly to the law of diminished responsibility, which comes from the acceptance by the community of the state of mind of a convicted person. So from time to time we have had to amend both Acts, more frequently the Justices Act.

Change takes place not only in the thinking of the people but also in technology. The Minister has referred to the use of cameras, a problem which did not occur to the legislators in 1886. We have seen cases where the use of a camera has been made a nuisance if not a means of preventing the proper free exercise of justice. After a certain coroner's inquest in this city it was found necessary to amend the Coroners Act because of the blatant use by certain members of the media of cameras in places where the free exercise of law could well have been prevented. For that reason it is intended to restrict the use of cameras in Magistrates Courts and in the precincts of such courts.

When considering the precincts of courts it is necessary to consider not only the courts as we know them in Brisbane, where they are situated in fine buildings such as the Central Courts, but also the courts in the country, which could quite easily be the scene of quite important, newsworthy trials. It is well to consider how far the use of cameras can go to prevent people from coming to and from court and prevent the proper disposition of justice.

The camera has created many problems. When we consider how it could be used and has been used in Brisbane courts it is obvious that we must take steps to ensure that the stage is not reached where the use of the camera is in fact in contempt. Recourse is then made to the provisions of the Criminal Code, which call upon people with access to the court to refrain from any action which, of itself, may amount to contempt of court. I refer to the use not only of cameras but also of all sorts of technical instruments that can be used to reproduce scenes.

I am sure that when legislation is being drafted it is a challenge to the draftsman to ensure that it covers every possible use of equipment that may generally be referred to as cameras but includes every possible device for the reproduction of images. That is what the draftsman will have had to do when considering the proposed amendments to prevent the improper use of cameras.

The Minister proposes amending the Act to provide for the apprehension of appellants who have lodged appeals under section 222 of the Justices Act. When a person appeals he may or may not be before the court. At present, assuming that he is before the court and that the court having heard his appeal dismisses it, he is not then in custody of the court. The court having dismissed the appeal, the appellant is free. I am informed that on some occasions appellants have immediately quit the court precincts. It then becomes a matter of arresting them. I regard it as quite proper that the court hearing an appeal should also be vested with authority to place the appellant in custody. The judge in charge of that court will have authority to issue a warrant immediately to arrest the appellant and take him into custody. This is a matter of streamlining the process of law.

Most of the recommendations in the legislation are designed to streamline the administration of justice. This applies particularly to the amendments that the Magistrates Court may sanction without the costly, unwieldy process of prerogative writs. Not for one moment do I suggest that prerogative writs should be removed from the reach of the citizen. They are probably one of the ordinary citizen's best bulwarks against bureaucracy and are designed for his protection, but prerogative writs were not intended for use in such minor matters as are dealt with by magistrates under such Acts as the Traffic Act and the Main Roads Act.

So it is not unreasonable for the Magistrates Court to be given power to amend its own records and to amend the documents that it possesses. Many of the errors are purely and simply grammatical—human errors. They are not such as to change the type of the offence, but it is proper that the magistrate should have the right and the jurisdiction to amend without the defendant having to go to

the expense of issuing a prerogative writ such as a writ of certiorari and going to the Full Court to have the wrong rectified. The whole of the proposed legislation is for the simplification of the process of law. I believe such legislation will have the support of all members of the Committee, both Government and Opposition.

The provision for amendment of section 59 of the Justices Act is a reasonable one. It is admitted that the frequency of prisoners absconding and escaping to other States would not be great, but it happens often enough to warrant the amendment. With transport by aircraft and swift land vehicles, it is not unreasonable to expect that when a person does escape from custody he may very shortly find himself in another State. Under the Commonwealth Service of Execution and Process Act there is the present difficulty that a warrant cannot be issued in the absence of a provision under the Act by which the person is charged. It is now proposed to amend that section of the Justices Act. Here again I submit that such an amendment could only have the approval of all the members.

The amendments do nothing more than assist in the administration of justice. For that reason, the measure should have the support of all members.

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.8 p.m.), in reply: I thank both honourable members for their contributions. I would like to comment firstly on the statements made by the honourable member for Rockhampton on the supply of adequate information on the motion for the introduction of the Bill. I was under the very clear understanding that during the motion for the introduction of a Bill it was incumbent upon a Minister to give the principles of the legislation that he was introducing.

If I might just briefly reiterate what I did say—and I do not want to delay the Assembly—first of all I referred to the difficulties being experienced. I then went on to cover clearly the position relating to the use of cameras within the precincts of the Magistrates Court and the remedy that was to be taken; the binding over of witnesses; the amendment to section 59, which was just referred to in some detail by my colleague the honourable member for Brisbane, and what we proposed to do in relation to that; the issuing of warrants following appeals; and the power of justices to rectify mistakes. I explained those in some depth. In fact, they are the principles of the Bill. I then went on to indicate in conclusion that—

“The opportunity has been taken, whilst amending the Justices Act and including in the Bill some consequential amendments to the Criminal Code, to correct two anomalies in the Criminal Code. Such amendments are included in the Bill.”

**Mr. Wright:** My point is that when it is an apolitical issue such as this, which should have the support of the Committee, it does not hurt to let Opposition members know beforehand. That is my point. It is done by other Ministers.

**Mr. Marginson:** Not all.

**Mr. Wright:** No, not all of them. When it is a political issue you score; but when it is not, we ought to know.

**Mr. LICKISS:** That is fair enough. I have no objection to letting all members know as much as possible about it so they can offer some constructive advice on the measure introduced.

On the question of the Criminal Code I said first of all that the amendments were consequential upon the amendments proposed to the Justices Act. They are merely amendments pointed out by the Parliamentary Counsel and I have taken the opportunity of accepting his advice. I am using this instance to correct an anomaly in relation to headings preceding sections of the Code.

The format of the Criminal Code as enacted is such that each section is preceded by a heading that encapsules the content of the section. This still applies to the great majority of the Code's provisions. However, in some sections of the Code that have been inserted by way of amendment, the original format has not been preserved, so a few provisions of the Code contain a note in and at the beginning of the section which is in the nature of a marginal note and not a heading.

Reference to section 14 of the Acts Interpretation Act shows that there is a difference in status between a heading and a note. This difference may well determine whether resort may or may not be had to the content of the heading or note to aid in the construction of the section.

I intended to cover this matter in more detail when I thought it was more appropriate—at the second-reading stage. I give that information at this stage to indicate that I do not wish to hide anything. It is a matter that the honourable member will note also when the Bill is printed. I do not think it is fair to say that I have not outlined all of the principles of the Bill. I set out purposely to achieve that.

I thank the honourable member for Brisbane for his very detailed and sound knowledge of the provisions currently before the Committee. I thank him for his contribution.

Motion (Mr. Lickiss) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

The House adjourned at 11.14 p.m.