

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 1977**

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Secretary, Queensland Law Society Incorporated, under the Legal Assistance Act 1965-1975, for the year 1976-77.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

##### DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY; MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (11.5 a.m.): I desire to inform the House that in connection with the overseas visit of the Minister for Primary Industries, the Deputy Governor, for and on behalf of His Excellency the Governor, by virtue of the provisions of the Officials in Parliament Act 1896-1975, authorised and empowered the Honourable Kenneth Burgoyne Tomkins, M.L.A., Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service, to perform and exercise all or any of the duties, powers and authorities imposed or conferred upon the Minister for Primary Industries by any Act, rule, practice or ordinance on and from 9 September 1977, and until the return to Queensland of the Honourable Victor Bruce Sullivan, M.L.A.

I lay upon the table of the House a copy of the Queensland Government Gazette of 10 September 1977 notifying this arrangement.

*Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the Queensland Government Gazette on the table.*

## TUESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 1977

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

#### PAPERS

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

##### Reports—

Commissioner of Land Tax, for the year 1976-77.

Nominal Defendant (Queensland), for the year 1976-77.

Licensing Commission, for the year 1976-77.

Literature Board of Review, for the year 1976-77.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the Electoral Districts Act 1971-1977.

##### Orders in Council under—

Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1971.

Audit Acts Amendment Act 1926-1971.

State and Regional Planning and Development, Public Works Organization and Environmental Control Act 1971-1974 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923-1975.

Harbours Act 1955-1976.

Co-operative Housing Societies Act 1958-1974.

Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act 1967-1973.

##### Reports—

Pyramid Selling Schemes Elimination Committee, for the year 1976-77.

#### PETITION

##### ALLEVIATION OF AIR POLLUTION, DARRA AREA

**Mr. MARGINSON** (Wolston) presented a petition from 1,002 electors of south-western areas of Brisbane praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take urgent action to alleviate the serious pollution problems and health hazards created by the fall-out and odour from the Darra Cement and Lime Company's plant at Darra and from other industrial sources.

Petition read and received.

#### VALUATION OF LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### INITIATION

**Hon. J. W. GREENWOOD** (Ashgrove—Minister for Survey and Valuation): 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 Valuation of Land Act 1944-1977 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. USE OF ARSENIC IN TANNERIES

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

(1) Has arsenic been used by tanneries in Queensland and, if so, has it been used in big quantities?

(2) Where tanneries bury in shallow pits the waste associated with this arsenic treatment, can the area be reused for housing development and, if so, is there any danger to home gardeners and those who work or grow vegetables in this soil?

(3) Are any checks made on existing tanneries or tanneries that have closed to see that areas that have been used for arsenic dumps are shown on maps, so that people are aware before they purchase land of the possible problems associated with the dumping of arsenic wastes?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I have had representations from the honourable member for Belmont (Mr. Byrne) about a similar matter recently and my answer to him was as follows:—

“Arsenical preparations were used by tanneries to a greater extent in the past than at present. During recent years those tanneries still operating are using alternative preparations and arsenic use is confined to specific sections of the industry.

“The only question that comes under my jurisdiction is that which relates to a possible hazard to health. I am advised that there is a certain amount of leaching out of the arsenic and the risk to the health of home gardeners is negligible.”

2. FAMILY PLANNING

Dr. Scott-Young, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) How much money has been funded by this Government in family-planning clinics?

(2) What guide-lines are laid down for the spending of the money?

(3) Is there an age provision written into the guide-lines to prevent minors from receiving advice on contraception techniques, so leading to an increase in promiscuous behaviour?

Answers:—

(1) The Family Planning Association of Queensland was paid an initial establishment grant of \$6,000 in May 1972 and subsequent maintenance grants to this association to 30 June 1977 amount to \$174,000.

The Natural Family Planning Clinic under the auspices of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau was paid an initial grant

of \$3,000 in 1972 and subsequent maintenance grants to 30 June 1977 amount to \$21,500.

(2 and 3) In view of the differing philosophies of these two organisations, the Government has pursued a policy allowing both freedom of movement to determine their own programmes and methods of operations within the objects of their constitutions.

3. COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICE, TOWNSVILLE

Dr. Scott-Young, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) How many persons are employed in the Community Health Service, Townsville?

(2) What is the total salary cost of this service?

(3) What are the classifications of the personnel employed and how many are in each classification?

(4) How many vehicles are used by the staff, and what is the cost of running and maintaining them?

Answers:—

(1) Forty staff were employed as at 30 June 1977.

(2) Salary costs for 1976-77 were \$394,490.97.

(3) Staff as at 30 June 1977 comprised—  
1 medical officer in charge of the centre;

- 1 regional psychiatrist;
- 1 regional geriatric physician;
- 1 medical officer, school health;
- 1 psychologist;
- 3 social workers;
- 1 physiotherapist;
- 1 speech therapist;

- 13 community health nurses;
- 4 community health aides;
- 1 health education officer;
- 3 health inspectors;
- 1 organiser, home helps;
- 2 clerks;
- 5 typists; and
- 1 switchboard operator.

(4) Nineteen vehicles. Running costs in 1976-77 were \$19,389.90.

4. CARDWELL RESTRUCTURE PLAN

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

What progress has been made by his department with the Cardwell restructure plan as submitted by the Cardwell Shire Council?

*Answer:—*

My Department of Forestry set out its reaction to the structure plan in a letter dated 12 October 1976 to the Cardwell Shire Council. The views of the council were sought on various matters raised, but the only reply from the council to date has been a formal acknowledgement.

#### 5. CANTEEN CLUB, PALM ISLAND

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

(1) Is he aware of an article in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" of 6 September wherein Senator Keffe implied that a decision had been taken to close down the canteen at Palm Island, thus resulting in sly-grog operations on the island?

(2) Will he explain the facts regarding the establishment, operation and management of the canteen club on Palm Island?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) The Palm Island Club, which includes the liquor facility, is operated and managed by the Palm Island Aboriginal Council, with all of the profits being retained for the community benefit.

The Government does not direct or control the activities of the liquor facility or the club outside of the general guidelines laid down in the appropriate legislation, which was determined with the advice and guidance of Queensland's Aboriginal Advisory Council.

The sales of beer ceased for four days by direction of the council for the simple reason that supplies had run out and fresh supplies had not reached the island.

#### 6. COMPLEXITIES OF INTERNATIONAL SUGAR TRADE

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

(1) Is he aware of an article appearing in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" of 6 September wherein the Leader of the Opposition is quoted as having criticised the involvement of this State Government in the current Japanese sugar agreement controversy?

(2) Has the Minister any further comments to add to his already lengthy statements regarding this matter, and will he explain the delicacy of international trade negotiations related to sugar and the necessity for political prudence in these matters, especially in the light of the past action of the former Labor Commonwealth Government in forcing up mineral royalties in spite of existing contracts, thereby creating the precedent for disputation in respect of existing agreements?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) The Honourable the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr. Sullivan, who is in constant touch with developments in the international sugar marketing field, is in Geneva.

In the absence of Mr. Sullivan, I would advise honourable members that the Leader of the Opposition is reported to be advocating immediate litigation as the way to solve sugar contract disputes. I would point out, however, that when the Honourable the Premier announced, on 1 September last, that the Queensland Government was instituting arbitration proceedings in accordance with the relevant clause in the Japanese long-term contract, it was only after extensive efforts had been made to reach an amicable negotiated settlement and after careful consideration by the sugar industry of the issues involved. The failure of the Japanese buyers to honour the contract or to respond in a responsible way to the proposals put forward by Australia left the Queensland Government no alternative to legal action.

#### 7. UPGRADING OF SECTION OF OLD CLEVELAND ROAD, BELMONT

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

(1) Has he received an allocation of funds to upgrade Old Cleveland Road to a four-lane highway from Creek Road to Capalaba Road and, if so, how much has he received?

(2) When will this work commence?

*Answers:—*

(1) As all honourable members know, I have been trying very hard to obtain an increased allocation of funds for many projects in Queensland to ensure that progress on our roads is kept at reasonable level. I am confident that my efforts will not be in vain. Included in the works which I have in mind when additional funds become available are three projects on Old Cleveland Road—the Main Roads Department calls it the Cleveland Sub Arterial Road—about which the honourable member has sought information. These projects cover roadworks from Adelaide Street to Bulimba Creek and then to Scrub Road and also the duplication of the recently completed bridge over Bulimba Creek. All in all I envisage an expenditure this financial year of the order of \$500,000 on this section of road.

(2) I strongly believe these works should be commenced as soon as practicably possible to demonstrate the Government's determination to provide the necessary road access to some of the proposed Commonwealth Games facilities, in spite of the

diminishing allocation for urban arterial roads in the Commonwealth roads legislation.

I am hopeful that yesterday's announcement by my colleague the Honourable the Deputy Premier and Treasurer will enable the work to which the honourable member refers to be undertaken at an early date.

8. PUBLIC TRANSPORT, SOUTH ROCHEDALE

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

What arrangements have been made for public transport in the South Rochedale section of the proposed electorate of Mansfield?

*Answer:—*

As I understand the honourable member's question, he is referring to that area of Rochedale between the boundary of the city of Brisbane, south to Underwood Road and east of Rochedale Road to Priest Gully (a developing area).

I am advised that at the present time regular bus services operate along Underwood Road only as far as Koobil Street. It is planned to extend these services along Underwood Road as far as Kiato Street, then north along Pandeen Street, Glengala Drive, Kala Street, Woodland Drive, Devon Street, Lamorna Street, Wendron Street, Davey Street, Valeena Street, north along Rochedale Road to Miles Platting Road to the Pacific Highway and Mt. Gravatt.

These proposals are subject to a general reorganisation of the private operator's routes in the Rochedale-Springwood area, which is presently under joint examination by the Department of Transport and the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

9. NATIONAL PARKS FUNDING

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

(1) Have funds been made available by the Commonwealth Government in the last 18 months to assist national parks in Queensland and, if so, what amounts are involved?

(2) What national parks received funds and what were the amounts?

(3) For what purpose are the funds intended?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes. Amounts involved are—

	\$
Tourist Development Projects .. .. .	97,573
Land Acquisition .. .. .	488,330
Fraser Island Grant .. .. .	500,000
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Total amount made available .. .. .	\$1,085,903

(2) Girraween National Park—\$51,574 for construction of visitor facilities.

Carnarvon National Park—\$45,999 for construction of visitor facilities.

Eubaneege Swamp National Park—\$88,330 for land acquisition.

A further sum of \$400,000 made available for land acquisition has not been finally allocated; it may include extensions to Lamington, Mt. Elliot and Crows Nest Falls National Parks.

A grant of \$500,000 has been made available over the four year period ending 30 June 1980 for works on the Fraser Island National Park.

(3) See answer to (2).

10. PARKING AREAS, NORMAN PARK AND MORNINGSIDE RAILWAY STATIONS

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

When will the parking areas at the Norman Park and Morningside Railway Stations be developed, as it is now some considerable time since the proposal was last discussed with the department through the late Minister?

*Answer:—*

The Metropolitan Transit Authority is progressively providing parking facilities at suburban railway stations in accordance with an order of priority based on such factors as current demand, projected future demand, availability of suitable land and finance.

Norman Park station is not high in order of priority and no work is at present contemplated at this site. Planning has been carried out for a car-parking facility at Morningside and consideration is now being given to including this site in the programme for 1977-78.

11. WORKS DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

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

How many persons were employed by the Works Department in each of the trade callings at 1 July 1975, 1976, 1977 and at the latest date available?

**Mr. LEE:** I hope the honourable member realises how many hundreds of man-hours were involved in preparing the answer to his question. I hope, too, he realises that there is another side to this question. To avoid wasting the time of the Parliament, I lay upon the table of the House the information sought by him.

**Mr. Houston:** Will it be included in "Hansard"?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes.

Answer:—

WORKS DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

	1/7/75	1/7/76	1/7/77	26/8/77
Foremen .. ..	180	91	91	91
Carpenters .. ..	728	511	546	506
Apprentice carpenters	450	398	316	301
Joiners .. ..	56	48	40	40
Apprentice joiners ..	14	10	11	11
Machinists .. ..	35	31	23	22
Apprentice machinists	7	7	5	5
Bricklayers .. ..	53	31	24	18
Apprentice bricklayers	45	36	24	21
Stonemasons .. ..	4	3	6	6
Apprentice stone-				
masons .. ..	3	2	2	2
Plasterers .. ..	45	34	32	32
Apprentice plasterers	5	4	2	1
Plumbers .. ..	147	148	137	130
Apprentice plumbers	94	77	64	63
Drainers .. ..	31	28	29	28
Scaffolders .. ..	26	20	20	19
Labourers .. ..	320	192	180	166
Painters .. ..	381	124	123	121
Apprentice painters	71	59	39	38
Signwriters .. ..	4	4	3	3
Apprentice sign-				
writers .. ..			3	4
Glaziers .. ..	16	20	17	17
Apprentice glaziers ..			1	1
Polishers .. ..	15	9	10	11
Apprentice polishers	2	2	2	1
Upholsterers .. ..	2	2	3	3
Apprentice				
upholsterers .. ..	1	1	..	..
Blacksmith .. ..	2	1	1	1
Electricians .. ..	68	70	52	50
Apprentice electricians	50	49	38	38
Electrical trade				
assistants .. ..	12	14	12	12
Chairman and porter	1	3	2	2
Mechanics .. ..	5	6	21	21
Apprentice mechanics	2	1	12	11
Panel beater .. ..	1	..	1	1
Welders and fitters ..	6	4	14	15
Apprentice welders				
and fitters .. ..	1	..	7	7

12. INTERSECTION OF GOLD COAST  
HIGHWAY AND HOLLYWELL  
ROAD

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

(1) As many accidents have occurred at the intersection of the Gold Coast Highway and Hollywell Road, are any plans in hand to improve this dangerous junction?

(2) What is the responsibility of the Gold Coast City Council regarding this intersection?

Answer:—

(1 and 2): I thank the Honourable member for asking this question. This is one of those situations where the growth of traffic on one road leading to an intersection can create additional hazards which tend to go unnoticed unless we exercise great vigilance.

The Main Roads Department is currently investigating the problem area where Hollywell Road meets the Gold Coast Highway with a view to preparing plans for improvements to the intersection. It is currently intended that funds for such

improvements be made available in the 1978-79 financial year, possibly in the Meters programme, in which case the Gold Coast City Council will not be required to make any contribution towards the cost of the works.

I used the words "possibly in the Meters programme" advisedly, because this is one of those areas in which the new-found experts sitting in Canberra claim to know more about these local problems than the concerned local member and the experienced road engineers in the Main Roads Department and the Gold Coast City Council. The Commonwealth Roads legislation forces me to seek the approval of the Commonwealth Minister for Transport in Canberra of our programmes of work. This is another aspect of unwarranted Commonwealth interference in our affairs which I find repugnant and which I will fight to have amended.

13. DREDGING OF MOUTH OF LODERS  
CREEK

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

(1) Does the contract to dredge the channel in the Southport Broadwater include the dredging of the mouth of Loders Creek?

(2) If not, would it be possible to include this in the dredging contract, as the Coast Guard has trouble at low tide when called out for rescue work?

Answers:—

(1) No.

(2) I will give consideration to the dredging of the mouth of Loders Creek after a review of the financial implication and will advise the honourable member of my decision.

14. COMPULSORY UNIONISM FOR  
SOUTHPORT HOSPITAL DENTIST

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

(1) Is he aware that Mr. W. Ardill, President of the Federated Miscellaneous Workers' Union of Australia, is standing over the dental staff at the Southport Hospital to make them join this union and that Mr. John Dill-Macky, a dentist at the Southport Hospital, has received a letter from the Gold Coast Hospitals Board inviting him to attend a meeting on 21 September to discuss his refusal to join an industrial union?

(2) As Mr. Dill-Macky, a well-qualified dentist who already belongs to the Dental Association, has no intention of joining an industrial union, what is the situation regarding his position at the hospital?

(3) Is it compulsory for professional men who work in our public hospitals to join an industrial union?

(4) Will he take steps to have Mr. Ardill investigated to see if his actions are within the law?

*Answers:—*

(1) Although not aware that a representative of the Federated Miscellaneous Workers' Union is standing over dental staff at Southport Hospital, I am aware that a person representative of that union has been endeavouring to enrol as members of his union two dentists employed by the Gold Coast Hospitals Board at Southport Hospital.

I am aware that Mr. Dill-Macky has been invited to attend a meeting of the board to discuss his refusal to join an industrial union.

(2) Mr. Dill-Macky is an employee of the Gold Coast Hospitals Board, and the chairman of that board advises that he and another dentist have been invited to attend a meeting on 21 September 1977 with a view to achieving an amicable resolution of a contentious situation. The Australian Dental Association is not a registered industrial union.

(3) Government policy—applicable also to hospitals boards in this instance—requires that all employees become members of a registered industrial union at the point of engagement.

(4) I am confident that the Gold Coast Hospitals Board will take appropriate action should the need arise.

#### 15. SMALL-BOAT HARBOURS

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

(1) How many small-boat harbours are in Queensland and where are they situated?

(2) How many harbours are usable at all tides and which are unusable at spring low tides?

(3) How much has the Urangan Boat Harbour cost to develop to its present stage?

(4) How much money will be spent on it in this and the next financial year?

(5) What return from fees, rental, etc., can be expected on this capital outlay?

*Answers:—*

(1) There are 14 small-boat harbours in Queensland situated at Southport, Toondah Harbour, Manly, Cabbage Tree Creek, Scarborough, Mooloolaba, Tin Can Bay, Urangan, Burnett Heads, Gladstone, Rosslyn Bay, Bowen, Townsville and Port Douglas. In addition, small-craft facilities have been provided in the harbours of Mackay, Mourilyan and Carins.

(2) Twelve small-boat harbours are usable at all stages of the tide. Two are unusable at low spring tides, and they are presently being dredged.

(3) An amount of some \$1,028,000 has been expended at Urangan Boat Harbour to June 1977.

(4) I presume the honourable member's question relates to Urangan Boat Harbour. I have sought funds to the extent of \$90,000 for this financial year. I cannot indicate at this stage what funds may be available for the next financial year.

(5) The return from fees, rentals, etc., is expected to be \$12,000 this financial year.

#### 16. AERIAL AMBULANCE PROPOSALS

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

Further to my question of 16 March and associated representations from me, when will he make a statement with regard to the establishment of a State-wide aerial ambulance or, alternatively, agree to the proposal put forward by the Q.A.T.B., Bundaberg?

*Answer:—*

The matter of a State-wide aerial ambulance service is at present under investigation by an ad hoc committee on the Rural Health Scheme and the use of aerial transport. I am sure that the honourable member would realise that an investigation of this nature must be thorough and complete, and as it involves visits interstate and throughout Queensland, I do not expect a report to be available for some time.

#### 17. PARKS HEADQUARTERS ON FRASER ISLAND

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

(1) What work has been done by his department in establishing a parks headquarters on Fraser Island?

(2) When will the headquarters be ready for use, how many officers will be stationed there and what will be their duties?

*Answers:—*

(1) Work to date has included a preliminary investigation survey and relevant planning necessary to determine how the park can be managed best. The location of the headquarters depends upon this. Three caravans have been purchased and installed to provide accommodation for staff pending construction of permanent accommodation. Initial work has involved site preparation, fencing and fire-hazard reduction.

(2) The temporary headquarters (caravans) are ready for use now. Two men will be stationed there initially, and this

number is likely to increase to six men during peak construction. A Commonwealth grant has been made available for the period up to 30 June 1980. Level of staffing after that will depend upon availability of funds, but it is likely to be three men. The duties of staff will be the construction and maintenance of staff facilities, and the general management and supervision of the park.

18. KARUMBA WATER SUPPLY AND ACCESS ROAD

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

(1) Did the Commonwealth Government in 1973 examine a request from the Queensland Government for financial support for the provision of a proper water supply for Karumba and the completion of the Karumba-Normanton access road?

(2) Did the Commonwealth Government subsequently make an offer of assistance to the Queensland Government of financial support on a package-deal basis for these two projects and, if so, what was the basis of its offer and what was the Queensland Government's reason for rejecting it?

(3) Since December 1975, has the Commonwealth Government made any alternative offer to support the projects and has the Queensland Government made any requests for support and, if so, what was the result of the requests?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes. The offer was in the form of a package comprising:

(a) loan of \$2,800,000 for water supply and sewerage; and

(b) a grant of \$1,450,000 for road construction between Karumba and Normanton.

The prawning companies and the Carpentaria Shire Council were not able to service the loan component for water supply and, as the Commonwealth declined to amend the package offer, both proposals were rejected.

(3) Since December 1975 no alternative offer or further request has been made.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I must inform the honourable member that this happened in the Whitlam era. That Government would not give any support. We, as a Government, have spent many millions of dollars on Karumba and will continue to play our part.

19. SALMONELLA IN MANUFACTURED MILK PRODUCTS

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

(1) In view of the continuing discovery of salmonella bacteria in manufactured milk products in Victoria, are processors of manufactured milk products in Queensland, who are licensed by the Department of Primary Industries, subjected to regular inspections by his department?

(2) Are milk products that have been manufactured in other States and on sale in Queensland supermarkets subjected to regular inspection and testing by his department?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Health Department is responsible for the standard of food available for sale to the public and regular checks are made of milk and milk products. The department has regulations specifically relating to premises and plant used in the processing and sale of milk and cream and all such premises and plant must be approved by the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. Such premises are regularly inspected. When the first reports were received of the discovery of salmonella in associated products, I gave instructions for departmental officers to confer with officers from the Department of Primary Industries to advise whether further legislation was considered advisable.

(2) Yes. They are treated on the same basis as all other foods offered for sale in Queensland irrespective of the place of manufacture.

20. OPERATING THEATRES, TOWNSVILLE HOSPITAL

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

(1) Has he been informed that a crisis exists in Townsville in relation to operating theatre space and time for both public and private patients?

(2) Will he look into the delay in planning and construction of the proposed new operating theatre block and take steps to rectify the delay so that the citizens of Townsville can obtain a medical service which they expect under the Government?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) The provision of a complete new operating theatre complex forms part of the major redevelopment of the Townsville Hospital.

A project team consisting of hospitals board and departmental officers is revising the redevelopment of the hospital, which had previously been approved in principle,

following a decision by the Commonwealth Government to defer the establishment of a medical school at the James Cook University.

This project team at its last meeting, on 21 July 1977, recognised the need to provide some additional operating theatres to be made available prior to the completion of the major redevelopment. The hospitals board was asked to investigate the provision of temporary theatres and I am advised that a proposal for two additional operating theatres in existing hospital buildings has now been adopted by the hospitals board and will be forwarded to the department for consideration.

The honourable member may rest assured that on receipt of this proposal urgent consideration will be given to it.

21. SAND-MINING

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

- (1) How many sand-mining operations are presently working in Queensland?
- (2) How many such operations have reduced either their work-forces or production in the last 12 months?
- (3) What were the reasons for the staff reductions or close-downs?
- (4) How many workers have been affected?

*Answers:—*

- (1) Three operators are currently engaged in sand-mining in Queensland.
- (2) Four.
- (3) Two operators ceased production on Fraser Island because of the decision of the Commonwealth Government not to renew export licences for their products from there. The operations of the other two were affected by the economics of production in terms of mineral prices and production costs.
- (4) A total of 461 employees were directly affected, while many other workers were indirectly affected.

22. ELECTRICITY AUTHORITIES REORGANISATION; TARIFFS

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

- (1) Did he say in a message in a colour brochure entitled "Queensland's New Electricity Set Up Explained" that criticism has been levelled at the fact that this will cost more to consumers in South-east Queensland, so it is worth remembering that the equalisation process will extend over at least ten years, and increases in tariffs will be of the order of 1 per cent per year?

(2) Did he promise before the reorganisation that Brisbane consumers would not pay an increase as a direct result of the take-over of the Brisbane City Council Electricity Department?

(3) Did the new, reorganised electricity authority make submissions for a 10 per cent rise for Brisbane and a 7 per cent rise for elsewhere, and does this submission conflict with his statement in the brochure?

(4) If, as promised, there will be no increases in 1977, what percentage increases will apply on 1 January 1978, after the election?

(5) Are there now two domestic tariffs in Brisbane and South-east Queensland—the old B.C.C. tariff and the old S.E.A. rate—and did the S.E.A. charge higher rates than the council?

*Answers:—*

- (1) Yes, but I would expect that the honourable member would have quoted the whole of my explanation and not merely one facet of it.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No.
- (4) I do not know when a further increase in tariffs will be required but as inflation is still running at about 10 per cent per annum, tariff rises will inevitably be required to cover costs.
- (5) Yes.

23. BEEF PRICES SCHEME

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

(1) As the leader of the Commonwealth Australian Labor Party, Mr. Whitlam, recently toured Queensland making promises as to what a Commonwealth Labor Government would do for our depressed beef industry and in view of the drastic A.L.P. policies towards rural industries when in power, what credibility can be placed on such statements?

(2) What action does the Queensland Government intend to take to implement a minimum floor price scheme?

*Answers:—*

(1) No credibility whatsoever can be placed in any statement or promise made by the leader of the Australian Labor Party, Mr. Whitlam, in relation to the helping of the depressed beef industry. Statements attributed to Mr. Whitlam, in fact, are rubbing salt into the wounds of primary producers for it was he, as Prime Minister of Australia, who dealt the greatest blows to primary industry and to country people generally.

Let me mention but a few—

Elimination of equalisation of petrol;

The withdrawal of free milk for schoolchildren, which hit the dairying industry;

Elimination of many of the major tax concessions that had been gained over many years;

Elimination of air subsidies that kept reasonable transport costs to the Inland; and

Several lots of revaluation further depressed the industry.

These, together with inflation and high costs which the Labor Party spearheaded, demonstrate that the greatest political enemy of all time so far as many people are concerned, and particularly, those on the land, is the A.L.P., both State and Federal, led by Mr. Burns and Mr. Whitlam.

(2) As a member of the beef industry committee, the honourable member would be fully aware that the development and implementation of a regulated marketing system for beef is a very complex matter. There is at present no classification or description of beef which could be enforced legally. Furthermore, the Australian Constitution provides that trade between States shall be absolutely free. For a beef-marketing scheme to be effective, we therefore need a national beef classification system and the agreement and co-operation of other States and the Commonwealth, which has the power to make laws with respect to trade, commerce, navigation and shipping.

It is now a year since my Government's proposal for a beef stabilisation scheme was taken to the Commonwealth and other States for consideration. At that time, the problem did not appear to be as urgent in their eyes as we knew it was and it has taken considerable time and effort on the part of this Government, through the beef committee under the chairmanship of the Honourable the Minister for Primary Industries, to achieve the progress which has been made to date. The Commonwealth has now agreed to replace the Australian Meat Board with an Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation with strong producer representation and wider powers to supervise trading.

A national automated beef classification system is presently under trial in commercial conditions in a number of States. At a recent meeting between Premiers and relevant Ministers of this State, New South Wales and Victoria, we agreed on the urgent need for the early introduction of a national beef classification scheme and have urged the Commonwealth to fund the implementation of such a scheme within a matter of months.

My Government is bringing forward legislation during this session of Parliament to replace the present Queensland Meat Industry Authority by a Queensland meat

industry organisation and marketing authority with powers over such matters as carcass classification, selling methods, consumer identification of meat and the administration of such pricing and stabilisation schemes for livestock and meat as may be approved. In the implementation and operation of pricing and stabilisation schemes the State authority will necessarily co-operate with similar organisations in other States and with the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation.

While my Government is most anxious to see better returns to the beef producer, it recognises the futility of attempting to introduce any regulatory marketing scheme independently of other States and the Commonwealth. We are in a position to move forward with a regulatory marketing scheme just as quickly as it is sensible and beneficial to do so.

#### 24. EFFECT ON TOURISM OF BAN ON STREET MARCHES

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

(1) Have Queensland Government Tourist Bureau officers in southern capital cities been inundated with inquiries from potential tourists since it was announced that street marches, which could incite violence, will be banned in Queensland?

(2) Is he aware that many southern tourists have been reluctant to visit Brisbane because they fear violence in the streets, owing to marches by some radical and militant people designed to cause confrontation with law-enforcement officers?

*Answers:—*

(1) No. Trading activities at interstate branches of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau continue, however, at a very satisfactory level.

(2) No.

#### 25. TEST FOR DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF MARIJUANA

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

(1) With reference to the answer given by the Minister for Health to my question regarding tests to determine if motorists involved in serious accidents are under the influence of marijuana, will his department make use of the gas chromatograph and mass spectrometer recently purchased by the Government Chemical Laboratory and test all drivers involved in fatal or serious accidents to determine if they are under the influence of marijuana?

(2) Will he consider purchasing machines for use in all major cities in Queensland?

Answers:—

(1) From information received by me, I understand that this equipment will assist the Government Chemical Laboratory in analysing blood samples in appropriate cases. The equipment is very complex and will require a highly qualified person with a university degree to operate and interpret findings. The Government Chemical Laboratory tests blood samples forwarded by police, and officers at that laboratory would be best qualified as to the methods and equipment to be used in making any examination. Police have no say in the methods used by that laboratory in conducting analyses of blood samples.

To enable such officers to determine the appropriate tests to be made, police as a general rule forward advice with the blood sample as to whether it is believed the donor had liquor or drugs taken. If drugs are believed to have been taken, all available information as to the type of drug believed to be involved is also supplied.

(2) No.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### STRIKE BY LIFT REPAIRMEN

**Mr. LOWES:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: (1) Is he aware of the number of buildings in the central city area of Brisbane (such as 444 Queen Street, which is presently completely without lift services, and the Comalco building in George Street) which have only restricted lift services owing to the long-standing strike by members of the Electrical Trades Union?

(2) Is he aware of the inconvenience and loss to the commercial and business world and, worse, the detrimental effect on the health of those members of the public who require access to such buildings to visit medical practitioners caused by such strike action?

(3) Will he make representations to the Federal Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations to have the Federal Government intervene so as to end this dispute by the Electrical Trades Union?

**Mr. KNOX:** Last night I heard the Federal president of the A.L.P. (Mr. Bob Hawke) in his role as president of the A.C.T.U. explain to delegates that fewer man-hours were lost through industrial disputes in the past 12 months than in the previous 12 months and, therefore, according to his reasoning, the situation in Australia had improved.

There may well have been fewer man-hours lost, but the real situation is that industrial disputes are now occurring in this country in vital areas of the country's welfare in sustaining its prosperity and development. These are what might be called

strategic stoppages, which are manipulated and used for the specific purpose of hindering the development and the economy of this nation. Mr. Hawke may well boast that fewer man-hours are being lost through industrial disputes, but, in fact, the consequential loss of production in the community because of a strategically placed industrial dispute can be quite disastrous.

The action of the Electrical Trades Union, which has, for some weeks, refused to maintain the lifts throughout Australia, including those here, has of course been very counter-productive. Because of this, it is virtually hampering the whole of commerce and industry in our city and in other parts of Australia.

Certainly I will make recommendations to the Federal Minister to do what can be done. The answer to the problem is that those who lead these people, instead of manipulating them into this position, should get them back to work straight away.

### APPLICANTS FOR PERMIT FOR ANTI-URANIUM PROTEST STREET MARCH

**Mr. LANE:** In directing a question to the Premier, I draw his attention to Press reports indicating that six persons called at the Brisbane Traffic Office last week in some form of deputation and submitted an application to conduct a march or procession through Brisbane streets on 22 October 1977 as an anti-uranium protest. I now ask: Is he aware that at least two of the persons engaged in submitting the application, namely, Mrs. Eva Bacon and Mr. W. J. Harris, have had a long-term association with the Communist Party of Australia? Can he also inform the House why the Communist Party would be interested in preventing the mining of uranium and its export from Australia?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I certainly commend the honourable member for Merthyr for seeking to bring to the attention of members of this House very vital problems confronting this State and nation.

**Opposition Members:** Rubbish!

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Opposition members say that is rubbish. That merely demonstrates how much they are on the side of Communists and others who advocate violence.

As I warned last week, well-meaning people should be careful with whom they associate, particularly in street demonstrations. It is correct that two of the six applicants for a permit to march as a protest against uranium-mining are very prominent Communists. Mrs. Eva Bacon is a well-known Communist and head of the Communist Party's Union of Australian Women. She is a well-known demonstration regular. Mr. Harris is a prominent Communist and another well-known street marcher.

I notice that Mr. Terrance O'Gorman, of the Council for Civil Liberties, was another applicant. As I told the House last week, Mr. O'Gorman was prominent in the anti-uranium vigil on Hamilton Wharf in which groups of from 6 to 13 well-known Communists took part over the three days of the vigil. As I have said before, all these protest groups consist of the hard-core activists who hide behind the gullible, the naive and the well-meaning.

In assessing who will get permits, the police must take notice of the record of those involved, not their promises—which, of course, are worth nothing. If the Council of Churches wants to associate with Communists, who denounce God and religion, that is its problem. But no group is going to use the streets as a forum to create a media spectacle and to take over the rights of the majority of the community.

The street demonstrators and the A.L.P. have tried to make out that their civil liberties are being denied because they cannot continue to promote mob rule in the streets. For their benefit, I repeat what I have said before—that there is a right to protest, and there are ample facilities for such protests, as the unions themselves proved by their meeting in the Roma Street forum last week. Other places available for such gatherings include the Exhibition Grounds, which are used by the Catholic Church for their annual Corpus Christi procession, and Lang Park, which is used by unions for their endless stop-work meetings. They have the right to protest, but I must draw to the attention of the public, as the honourable member has done again this morning, that the hard core of those who are behind these demonstrations are all Communists and members of the A.L.P.

#### ABSENCE OF LEADER OF OPPOSITION FROM CHAMBER

**Mr. LANE:** I draw the attention of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer to the frequent absences from this Chamber of the Leader of the Opposition and ask him whether he will take the opportunity of publicly drawing the attention of the Leader of the Opposition to his responsibility to appear in this House to lead an Opposition to this Government?

**Mr. KNOX:** I know that the acting Leader of the Opposition is embarrassed by having to—

**Mr. Houston:** I'm not embarrassed at all; I want Parliament to function.

**Mr. KNOX:** We want Parliament to function, too. Where is the Leader of the Opposition?

**Mr. Houston:** Where are all your members?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the honourable member for Bulimba that if he does not behave himself I will deal with him under Standing Order 123A.

**Mr. KNOX:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Wright:** What about 20 Government members out of 60?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order: I also warn the honourable member for Rockhampton that if he continues to interject I will deal with him under Standing Order 123A.

**Mr. KNOX:** The de facto Leader of the Opposition—and I am really not sure which is the de facto leader, the one who is here all the time or the one who is out in the bush—is travelling around the countryside complaining about the inadequate numbers he has in the House, and one would expect to see 11 vigorous members opposite on the job all the time under the command of their leader. But they are a leaderless legion as well as being unfortunate enough to have the members they have. This is a situation which the public ought to know something about. It is all fine and dandy for the Leader of the Opposition to get media publicity for what he is doing, but for some time he has not been attending to his duties in the House. His own members are ashamed to admit it and are greatly embarrassed by the situation.

#### FIRE LOSSES IN KILCOY AND LAIDLEY SHIRES

**Mr. GUNN:** In asking the Premier a question without notice I point out that yesterday a fire burnt out thousands of acres of pasture land in the Kilcoy Shire, destroying miles of fencing and many livestock. This morning graziers and farmers in Kilcoy are shooting cattle and horses that were caught in the fire. Total losses have not yet been assessed. In the Laidley Shire, fires are out of control and are likely to cause severe damage before they are brought under control. In view of the disastrous situation in which land-owners in both of these shires now find themselves, will he investigate the situation with a view to rendering some Government assistance to those people suffering severe losses?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Yes, there have been some very severe fires, not only around Brisbane but in certain country areas as outlined by the honourable member. It causes us all a great deal of concern that these fires are occurring, why they are taking place and why they spring up in so many areas. I am unaware of the problems of the persons mentioned by the honourable member that happened only yesterday. I do not know whether any special form of assistance can be provided. A disaster has to happen on a wide scale before we can seek assistance from the Commonwealth Government and the State. I will be pleased to hear any further information the honourable member can supply about what actually happened and the losses incurred.

I must warn the people generally that if they light a fire they do so under the great threat of causing a calamity with

great harm and indeed loss of property and life. I had the fire protection service people in my office this morning, and they are asking that a state of emergency be declared throughout the State to combat the possibility of very serious consequences of fire in the city and other parts of the State. These are matters that are being looked at in the overall situation. I again caution people that they must not light a fire under any circumstances in the present situation.

#### LOW PRODUCTIVITY OF WATERSIDE WORKERS

**Mr. DOUMANY:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Is he aware that on a recent current affairs programme the captain of a Russian ship stated that a cargo which took three days to load in Russia would take three weeks to load in Australian ports, and expressed the view that because of the strikes and low productivity of the waterside workers it was not worth calling into Australian ports? Is there anything that can be done to alter this drastic state of affairs?

**Mr. KNOX:** The situation is rather interesting because more and more Russian ships are servicing the Australian coast. In fact I have had unconfirmed reports that nearly 50 per cent of the bottoms that now service the Australian coast are Russian. Obviously they are in a position to capture the trade of Australia because they do not seem to have on their ships or at the ports they normally service the industrial trouble that we have. I will not go into the reasons for that. Obviously in a totalitarian country such as theirs they do not even have the opportunity to take time off for smoko. Our conditions allow Australian people the privilege of going on strike. It has become a privilege in some quarters whereas once it was a right—a right that was jealously guarded by those concerned with industrial reform. But now in this country we can have industrial trouble for capricious reasons without any regard to the consequences to the development of the nation. Is it any wonder that those nations that have their industrial situation so tightly under control that they do not allow a right to strike are complaining about the situation in this country? That is a matter of concern.

I saw the interview with the captain of the Russian ship. Obviously he is not aware of the political issues and will probably get into trouble back home. Nevertheless, he was able to alert people quite convincingly to the fact that the situation in his country is a lot different from what it is in ours. If there are people in our country who take advantage of the freedom that we have to hinder the development of our nation we will not be able to help anybody in the world.

At 12 noon,

*In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 17, the House proceeded with Government business.*

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

#### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SEVENTH ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 1 September (see p. 368) on Mr. Turner's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba) (12.1 p.m.): This motion gives honourable members an opportunity on behalf of their constituents and themselves to once again swear allegiance to the Crown and, naturally, I do so accordingly. Parliament was opened in the customary manner by the Governor when he made his Opening Speech but, on this occasion, I am afraid that the Governor's advisers let him down. Perhaps the only plus would be that his Speech was short.

I note that the Deputy Premier has left the House. It is a pity that he is not here so that I could give him a few words of wisdom on his party's attitude to the Opposition in this Chamber. I remind the Premier, the Deputy Premier and all other members of the coalition Government that, although there are normally 18 Ministers in Cabinet, just prior to the end of question-time this morning, only 10 Ministers were in the House—10 Ministers out of the present 17. When one Minister died recently the Government did not think the appointment of a new Minister was warranted. It is obvious that 18 Ministers are too many. My point is that with 17 active Cabinet Ministers only 10 could be here to answer important questions asked in this House.

**Mr. Wright:** There were only 20 Government members in the Chamber at the time.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** There were 20 out of 61.

The Opposition has one official spokesman with air fares, amongst other things, who is recognised by the Government, and that is the Leader of the Opposition. He has to match 18 Ministers.

**Mr. Lane:** Where is he?

**Mr. HOUSTON:** Never mind where he is! He is on official business.

**Mr. Lane** interjected.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** That is none of the honourable member's business.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. HOUSTON:** He is certainly not at the place that the honourable member frequents most, and that is certainly not here.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. Lane** interjected.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** The honourable member has a big voice when it comes to arranging with Ministers to ask questions without notice, but when it comes to a few facts he cannot take them. The fact is that the Leader of the Opposition is doing a very great job for the State and will do a better job when he becomes the Premier of this State.

**Mr. Lane:** He is doing a political job for the Labor Party. What about his responsibility as Leader of the Opposition in this Parliament? That is what we want to know.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Merthyr will refrain from persistent interjections, or I will have to deal with him.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I want the Government, the Parliament and the public to recognise that there is one person in the Opposition, namely, the Leader of the Opposition, who has to contend with 18 Cabinet Ministers. I have yet to see the day in this Parliament when 18 Cabinet members have been sitting here to answer questions with or without notice. I urge members of the Government, for goodness' sake, to grow up and carry out their responsibilities, and the Opposition will carry out its responsibilities as it sees them.

Let us look at the Governor's speech, which is what this debate is all about. One of the things he said was—

"My Ministers have informed me that our State continues to be in a sound financial position. Last financial year ended with a deficit of only \$1 million in a total budget of more than \$1,600 million."

To be quite honest about it, for the life of me I cannot believe that any Government can be happy at having a balanced budget when nearly 50,000 people are out of work. Nearly 50,000 good Queenslanders are out of work; yet the Government talks about being happy with a deficit of only \$1,000,000. I would much rather have a deficit of \$10,000,000 and only 5,000 people out of work. I cannot at all go along with the Government's priorities for the development of the State. Unemployment is a blot of any community, and it is certainly a blot on this State Government.

**Mr. Greenwood:** Of course it is, but we can't print money.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** The Government hasn't got to print money. It has to use its available money correctly by encouraging people to do things and encouraging industry to develop. It has to stop making excuses. It has to start thinking positively.

Look what has happened in this House—and I do not want to go back over it again unnecessarily—with question after question from Government members. They were not designed for the advancement of the State. They were an attempt to score some cheap political advantage. I can assure Government members that there is no political advantage in carrying on as they have been; the people of Queensland want action. They are tired of hearing words.

Let us look at the situation. Unfortunately, according to the records, nearly 50,000 people are out of work. "The Courier-Mail" the other day gave a figure of 47,923, which it said was a drop of 896 from the previous month. There is 1,000 missing somewhere, so I don't know whether the drop from 49,819, which was the July figure, was 896 or 1,896. Anyway, it does not matter particularly. The significant fact is that there was a very, very small drop. The fact is that at least 5.43 per cent of the Queensland work-force is still out of work—and the Government talks about claiming credit. It says we are in good shape. The State is not in good shape.

I will look at the situation a little more closely, using the July figures, as they are the last accurate ones I have. As I said, whatever the correct August figure, there is a very small difference, and certainly no improvement at all when that figure is compared with the figure for August last year. In June 1976, 38,586 were out of work. In July 1976 the figure had dropped by 240. However, between June and July 1977 the figure increased from 48,582 to 49,819. In other words, between June and July this year the figure went up by 1,237. In the 12-month period between July last year and July this year the figure rose by 11,473, from 38,346 to 49,819. That represents an increase of 30 per cent in one year—the year in which the Government is talking about things going along great in the State. Of course, it is the Governor's Opening Speech; but that is the advice he received from the Government. I am in no way criticising him; that is the information he was given.

Those requiring unemployment benefits rose by 748 in that year, to 34,340. Even with the drop last month, there are still 33,710 people received unemployment relief—in other words, the dole. At the present time, of those who are registered as being out of work, 70 per cent are on the dole. So it is not a case of people registering who want a better job or another job. The point is that 70 per cent of those, or 33,710 people, want work but are now being paid the dole. In many cases, the persons who are receiving unemployment benefits are family men with wives and children to keep. They can be added to the number, so that well in excess of 50,000 people rely entirely on the dole.

I know that the honourable member for South Brisbane is to follow me in this debate so I have selected the figures from the Woolloongabba area. They concern my area and the area represented by the honourable member, and are factual.

In that period, 2,994 people were out of work, with only 53 job vacancies. That means one job for every 57 persons. Surely that is nothing to be proud of. The number of 2,994 is made up of 1,519 male adults, 536 male youths, 424 women and 515 girls. That shows that unemployment is spread over the whole range of people. It is tragic that 1,100 young people are still out of work in the one employment district of Woolloongabba. Vacancies exist for 30 men, nine youths, 11 women and three girls.

Of the 1,519 males out of work, 241 are skilled workers in trades or callings (and we need them), 172 are clerical workers, 595 are semi-skilled, 379 are unskilled, 127 are suitable for service occupations, one is rural, and four are professional. Of the women, 215 are clerical and administration, 102 are semi-skilled, six are unskilled, 94 are service occupations, four are skilled trades, and three are professional. Of the youths, 227 are semi-skilled, 173 are unskilled, 13 are service occupations, 77 are skilled trades, 45 are clerical and administration, and one is rural. Of the girls, 356 are clerical, 80 are semi-skilled, eight are unskilled, 64 are service occupations, five are trades, and two are professional.

That indicates that the people who are out of work cover virtually the whole spectrum of our work-force. Our employment situation is drastically bad in every section, no matter which one is looked at. The people out of work in the country areas, as is natural, tend to be more in the rural classifications. Those who do not have to rely on rural work have returned to the larger city areas.

I shall now outline the breakdown of vacancies in the Woolloongabba district. For the 1,519 men there were 30 vacancies. A man's chance of getting a job in July was one in 51. As I said, the figure is only a little better now. For the 424 women out of work, there were 11 vacancies. A women's chance of getting a job was one in 39. For the 536 boys out of work, there were nine vacancies. A boy's chance of getting a job was one in 60. The great tragedy of the whole story is that for the 515 girls there were only three vacancies. A girl's chance of getting a job was one in 172.

The same pattern is obvious in the country centres. Of the 49,819 people out of work in Queensland, 28,565 or 57.3 per cent are outside the Brisbane metropolitan district and area. Even if Ipswich is included in the metropolitan area, 52 per cent of the people unemployed are outside the metropolitan area. How could any Government boast of a balanced Budget and of having

the State in great financial shape when so many young people are out of work and unable to contribute to the State's development?

The Government now boasts of directing \$50,000,000 towards promoting employment opportunities. Surely that is the greatest lot of nonsense that one could hear. The money is available, it will be spent and its expenditure will have to be covered by the Budget. That is nothing more than a normal process. If the \$50,000,000 was put aside in the last financial year to be spent in this year, it is no more than normal Government expenditure. The great problem is that the Government is doing nothing to deal with unemployment. The first thing that the Government has to do is get goods sold. They must be sold from the shelves so that employment is created. That necessitates Government activity and enterprise in this field.

Reference was made in the Governor's Opening Speech to increased population in Queensland, and this was attributed largely to the mining industry. His Excellency said—

"The results of the last national census confirm that Queensland leads Australia in population growth, and that five of the top nine regional growth areas in Australia are located in Queensland.

"To a significant extent, this growth can be attributed to the expansion which has occurred in our mining industry in the last decade."

It is, of course, true that mining has created new towns and employment opportunities. The Government has, however, fallen down in its attitude to long-established country towns. From my experience in visiting rural areas I know that country towns are dying. The people who live there do not want them to die; they want them to flourish. They want them to expand so that it is at least possible to keep family units together. But the Government is so intent on boasting about the creation of new mining towns that the old-established towns have been completely ignored.

No wonder the Country Party decided to change its name to National Party. While it was known as the Country Party, its members in this House apparently felt that they had an obligation to country people. But over the last five or six years there has been such a marked deterioration in employment opportunities and amenities provided to country people and in their welfare that those who represent them here are now looking to others to help them. In changing its name to the National Party, the Country Party finally admitted that its base was no longer in the country. Mining towns are now its first thought.

Recently I had an opportunity to visit and spend some time in many country towns. A few years ago such towns contained two or three hotels, a bakehouse, butcher shops

and other businesses that produced satisfactory financial returns. Today only the oven stands in what was the bakery, the butcher shop is empty and only one or two small shops remain in business. There are no cafes, no doctors, no dentists and none of the normal amenities that should be found in country towns.

It is surely a reflection on the members representing those towns that they have allowed this situation to develop. They have not used this House to bring these problems to light. They would rather go outside and criticise somebody else. Today the Government blames someone else for everything that has gone wrong, but those who live in country areas know the true situation. I shall be very interested to hear National Party members who will speak after me tell the House what they have done to overcome some of the great problems confronting country areas.

The Deputy Premier and Treasurer spoke about costs. Does he not appreciate that he, as Treasurer, increased rail freight rates tremendously over the last couple of years? He is the Treasurer, and he has been Minister for Railways and Minister for Justice. As Treasurer of this State, surely he was responsible for suggesting to Cabinet when increased rail freights should be implemented. He increased rail freights by 40 per cent in one hit and this is having a tremendous effect on costs in our country areas.

Even the Premier this morning once again mentioned the things he said Whitlam did wrong. I am not going to say that everything the Whitlam Government did was right. Some of the things it did were hard to explain, and I think if it had reflected on some of the decisions it made it might not have made them. But I think the significant fact is that in the two years that this Federal Government has been in power none of these schemes to which the Premier referred have been reintroduced, particularly free milk for schoolchildren and petrol concessions. But rail freights have been increased. There has been no finalisation of the scheme to abolish road tax. When one looks at the lovely bitumen highway to the Gold Coast and the much improved road to the North Coast and Nambour and then looks at country roads and sees how this Government has neglected them, how then can the Premier, the Deputy Premier and National Party members generally rise in this Chamber and talk about what great things they have done in these areas?

I believe it is absolutely necessary—and should have happened years ago—that the Government use its talents to investigate exactly what industries can be established in country areas. New South Wales and South Australia have proved that there are many industries which can be established in country areas. Only the other day the Minister for Works and Housing was asked a

question about the number of Works Department employees. It is very significant that the number of Works Department employees has been dropping over the years. Of course, the Government says that it is giving work to private enterprise, but the point is that this does not help people in country areas because in country centres where private enterprise is being given jobs it brings workers from the city. Instead of local people, workers for Works Department jobs in country areas are being sent from Brisbane. So no matter from which angle we look at the situation, we find that country areas are being neglected by this Government.

Why can we not have an investigation to see whether wool can be sold locally instead of being brought to the coast to be sold? The Government has not investigated the possibility of processing meat nearer to the point of production. How much research has gone into the use of cereal crops for flour or breakfast food production? These are things which should be investigated.

I mention also the maintenance of public buildings in country areas. If a job of any size is required to be done the people concerned come to Brisbane seeking contractors. Recently in Townsville, which is no small place, even the Housing Commission decided to use a Brisbane firm to build some homes instead of using local contractors. These are the sorts of things which work against rural development.

Of course, once these areas start losing population, as has happened in recent years, the stage is reached where people cannot obtain sufficient financial return to ensure their own well-being, and if that occurs we cannot expect people to remain in those places. Once this population drift starts, doctors, dentists, solicitors and entertainers also tend to leave because there is not sufficient demand for their services. This again has an even more adverse effect on those people who remain and in turn leads to even greater unemployment. It is no wonder that people are leaving the country areas.

It is time the Government stopped blaming other people and got on with the job. In decentralising activities, the Government should consider whether or not it would be wise to pay special allowances to people who work in country areas. The Federal Labor Government tried to do something for these people by means of taxation concessions. However, the State Government should also consider what action it can take.

Of course, as all honourable members are aware, problems have increased in the cities, and I will have more to say about that later. The Government has stagnated and become lazy. Because of the numbers it has in this Chamber, it has become domineering and unable to see that anything is wrong. The only thing that matters to it is that it has

the numbers. It lacks incentive, drive and initiative; so much so that we see fighting and disputes within its own ranks. Members of the Government parties are announcing their retirement and making statements that indicate clearly that they are not satisfied with the Government's performance or with their own progress within the ranks of the Government, and it is not because they are not capable of doing the more senior jobs that they have not been called upon to do.

There has also been open criticism of Government Ministers. In one sense, it is quite refreshing to hear that, because it makes one realise that the Liberal and National Parties have many internal problems. I hope that the public as a whole will recognise that and cast aside the Government's constant blaming of someone else—the unions or Canberra, for example—for its own shortcomings. When I refer to the Government's blaming Canberra, let it be clearly understood that the Fraser Government basically was put into office by Queensland electors on the recommendation of the Premier and of the Liberal and National Parties. Therefore, although the Fraser Government and its Ministers are directly and closely associated with the Queensland Government, the Queensland Government would now like to dissociate itself from them.

I propose now to speak on a matter in which I have a great personal interest—housing. A lack of housing is one of the greatest problems facing people in Queensland who wish to own their own home or who, because of their occupation, wish to rent a home. Of course, the present Government has been able, through the Queensland Housing Commission, to look after a few people, but the stage has now been reached when not enough homes are being built. Honourable members and the public generally are becoming rather tired of receiving the same old reply—it never varies—and a letter that I received recently is a typical example. It said—

“Priority of Mr. So and So's application has been appropriately assessed comparatively with several thousand other applications held.

Many of these are longer standing applications of equal priority or of higher priority and I regret that I am unable to indicate at this stage when a house may become available for offer to Mr. So and So.”

That is the type of letter I am receiving; I am sure that other honourable members are receiving similar letters. The letter indicates that thousands of people are being denied the right to own their own home through the Housing Commission, yet I do not hear any great complaint from Government members in this Chamber. Every time members of the Opposition ask the Minister for Works and Housing a question about the shortage of housing, he gives us the wipe-off.

The situation also arises in which a person who has been renting a house for years wishes to buy it, and a case of this type came to my attention recently. The persons concerned had been in the house for just on 25 years. As honourable members will know, a house built 25 years ago would be one of the older Housing Commission houses. They decided they would like to buy the house so they asked what its value would be. They were told \$22,800. I wonder what it originally cost. Because I have not seen the house, I am not disputing its value; but I know that a house of a similar type, with one bedroom fewer, was sold for \$12,500 three years ago.

For 25 years those people have been paying rent. For the first four years the rent was paid under the rebate system, so I will discount that for the moment. For 21 years they have been paying the full rent. When they asked how much they would get off the purchase price, they were told “\$1,120”. In other words, their being in that house for 25 years was not worth \$1 a week in rebate to them. Yet the Government talks about encouraging people to own their own home. It has to alter its priorities.

Home-ownership is a great thing in itself, but it is also a great thing for creating work. In all parts of Queensland—the metropolitan area and everywhere else—there are people who urgently require homes. The unemployment statistics I gave earlier clearly indicate that there are many tradesmen and semi-skilled persons who could be employed in the building industry, particularly the home-construction industry. If the Government wants to be able to boast about doing things for the people, it certainly should look after their welfare by way of housing. I hope that the Minister for Works and Housing will direct the Housing Commission to alter its home-purchase scheme. More importantly, he should make stronger representations to the Commonwealth Government for housing money. At the same time he should use some of the money the State is receiving from mining projects to help with housing. If the State's great wealth in minerals is to mean anything to the State, surely it should be used to provide amenities for the people of the State, and housing is one of the amenities which is very important.

In his Opening Speech the Governor said—

“A ‘Buy Queensland Made’ campaign is currently under way to draw consumer attention to the need to support local industries.”

That is a great theme and a great idea, but I wish someone would tell those who control many of the retail outlets in the State that we would like the opportunity to buy Queensland-made goods in our own State. Because of this Government's lack of initiative over the years, many of Queensland's major retail outlets

have been taken over by southern companies, to such an extent that most of the buying is now being carried out in the southern capitals. As a result Queensland shops are loaded with products that were made in many other parts of the world. We have to start by loading Queensland shops with Queensland-made goods. Owing to the policy or lack of policy of this Government, we have seen clothing manufacturers, shoe manufacturers and manufacturers in other fields brought to near financial ruin.

**Mr. Newbery:** Who started that? Whitlam started that.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** All our major shops here were taken over well before the Whitlam days. Let there be no mistake about that. The Minister is following the old theme of the Premier, "Blame Whitlam for everything." Whitlam was in power for three years with a hostile Senate for the whole three years; he didn't have control of both Houses. The present State Government has been here for 20 years. What about McWhirters, T. C. Beirnes and Overells? I could name them one after the other. They have all been taken over by southern retail outlets. Queensland manufacturers also have been taken over by southern manufacturers and, in some instances, the local firms have been closed down.

The Government's excuses concerning Whitlam are wearing thin. He was in power for three years but two years have elapsed since then. For 20 years before the Whitlam Government, consecutive Federal Liberal-Country Party Governments were in power. That was when most of the major take-overs were effected, and they certainly took place during the terms of office of Tory Governments in Queensland. For 20 years these Governments have been in power and for 20 years they have been blaming everyone but themselves. It is about time that the State Government took the initiative. It claims that Queensland is a sovereign State and that it has the people's welfare at heart. Let it act in a practical way instead of blaming somebody else.

Every time Opposition members ask about better roads somewhere the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads says, "I am trying to get Canberra to give me extra dollars." I remember that when I first entered Parliament, under leaders like Sir Frank Nicklin and Jack Pizzey—I refer particularly to Sir Frank Nicklin—there was no whingeing or excuses. It was very hard in an Address-in-Reply speech to make really constructive speeches against the Government because, as the State Government, it was fighting well for the people of the State. But the situation today is entirely different. The large number of Government members has made the Government lazy, and it blames everybody else. It has no initiative.

If we want Queensland goods on the shelves we should talk to the southern people who have the buyers. In this way the goods will come onto the shelves and Queenslanders will buy Queensland-made goods. On asking for particular brands in shops, knowing that they were Queensland-made, I have been told, "I am sorry, but we do not stock that brand. You can buy this brand made by a southern manufacturer." More commonly, in recent months, goods from Taiwan and other Eastern countries have been on sale.

The Government has let the people of Queensland down in another way. Many products stocked in shops must be kept frozen. The health authorities tell us that frozen goods have a limited life. People know how long they keep an item in their refrigerators and freezers, but they do not know how long it has been kept in retail or wholesale establishments. Once again I make a strong plea to the Government to legislate so that all perishable goods sold in Queensland are stamped with the date of manufacture—not the expiry date for sale purposes. No-one can tell me that it cannot be done. It can be done. It is only a matter of the daily production being stamped by a machine. I agree that 20 years ago this would have been difficult, because we did not have automatic machines, computers and so on. But in today's technological age when every worthwhile manufacturer has sophisticated machinery, the date of manufacture should be shown on perishable goods. I do not say that all goods should be date-stamped, but perishable goods requiring refrigeration in one form or another certainly should be.

I am concerned about the human element in retail shops where commodities are put into freezer units, with so many being sold in one day and the freezer then being restocked. It is all very well to say that the stock is rotated, but I know what can happen when people are rushed. It is possible for some items to be in a freezer for quite some time before being sold. Because the health and welfare of our people is most important, I urge the Government to introduce legislation as early as possible to make it compulsory for all goods sold in Queensland—not only those manufactured in Queensland—to be date stamped.

We hear of various diseases that are contaminating our foods. Luckily, as yet there has been no effect on Queensland people to any great extent, but surely we must heed the warning. It is not good enough to say that it was contamination at the point of manufacture and that that is a matter for other health authorities to sort out. I hope that our health authorities are watching our own manufacturing areas, and I imagine they would be. That is one aspect, but it is the aspect that makes one realise how many other facets of our health have to be borne in mind.

With carcasses, it is not easy to mark all parts; but I think one stamp on a carcass would be sufficient to indicate what it was. It is not that type of food—fresh food—that I am worried about. I am worried more about processed and packaged food. I believe that appropriate legislation should be introduced. I am sure that that could be arranged so that a possible serious health problem could be prevented.

In reply to the Governor's statement about the trade union movement, let me say that the trade union movement is a very responsible organisation, and the only regret I have—and it is a great regret—is that this State Government is not prepared to talk to unions and the union leaders as it is prepared to talk to leaders of employer organisations. It should get on with the job of talking to unions and union leaders.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. LAMONT** (South Brisbane) (12.42 p.m.): I enter this debate today with some degree of pride—pride that I belong to a Government that has had such a fine record over the past three years.

**Mr. Moore:** What about your pledge of loyalty?

**Mr. LAMONT:** I think the honourable member for Windsor just said, "What about your loyalty?" There have been times when I have felt that I had to criticise Government decisions. If a member of Parliament cannot disagree and reserve the right to say, "I am in this team. I am part of this Government and proud to be helping to provide stable government, but I don't always agree 100 per cent with what happens.", then he is not much chop. Of course, in the Labor Party a person has to sign a pledge that he will never speak out and think for himself. Gilbert and Sullivan had a wonderful line—

"He always rallied to the party's call,  
He never thought of thinking for himself  
at all."

That is the Labor Party—unthinking yes-men keeping the seat warm. It is with great pride that I rise as a Liberal, because as a Liberal I am able to think for myself and have the right to express my own opinions. I support the Government on most issues; but, if I feel fundamentally that my conscience is aggrieved at certain decisions, then I dissent. My party accepts this right and that is what the word "liberal" means.

Before I move on to matters to which I have directed my attention over the past three years, and I believe that this debate, coming near an election, should be a time when we review some of our decisions and actions, I would like to pay tribute to a man who I believe is a great Queenslander (I am calling him a Queenslander, although I understand he was born in the south, but then we say the best people come to

Queensland) and that is a man whom I regarded as a friend long before I came into this Parliament and a man whom I respect very much—Sir Zelman Cowen. Sir Zelman is a man of great integrity, a man of high intelligence and a man with a most impressive academic record, especially in the field of constitutional law. As Governor-General that will stand him in good stead. It makes me feel very confident that someone as qualified as Sir Zelman Cowen and someone with his integrity will be holding that position.

Sir Zelman's record at the university has been very good. True, we have had some minor disturbances on that campus since Sir Zelman arrived there. Most of them, however, were in the first year. The way that he has been able to work with the students, the staff, the professorial board and the police since that time has done him great credit. The University of Queensland has been the quietest campus in Australia in recent years. Some of the students might not be proud of that, but most of the staff, most of the students and I think most of the community are proud of it. I wish to pay tribute to Sir Zelman for the way he has handled his Vice-Chancellorship and I am sure he will conduct himself with equal eminence in the role of Governor-General.

I am also not a little proud to see that Sir Zelman described himself as a little "l" liberal. I know what I mean by a "little 'l' liberal". I do not presume to say what I think Sir Zelman means, although I do think I know.

But, in my experience, a "little 'l' liberal" is often confused with a person who wants to legalise marijuana make homosexuality compulsory and so forth. That is not true. I regard a "little 'l' liberal" as best defined as a person who is tolerant of those who dissent from his own view and is prepared to extend that tolerance into law to guarantee the rights of individuals.

So I come to review some of the decisions I have taken since become a member of Parliament, particularly during the past 12 months. I have taken a stand in favour of safeguarding civil liberties. I do not say that I am the only one who has done this but I am proud that I have been one of them. At the same time, as a former police officer, I know that we have to stand four-square behind the police. The police have the right to know that the public and the Parliament will stand by them in the decisions that they take. But in return we have a right to ask that the police become the most law-abiding group in our society so that we can respect them. We have to remember, and the police have to remember, that the meanest member of our society is entitled to his rights. Unless the meanest member of our society is entitled to respect under the law, none of us has rights.

The commissioner of the Victorian police said recently that the noblest causes are often fought in the names of the most unworthy individuals. We must not allow our judgments of individuals to cloud the principles that are often involved. We sometimes come in danger of reaching the stage of the old joke where the hoary reactionary says, "We must stamp out homosexuals, intellectuals and Communists, to name but one category."

I am not on the side of the demonstrators. I have seen demonstrations such as few others in Australia have seen. In Aden and in Calcutta I was witness to violence, and in Hong Kong I was actually involved in the police side of containing very serious demonstrations. Fifty thousand Chinese Communists were in the streets confronting a thin blue line of loyal people, who won the respect of the remaining 5,000,000 people of Hong Kong, all of them Chinese, in spite of the worry of 700,000,000 Communists over the border 20 miles away. The Hong Kong police, on that occasion, stood out as the most respected and law-abiding group in the community. If the Queensland police will guarantee such behaviour, we will never have any qualms about giving them our 100 per cent support. I am sure that the Minister, who sits here today, would agree with me on that, as would the new Commissioner of Police (Mr. Lewis).

I agree that civil liberties can and sometimes must be curtailed when the liberties of others are endangered. I instance an argument that I have had with some members of the extreme Left in this State over such instances as demonstrations against the Springbok Rugby players. I happen to enjoy a game of Rugby. I believed that politics must be kept out of sport. I said to a gentleman who, incidentally, is a secondary school teacher who apparently puts his views a little bit forcefully in the class-room, "You weren't demonstrating just to make your point. You were demonstrating to stop me and others from attending a football match and to break up that match so we couldn't enjoy it to the end. If we gave you Lang Park to demonstrate in and provided all the publicity you wanted, would you be happy to let me go to the Springbok match and watch the game to the end?" Of course, he would not have been happy with that at all. He wanted to exercise his rights at the expense of mine.

I wonder whether the students last Wednesday were satisfied with the publicity they received. Many of them, the moderates in particular, pulled out of the march in respect for the law. But many of them were determined to try to continue not, I feel, in support of the principle which was already taken care of in the proper place, namely, here, but because they wanted to provoke the police. Those sorts of provocative demonstrations, which are likely

to result in violence, have to be stopped. We do not want violence in the streets. We have to beware of the small handful of agitators who pop up at every demonstration, pop up at union demonstrations, pop up at the Q.C.E., where they get their instructions, and pop up at the campus every now and again, because they want in fact to provoke a reaction among us and they can, if we are not careful, provoke us to the point of leading us into curtailing liberties that should be preserved.

An interesting development in politics in this country and in this State in recent months has been the formation of a new centre party known as the Australian Democrats. Honourable members will recall that several years ago the Australia Party was formed as another centre party. It taught the Liberal Party something of a lesson. It reminded us that there is a middle ground that deserted us in the Federal elections in 1972. I believe that centre parties do make a contribution to the political situation. They warn conservative parties not to drift too far from the middle ground, just as the Australia Party warned them in 1972. A centre party warned the Liberal Party and the Country Party, as it then was, not to drift too far from the middle ground, or we would lose office.

Centre parties have a moderating influence, just as the D.L.P. attempted to have a moderating influence on the Calwell and Whitlam leadership of the Labor Party, which was drifting far to the Left in the 1960s. Whitlam learned a lesson from the D.L.P. because in 1972 he dressed up his party as the best dressed of a couple of the middle-of-the-road parties. That is a lesson that we should remember. We must never drift so far from the middle ground that we give up that enormous body of voters who simply want the peaceful life but are well aware when their rights are being infringed.

In the last three years I have taken a considerable interest in the handicapped, particularly children who are handicapped by deafness and blindness. As president of the Australian Deafness Council I have called on the Minister for Health to assist our programme of vaccination of every young girl against maternal rubella. I wish to advise the House now that it is the considered opinion of medical authorities that rubella vaccination is 98 per cent effective. In fact, I think it is the most effective vaccination known to the medical world. We believe it is possible to eradicate 40 per cent of the cases of children born deaf or blind and 90 per cent of the incidence of cases of children born with the double tragedy.

I believe it appropriate that the State Health Department and the Minister for Health should not only support this programme but should ensure that the Division of School Health Services is sufficiently

expanded to vaccinate all girls in their final primary school year against maternal rubella. If they are vaccinated once, we believe, the effectiveness of the vaccine will remain with them for life. There is no need to return every 12 months for a booster. Rubella vaccination is more effective, for example, than vaccination against tetanus or cholera. It remains for life. I believe that we must throw our full support behind a form of protection that can reduce the chances of a mother giving birth to a deaf, blind or multiple-handicapped child.

I am also concerned that deafness in children be detected at the earliest possible time. I have heard of some doctors who believe that it does not matter if deafness in a child is not detected until the child reaches school age. But by that time, a child has to develop speech. It is possible to detect deafness and partial deafness in babies at the age of two months and it is possible to fit them with hearing aids at the age of four months. Then they are able to hear the sounds around them and they will learn to speak, whereas a child with an undetected hearing defect will not develop proper speech.

A case of deafness in schoolchildren between the ages of five and 17 is detected every second day. That means that over 150 cases of deafness are being detected in Queensland every year. Those children are going through their school years with partial deafness and are being regarded as mentally retarded because they do not respond to teaching. They are not retarded or naturally inattentive; they are just not hearing what is going on.

I might refer to a case in the electorate that I am seeking to represent after the next election. I shall not name the school as I do not want to embarrass the principal and staff, who are not at fault. At that school not so long ago several cases of children with visual and hearing handicaps were discovered by the School Health Services. That school had not been visited by the School Health Services for three years.

It cannot be said, either, that it is the fault of the School Health Services. They are very dedicated people and they are doing their level best. I hope the Treasurer will be able to provide more money for the expansion of the School Health Services because they are doing a wonderful job. It is, however, a job that a local general practitioner could assist with greatly when some woman in his care has a baby. If deafness can be detected at two or three months and a hearing aid is fitted at that age, the educational, psychological and social development of the child will be vastly improved.

I raise, too, the issue of cotton buds, which are currently sold at chain stores as well as in chemist shops. They are very dangerous. Cases have been reported to the Australian Deafness Council of children and adults who have had their ear-drums

ruptured by the use of cotton buds and who have suffered traumatic deafness that will remain for life. These people did this by probing their ears or those of their children with cotton buds and other materials. The fact that cotton buds may have flexible stems with cotton wool on the end matters not a jot. One should put nothing smaller than an elbow in one's ear, unless it happens to be a piece of wet cotton wool, which will do the job of cleaning as adequately as is required.

I would like to raise, perhaps for the first time in this Parliament, the question of providing in the courts adequate interpreter services for deaf people. I hope that the Minister for Police will ensure that police cadets and, indeed, police officers are made aware of the problems of deaf people because we have had cases of people arrested who do not know why they have been arrested and do not respond to the arrest, and, of course, the police officer quite rightly thinks that the person is not responding properly to his requirements. There have been cases in court where a solicitor has said he can use and understand "sign language" and therefore he will interpret for the deaf person—and that is not good enough. If justice is to be extended to all, adequate court interpreter services for deaf people must be made available.

There is also the problem of hearing-children of deaf parents. I am proud to say that the Minister for Community and Welfare Services in this State is the first Minister to provide special money for the Queensland Deaf Society. Hitherto this society has been run on voluntary donations and has not been attracting subsidies. The Minister is putting an end to that sorry state.

I come now to the subject that has been occupying a great deal of my time as a member of Parliament—education. Let me say first of all that there has been a bit of a flurry today with respect to education. I debated the subject with the Deputy Director-General of Education on a radio station earlier and he made some quite outlandish claims. I am concerned that public servants are running away with decision-making in education in this State. I am concerned, for example, that when I criticised the Deputy Director-General of Education for a policy of his just recently, I was hit with the threat of a law suit. His solicitor wrote to me and said, "If you criticise him again by name we are going to sue you for libel." I did not bother to answer it. I thought I would answer it on the floor of Parliament and in a private letter to the Premier. A public servant had written back in the name of the Minister—as far as I know without consulting the Minister—and I learned of his reply and criticised it.

I will tell you what happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A charitable organisation had asked the Minister for Education—I am glad to

see he is present in the Chamber today—to present a set of Encyclopaedia Britannica to the school that raised the most money for its cause. Mr. Hamilton wrote back and said that the Minister would not do so. He said words to the effect that the development of the competitive spirit is bad for the social and psychological development of the child. I denounced that as socialist, egalitarian nonsense.

**Mr. Bird:** Why don't you be truthful and produce the letter?

**Mr. LAMONT:** The Minister knows very well that that letter exists.

**Mr. Bird:** I know it exists.

**Mr. LAMONT:** I am not really worried about who wrote the letter (I know the Minister did not sign it), but what I am worried about is that when I criticised it—whether I am right or wrong and whether competition is good or bad for children—I was hit with the threat of a law suit which constituted an attempt by a public servant to gag a member of Parliament doing his duty. I think that is an atrocious situation, and if I had been the Minister he would have been disciplined.

I am looking forward to the Minister telling the principal of the Brisbane State High School that he must not put up a football team against Brisbane Grammar, Nudgee or Terrace next year because the development of the competitive spirit is bad for their social development. I know very well what the principal will tell the Minister if he has the temerity to make such a silly statement.

**Mr. Bird** interjected.

**Mr. LAMONT:** What would you like to say, Mr. Minister? I will give you half a minute.

I am sorry—the Minister remains silent.

**Mr. Bird:** I am not silent. I said, "Why don't you be honest about all this? Why don't you produce the letter?"

**Mr. LAMONT:** I will produce the letter by asking the Minister to table it. After all, he has a copy in his departmental files. I challenge the Minister to table the letter that was sent to the Red Cross so that we will all know whether he believes that the competitive spirit is a danger to the social development of a child.

**Mr. Bird:** Can I table the letter that you wrote in which you misinterpreted that letter?

**Mr. LAMONT:** The Minister can table anything I have written to him. I am not ashamed of anything I have written. I could not get a copy of that letter out of the Education Department, but if it is tabled, so much the better.

**Mr. Bird:** You referred to the letter.

**Mr. LAMONT:** The Minister has had his go.

**Mr. Bird:** Now you are saying you haven't seen it.

**Mr. LAMONT:** I have had its contents read out to me.

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

**Mr. LAMONT:** I concluded on rather an interesting note before the recess for lunch. I was expressing my concern that certain public servants in the Education Department seem to have a sense of values that I think is in conflict with the sense of values of most of the community—parents, employees, members of Parliament.

The Minister has agreed to table a certain letter that I think reveals something of the attitudes of some of his bureaucrats. It will be interesting to see the letter, because there are copies of it in existence outside the Education Department, and I hope that the copy which is tabled is the same as the other copies that exist.

The point at issue is whether or not the competitive spirit ought to be encouraged or whether in fact it is to the social and psychological detriment of the development of the child. I believe that there are a number of public servants who contribute and subscribe to the view that the class-room ought to be, and can be, converted into a social-engineering laboratory to remake society in some ideal image of their own.

We have many examples of this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have seen reading, writing and arithmetic making way constantly in the syllabus for social-engineering subjects. But one thing that the clever bureaucrats have not yet discovered is a means of fitting more than six hours between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. For every new social-engineering course that goes into the schools, something has to come out. It will not be last year's fads; it will, naturally, be the old traditional subjects that constantly suffer.

I was quoted in the newspaper this morning as attacking "Man: A Course of Study", which is currently in use in 15 schools in this State. "Man: A Course of Study" is not a study of western civilised man; it is a study of primitive sociological man. And I regard this incessant and increasing demand upon children at an ever-increasingly early age to come to grips with the problems of society as being a vast assault on childhood. Let children have their innocence. My child is 12 weeks old today, and I want him to have 12 years of happiness and carefree living before he has to come to grips with the rotten world that we adults, unfortunately, have been able to produce.

Why should children, at the age of nine, have to come to grips with the bomb, population explosion, pollution, racism? "Man: A Course of Study" seems to have a hang-up

about wife swapping, incest and cannibalism. Surely we can let children study the history of the development of western civilisation without having to go into the horrors of it. Let me give an example. I can teach nationalism to children of tender years by talking about Australian nationalism and the brighter and better aspects of nationalism, or I can teach nationalism by talking about Hitler, the concentration camps and the bones and the bodies of victims of the gas chambers. It is just the way you go about it, and "Man: A Course of Study" seems to dwell upon the more morbid aspects of the history of man.

It is the bureaucrats who introduced this course without any meaningful consultation with teachers. When I visit p. and c. meetings or address public meetings, I say to the employers and the parents, "Don't blame the teachers for the dissatisfaction you have with the education system, because teachers are usually as much the victims of poor educational planning as are the students." I tell them that teachers are the only real experts in education, but they are seldom consulted adequately.

A handful of idealistic bureaucrats in this State are in control of education. They jet-set their way around the world, pick up a few ideas in vogue in England or America and bring them back here with woolly impressions of their success rate, and implement them in every school along the way. They do not consult teachers as to whether they want the changes. They do not give adequate in-service training to the teachers. Consequently, the real experts, the ones at the coal face who are doing the work, are not consulted.

One Director of Education—in fact, the Director of Primary Education—said to me, "No matter what you people in Parliament do, you won't change the way I want to run my schools." Quite frankly, that appals me, because he is, after all, a public servant, or is supposed to be. These bureaucrats have been too long away from the class-room. The Deputy Director of Education, who was debating with me on radio station 4IP this morning, has not been in a class-room as a teacher since the 1950's—over 17 years—yet he is dictating to practising teachers as to what they should do.

There is a great gap in communication between the teaching profession and the policy makers. It could be remedied very easily; but, unfortunately, the right attitude does not prevail at the top. I say that those bureaucrats have an arrogant disregard of our opinions in this Parliament, the opinions of parents and, most of all, the opinion of teachers, who are the only real experts in education. So I say that parents should not blame teachers. When they are dissatisfied with what they see, they should apply pressure upon the department or come to members for advice. At the moment consulting the profession really boils down to a few bureaucrats like the Deputy Director-General

of Education consulting with the president of the Teachers' Union, and that is not only not consulting the profession; it is barely a meeting of two minds. We have to get away from this situation. One of the ways, of course, is to build up the teaching profession.

There should be a better selection of teachers for training. Instead of just taking them on their T.E. scores from school, let them be interviewed to see if they are vocationally motivated. Let them be interviewed again at the end of the teachers' course. We have repeatedly asked for this, but the Minister's advisers have repeatedly told him, "We can't have it." Why, I don't know. If I were considering employing someone I would check his character, his aptitude, and his motivation, not just look at his T.E. score. Yet for something as vital as teacher-training we go on academic results alone. The public servant simply won't be told. Here is another matter. Not enough money is spent on in-service training. We won \$2,000,000 for in-service training a few years ago, but what happened? It built the Bardon Professional Development Centre. The money was put into public works. There are class-rooms in the colleges of advanced education with staff at those colleges going begging for something to do. They could be employed in in-service training, and the \$2,000,000 could have been spent in lifting teachers out of schools for three-month courses on full pay. That would have been a contribution to the profession. What about teachers who want to return to jobs after leaving the profession for five or six years? Now if they have only one year's training behind them at a college, they have to go back to college. At the age of what—forty? What about a woman who leaves the profession to bring up her children and then wants to come back to the profession? She has to go to a college of advanced education. What for, I don't know. If she has 10 years' teaching experience behind her, for example, she should be credited with two years' additional training because she could probably teach the pants off young teachers straight out of a college. That, too, has been rejected as a proposal.

I now wish to leave the subject of education because I think my views on this matter are pretty well known throughout the State, and certainly in this Parliament. I want to devote the remaining half of my speech to problems I find in my own electorate that I represent at present and also in the electorate of Woodridge and Springwood that I am reasonably confident I will represent in the next Parliament. One of the things facing all of us, particularly young couples with families who are buying homes (but builders and tenants as well), are the high interest rates. Interest rates have to come down. When people say to me, "But your Government hasn't brought them down", I say, "Yes, but remember this: In 1972 the Labor Government came into power promising to lower interest rates. They doubled them and doubled them again.

Interest rates went to four times the base rate of 1972 under Labor simply because when we handed over to them there were hundreds of millions of dollars in credit in Australia, and when they handed it back to us we were thousands of millions of dollars in debt." There was a massive overseas debt to such an extent that the Prime Minister had to conspire with three of his senior Ministers to sell Australia to the Arab consortium for millions of dollars for 20 years, which he dressed up as a "temporary" loan.

Why the Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, has stopped that lawsuit investigating the former Prime Minister's motives I shall never know, because it was quite obvious that Whitlam, to circumvent the Constitution, to circumvent the will of the people, was prepared to sell the people out to the Arabs. His is the party that talks about multi-nationals owning our country.

Because of the massive overseas debt, because of the bankruptcy the Labor Government ran us into, there became an enormous pressure on the money market. When there is that kind of pressure on the money market, then interest rates will rise. That is what Labor did to Australia. So all of us who are paying off homes or paying rents to landlords who are themselves paying off premises, had to pay massive interest rates to the building societies and the banks. Gratefully the Fraser Government has taken a responsible attitude towards the economy. But we have had to tighten our belts. It has meant more to some of us than to others. This has meant that now, this October, it is probable that interest rates will go down a half to 1 per cent, and I would predict that by May next year they will come down a further 1 to 2 per cent. That is real cash back in the pocket to people to whom \$2 or \$3 a week means a lot in their net income for their families. It is good for buyers; it is good for builders; it is good for the real estate industry. Indeed, it is good for the economy generally. This will happen and the first move will come before our State election. No doubt the Government will get some response from the electorate, which will be happy about it.

I am happy to say that I have served on the housing committee, which the present Minister for Works and Housing has chaired for the past three years. We have tried to implement Liberal Party policy, namely, that every person who wants a home shall be assisted to own his own home. Labor Party policy is that we must keep a certain percentage of homes for rental purposes only. Indeed, the Labor Government of 1972 to 1975 forced on the Queensland Government in 1973 an agreement that forbids us to sell houses built with certain Federal Government money to people who are Housing Commission tenants.

I am proud to say that the housing committee of this Parliament brought forward a scheme that the Minister has introduced which virtually says to Housing Commission tenants, "We want you to have an opportunity to buy your own homes." The homes they are in at the moment, on which they are paying rent to the Government, can be converted to their ownership by the payment of a small deposit. Their rent payments are then regarded as interest repayments on the mortgage at the low rate of 7 per cent compared with the overall rate payable to building societies and banks. We have assisted Housing Commission tenants—people who are receiving welfare assistance in housing—to convert from being rent-paying tenants to mortgage-repaying owners. That will stand us in good stead in Housing Commission areas when it sinks in fully to the people that they can at last own the roof over their heads. The Labor Party would prefer that the people did not own the roof over their heads, knowing full well that people who do not own the roof over their heads depend on the Government and thus are more susceptible to socialist policies because, after all, they are on welfare hand-outs. That is the way Labor treats its followers. It wants to keep them dependent on the Government.

Only last week we announced the release of a further \$10,000,000 into the building industry so that people who cannot afford to borrow \$26,000 or \$27,000 for a new home can get \$18,000 in Government money at 7 per cent interest, rather than 10 per cent, and can borrow the remainder from a building society. Once a person has \$18,000 approved by the Government, it is much easier to borrow from a building society. This is assisting people again—particularly young couples—to buy their own homes, and this is applicable to people buying their first home who usually have young families. I am very proud to be associated with both of these policies that help people to achieve private ownership of the roofs over their heads. I am only sorry that the 1973 Whitlam Government forced us to reserve certain homes built under its scheme so that we cannot hand them over to the people to achieve home-ownership.

In the electorate of South Brisbane, and the new Woodridge electorate, owner-driver truckies have problems with road maintenance tax. I sympathise entirely with them. Truck drivers are probably the only people who work longer hours than members of Parliament. They find that, to keep adequate records of the money they have to pay under this tax scheme, they have to employ someone on a part-time basis because of the amount of clerical work involved. But they are not making enough money to employ someone even on a part-time basis. We are taxing people who are trying to go about their own free enterprise. That is not supposed to be the way of this Government. These people are willing to pay. They do not

begrudge giving the money to the Government, but they want to be able to pay in a different way so that they do not have to do so much clerical work. The best alternative suggestion that I have heard is a tax on diesel fuel. I know that there are some administrative or constitutional legal problems involved with the Federal Government, but "life was not meant to be easy". I am sure that the State Government can work out some agreement with the Federal Government to give relief so that as the truck drivers buy diesel fuel they pay the necessary tax and the clerical work is eliminated.

One result has been that owner-drivers in the trucking industry have set up straw companies in, say, South Australia. In this way the Queensland Government loses registration fees.

These fees would flow back to the State if we took a more enlightened view. I hope that the Treasurer and the present Minister for Transport can do something to help owner-drivers.

Transport is another grave problem in the Woodridge, Kingston, Springwood and Underwood areas, where people without a car are virtually isolated. Most families have to try to support a second car so that the wife can get around to do the shopping and take the kids to kindergarten when the husband takes the car to work. I believe that a transport system was about to be approved earlier this month, but regrettably the death of the Transport Minister meant that some decisions had to be postponed. I hope it will not be long before the present Transport Minister can give his approval to this very important service, which I believe has already been tendered for and for which approval was almost ready to be given.

Anybody travelling down the Pacific Highway will see that cars travelling at 100 km/h are cutting across the paths of people in the area who have to move backwards and forwards across the highway in the course of their daily duties. I believe that one flyover is already planned for the area. I hope the Minister for Main Roads can provide more flyovers, because it is a very dangerous area. Driving there the other day I saw three children on horseback trying to cross the Pacific Highway, with traffic heading to the coast at this extraordinary rate. Frankly, it frightened me to watch.

I wish to pay a tribute to the honourable member for Salisbury (Mrs. Rosemary Kyburz). As I have been going around the Woodridge area since my endorsement for the proposed electorate of Woodridge, I have found that everyone has a good word to say about her. I am finding a wonderful legacy of goodwill to me as a Liberal Party member. For some there who voted for Mrs. Kyburz, it was the first time in their lives that they had voted Liberal. God didn't strike them down with lightning. The sky didn't fall in. Those people found that Mrs. Kyburz as a Liberal has given them a magnificent service.

In the area of education alone, two of her schools have received over half a million dollars in three years, another two have received a third of a million each, and another a quarter of a million. Even the opportunity school, which is a much smaller establishment, has received \$90,000. In addition she has had a completely new school established in the electorate. So a wonderful goodwill exists in that area by virtue of the marvellous work that Mrs. Kyburz has done. I assure the people of the Woodridge electorate that I will be serving them with the same diligence and the same degree of integrity as Mrs. Kyburz has shown.

Time is running out. I hope that I have given some account of the sorts of issues I have supported since I became a member of Parliament—civil liberties, police activity, education, schools, health and welfare, and transport. All of these are issues that I believe will be important in the coming State election. If we were really looking for a slogan for this election and if we were negative-thinking people, I suppose we would pick, "Lest We Forget", because I don't believe that the people who swung away from the Labor Party in their droves in 1974 and again in 1975 will drift back to the Labor Party simply because we are taking a bit of time to get Australia out of this mess.

Australia got into an enormous mess in the three years under Labor. It got into such a mess that it has taken us already 18 months to achieve what we have been able to achieve (which I have already outlined). I am very proud to be associated with a State Government that has the lowest level of unemployment, the lowest consumer price index rises and perhaps the highest service to its people. Certainly it has the greatest amount of integrity, law and order and respect for the individual of any State of Australia. Some of the more trendy images that we have seen in the South just have not come off. In a few weeks' time we will see in South Australia just how the very trendy Don Dunstan fares. I think we will find that this time he will not come off quite so well.

So, if we were looking for a slogan, "Lest We Forget" would be an interesting one to adopt. Malcolm Fraser must be the only Prime Minister who ever went to the polls saying that things would get worse in the short term before they got better. He has only been going for half the time that he said he needed to show some signs of improvement; yet some signs are already there. We have reduced the massive overseas debt to a certain extent and interest rates are starting to show signs of coming down. We will see a greater boost to employment in about December. The school-leavers of this year will not be facing the same problems as the school-leavers of 1975 and 1976. The stability of this State Government, along with the very stringent policies (they were very hard economic policies and hard decisions to adopt,

but nevertheless were very effective policies) of the Fraser Government, is going to mean more jobs for school-leavers, and that is very important to all of us.

At the opening of my speech I am afraid I misunderstood an interjection by my colleague the member for Windsor. He mentioned the word "loyalty" and I thought he was talking about loyalty to the Government. He was in fact talking about loyalty to the Queen. Of course, in my reference to Sir Zelman Cowen and the tribute that I hope I paid to him, I perhaps should have added, because I certainly feel it, that I believe very strongly that a constitutional monarchy provides the greatest amount of stability that any Government can provide. There is an ongoing person we can look to who provides a personification of the Constitution that we know provides the sort of democratic, free and respectable way of life that we in Australia want. Therefore, I am very happy to affirm—perhaps later in my speech than it deserves—my utmost loyalty to the Crown and my firm belief that the constitutional monarchy should and will continue as the way of life that will guide all Australians to a better way of life.

**Mr. MARGINSON (Wolston) (2.35 p.m.):** We have had something like 40 speakers in this Address in Reply debate, which has now proceeded for a number of days. Because of my past actions and attitude I have no need to pledge by loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen. I am supporting the motion, which does incorporate a pledge of loyalty by the House to the Crown. I join with that expression both for the people of Wolston and for myself personally.

I congratulate Sir James Ramsay on his appointment as Governor of our State. It has been my good fortune to meet him on a number of occasions, particularly at functions in the city of Ipswich, and I extend to him and Lady Ramsay every good wish in the tasks that they are undertaking.

**Mr. Frawley:** How hypocritical can you get? You would get rid of him if you had a chance. Your mob would throw him out.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I will make reference to that member later on. I will have something to say about his conduct in this House, I hope, if I am allowed.

The mover and seconder of the motion now under debate disappointed me because I believe they deliberately avoided the great problem that Queensland is facing today. They brought many matters to the attention of honourable members in their speeches to the House, but the great matter of unemployment was deliberately side-stepped by them. I was particularly disappointed with the honourable member for Warrego when he avoided this question, because his area is one that has the greatest number of

unemployed workers in the State of Queensland. He outlined what he thought were some grand things that the Government intended to do but I would say that he should help the people who are out of work in the Warrego area. I find, from the particulars I have at my disposal now, that as many as 347 people are unemployed in the Charleville area—the area that he represents—yet he was not prepared to speak up on their behalf and point out that they require work. The honourable member for Belmont also side-stepped the question.

The tragedy of unemployment in Australia and particularly in Queensland today is something that we cannot afford to overlook. We have 333,000 people out of work in Australia. That does not mean that only 333,000 people are affected by unemployment in the nation. That figure is something like 1,000,000 people. We have to include the wives of male workers, the husbands of the ladies who are unemployed and the children of those families. They are affected by the non-income-earning of their husbands and fathers, and we have a Government that is endeavouring to overlook it. I want to say quite distinctly that the Government has made no attempt to consider this question of unemployment. It has brought down some grandiose schemes that were mentioned by the instant expert who spoke before me and who said how proud he was to be a member of the Government of this State. He alone of Government members spoke of unemployment; but he, too, reverted to the same old catchcry of the last 18 months of blaming the Whitlam Labor Government.

The present Prime Minister, who is a Liberal, and his Government promised in 1975 that they would overcome the problem of unemployment. They have done nothing about it. Their counterparts in the Government of this State should hang their heads in shame when they allow unemployment to exist in Queensland today.

**Mr. Lindsay:** Who wrote this for you?

**Mr. Frawley:** He's never written a speech in his life. They are all handed to him as briefs from the Trades Hall.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** The member who so rudely interjected should know that I am not reading. I am speaking off the cuff, which is something he cannot do.

**Mr. Frawley:** You're speaking from the heart, are you?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I have more heart than the honourable member, particularly in my concern for the unemployed in this State. This is a problem that has to be solved by the Government. During the coming State election campaign, the Government will be particularly anxious not to refer to unemployment.

The Premier, who won an election on the issue of law and order, will not admit to the people of Queensland that he acquiesced in the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia. The President of Indonesia came to Queensland and met the Premier. The Premier admitted that he told the President that he was not opposed to Indonesia's invasion of East Timor. He shares responsibility for the mass slaughter that has gone on in East Timor and apparently is continuing today. This unchristian gentleman to whom Doug Anthony referred has made it quite clear that he has some blood on his hands following the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia.

The Premier has come out as Mr. Fraser's Foreign Affairs Minister. As Premier of the State, he has dabbled in the foreign affairs of this country, which is the province of the Federal Government. I ask the people of Queensland to realise just what he is.

I have with me an extract from the "Sunday Sun" of 20 January which I wish to refer to the House. A young chap named Scott Prasser from Ipswich—

**Mr. Frawley:** He's bad news; I can tell you that now.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** He is bad news because he happens to be the research officer for Mr. Hodges, the Liberal member for Petrie. That is why he is bad news to the honourable member for Murrumba.

**Mr. Greenwood:** We believe in free speech in our party, you see. There's a bit of a difference in your neck of the woods.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** The Minister is wrong there. He says he believes in free speech but he objects when we speak about what he was doing before he joined the Ministry.

I have here an article about what Mr. Scott Prasser had to say, and I agree with him. The article reads—

"The Queensland Government's faults were compounded by the obvious incompetence of many of the State's Ministers and back benchers both Liberal and National . . ."

That is why the Minister for Survey and Valuation is objecting to this. This article was written at about the time he was elevated—prematurely—to the Ministry of this State.

**Mr. Porter:** Don't you think he might be prejudiced by working for a Federal member?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I will go on with this first. The honourable member should listen to what he has to say about Government back-benchers. The article quotes Mr. Prasser as having said—

"At best they can only be kindly described as second raters and careerists of the worst kind."

The article continued—

"The stinging attack on the Government members was launched by Mr. Scott Prasser, vice-president of the Young Liberals' policy committee."

I do not think Government members have heard this before. This article was written last January. It quoted Mr. Prasser as saying—

"I can only recoil with increasing regret at the low standard of government in Queensland."

**Mr. Frawley:** Give us a photostat.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** The honourable member would not be able to read it if I gave him one. Honourable members opposite know what is coming, and they are smarting.

**Mr. Porter:** How old is Mr. Scott Prasser?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** He is 22. He said further—

"The Government, under the control of the Liberal and National Parties, displays all the long-quoted faults of State governments—ineptness, lack of co-operation with the Federal Government and general stagnation."

What a very good description of this Government he has given to the people of Queensland—"ineptness, lack of co-operation with the Federal Government and general stagnation". The article continues—

"Fortunately one or two of the older back benchers" (this does not include the honourable member for Toowong) "and some of the 'new' Liberal members elected in 1974" (that would include the Minister for Survey and Valuation) "have shown courage in their willingness to stand up for Liberal principles . . ."

That is what the honourable member for Wavell spoke about not so long ago in the Press after he had tendered his resignation—that the Liberal Party is not standing up for its principles or bringing down new policies.

**Mr. Porter:** Is that so?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** That is what he says. I am only quoting one of your own members.

**Mr. Porter:** Which one?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** The honourable member for Wavell.

**Mr. Porter:** What did he specify?

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I think the honourable member for Wolston should proceed with his speech.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I am sorry if I am annoying them, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The article continues—

“They have shown courage in their willingness to stand up for Liberal principles when necessary and as well appearing to grasp some of the realities of modern day politics.

“Mr. Prasser said most Government members were willing to accept Queensland’s archaic parliamentary system and the Government’s lack of innovating style. The Liberal Parliamentary wing which has had its ranks swelled by the charisma of Bjelke-Petersen in 1974 appears oblivious to the fact that because the Liberal Party has no separate identifiable image in the eyes of the public, because those from the top down don’t believe there is a difference, it will also suffer when the inevitable anti-Petersen swing begins.”

**Mr. Byrne:** Do you realise he has as much support for those ideas in the Young Liberal movement as the A.L.P. has support in this Parliament—virtually nil?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** Is the honourable member going to tell a member of his own party that he does not support him?

**Mr. Porter:** Of course!

**Mr. MARGINSON:** What is the honourable member butting in for?

**Mr. Porter:** I just want to help you.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I am not looking at the honourable member; I am looking at the honourable member for Redlands, who is not in his seat.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Redlands is entitled to sit where he likes while he is not speaking or interjecting.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** He is interjecting.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** If he wishes to interject, he must first make his way to his own seat, and he knows that. I suggest that the honourable member for Wolston direct his comments to the Chair.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I shall have something to say about the conduct of the House very shortly, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I am sorry if I have hurt Liberal members of this Assembly by quoting Mr. Scott Prasser’s condemnation of them, but I intend to quote a little further from what he said. He went on to say—

“The Queensland Parliamentary Liberal Party displays all of the characteristics of its Federal counterpart in 1972—aloofness from the organisations wing and forgetting what the first principles of liberalism are all about.”

So I join with Mr. Prasser—it is very strange that I should join with a Liberal in anything—

**Mr. Greenwood:** If you join with Mr. Prasser, it will cost you \$10.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** If he joins with me, it will cost him much more than that, because the party to which I belong is much better than his. I think I have dealt adequately with the Liberals, Mr. Deputy Speaker—the second-rate Liberals, as a member of their own party has said.

In the 8½ years that I have been in this Chamber—and what I am about to say is not a reflection on the Chair—I have seen the conduct deteriorate tremendously. In the earlier years, we did not have here people such as the honourable member for Murrumba and the honourable member for Merthyr. We did not have displays such as we have had in the last few days from the Minister for Police. But the deterioration in conduct is not solely the result of their presence in the Chamber. In my opinion, it arose about the time of the introduction of questions without notice.

The Premier and his Ministers are answering not only genuine questions without notice but also questions without notice that I suspect they have given to back-bench members of the Government parties to ask at question-time. This enables them to attack those who oppose them in this Parliament. I find it difficult to believe that anything of that type can take place in a democratic Parliament, but I have seen Ministers hand to members questions without notice that will enable them to attack people.

Unfortunately, when I protest—and I am speaking only for myself—about the questions and the answers to them and I am attacked by one Minister in particular, I have to cease my attack because I am warned under a certain standing order; yet the Minister can continue to attack me. In circumstances such as those, a member is unable to retaliate or even to deny the truth of what a Minister is saying.

I reiterate that in the 8½ years that I have been a member of this Assembly the conduct of the House has slipped tremendously. I am not slighting the Chair when I say that.

**Mr. Lowes:** You’re like a tomcat; you want to have it and yowl about it at the same time.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** The interjector is sour now because he didn’t get a job as a Justice. That was the story that went around. He said that he would get there before the present Minister for Survey and Valuation. The Minister for Survey and Valuation has beaten him into the Ministry, but he is still adamant that he is going to be on the Bench.

**Government Members interjected.**

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Mr. Marginson.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I will listen to the honourable member for Archerfield.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Do you reckon the Minister for maps was elected to the Ministry on ability or—

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I would say that most of the Ministers have been elected on patronage. I have seen one striking example of such an appointment to the Ministry while I have been here. The honourable member for Yeronga is looking guilty.

**Mr. Frawley** interjected.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** There's the dog-kicker at it again.

**Government Members** interjected.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I would be pleased if the honourable member for Wolston would proceed with his speech.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I don't want to stir them up.

**Mr. Jones:** Isn't it true that the honourable member for Warwick said that they were blackmailers and crawlers?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** The honourable member for Cairns has reminded me of what Mr. Cory said here. I was here the day he said it. Faces were very red when he said one had to be a crawler to get into the Ministry. That is the point I have been trying to prove. We in this House are finding it very difficult to carry out our duties.

**Mr. Byrne:** You haven't even tried.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** There's the evil friar again.

It was not long ago that I heard that a committee had been set up to appoint a successor to the present Clerk of Parliament, who I am sorry to know is retiring. What a shabby deal it was to appoint a person not even on the staff, and not even au fait with what goes on in the Legislative Assembly. What else will the Government do?

**Mr. Greenwood:** A very distinguished public servant. You shouldn't say things like that about him.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** There has been worse said about the honourable gentleman and his fiddling around.

**Mr. Greenwood:** You are a sensible man and people take notice of you.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** Thank you very much. I am taking notice of this. I believe that if a public servant is working in a department and gaining knowledge of the work of a higher office, he is entitled to the promotion he deserves. I have not heard one Government

member during the debate oppose this proposal of the subcommittee to bring in a high-ranking public servant from outside. I have no doubt that it will be tried again. The Government has tried it once. There is no reason why those on the staff of this House who are capable of carrying out those duties should be overlooked.

In commenting on what has taken place I must say how sorry I am that we are to lose our Clerk of Parliament. I thank the staff of the House for the assistance that they have given to me in the 8½ years I have been here. I thank not only the staff in the offices—

**Mr. Byrne:** Are you retiring, Mr. Marginson? Are you making your valedictory speech?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** Not at all, but I know that the honourable member for Belmont will be retiring.

**Mr. Byrne:** That is where you are far from the truth.

**Mr. Frawley:** Don't forget, when you were secretary of the Ipswich Hospitals Board there was a lot of funny business.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** Yes; at that time you came up to try to fix our lifts, but you couldn't do it. We made more complaints about you to the firm than about anyone else.

**Mr. Frawley:** I have some good information on you.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** When you came up we had complaints because the lifts were not working properly. You were a very poor tradesman.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I ask the honourable member once again to direct his comments to the Chair and I ask him to continue with his speech.

**Mr. Lane:** It could hardly be called a speech.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** Hello, the mug from Merthyr is here.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will withdraw that comment.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I withdraw it.

**Mr. Lane:** Have you got anything to say or are you just going to stand there?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I am looking for a little bit of protection from you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I am trying to give the honourable member protection by asking him to proceed with his speech. I again ask him to do so.

**Mr. Lane:** He has nothing to say.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** Well, I hope I can get it.

**An Honourable Member:** You had better sit down.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member has asked for my protection so that he can complete his speech. I will give him my protection. I ask the House to hear him in silence, and I ask the honourable member to proceed and complete his speech.

**Mr. Jones:** Tell them about the blackmailers now; you have touched on the crawlers.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** My colleague wants me to deal with the blackmailers, having touched on the crawlers.

I want to continue with my speech concerning the proposed appointment of the next Clerk of Parliament by a subcommittee, which, I heard, consisted of the Premier, Mr. Speaker and one other person, who was not the Minister for Works and Housing.

**An Opposition Member:** It was Mr. Knox.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** Yes, Mr. Knox. It was not the second-rate Minister I referred to earlier in my speech.

I hope that similar action will not be taken again but that the Government will ensure that conscientious, loyal employees of the House are given the promotion they deserve and that a member of the Public Service outside the ranks of the officers of the Parliament is not introduced to step over those loyal officers and take a position to which one of their number is entitled. I am very sorry that the Premier on this occasion saw fit to introduce an unknown to take on the job of Clerk of Parliament in this House. Apparently, as the honourable member for Ashgrove said, he was a top-rating public servant, but he found that the job was far too great for him and he has since left us to go back where he came from.

I am very sorry that it has been necessary for me to ruffle so many Government members, particularly the Liberals. As I said, I believe that conduct in the House has deteriorated. I am pleased to see the honourable member for Merthyr here; he was not here when I last spoke on this subject.

**Mr. Lane:** What subject?

**Mr. MARGINSON:** Conduct in the House, which the honourable member would not know a thing about.

**Mr. Lane:** While I have been here, you have only put blank pages into "Hansard".

**Mr. MARGINSON:** You can't count. You are as good at that as you are at rolling drunks and crooks.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! That comment is offensive, too, and I ask the honourable member to withdraw it.

**Mr. MARGINSON:** I withdraw it, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. JENSEN** (Bundaberg) (3.5 p.m.): First I wish to affirm the loyalty of the citizens of Bundaberg to Her Majesty the Queen and also to our new Governor, Sir James Ramsay, and Lady Ramsay. One of the first duties of our new Governor was to open a new port facility at the bulk terminal in Bundaberg. He acquitted himself very well. The people loved him from the start, and he enjoyed the spirit of Bundaberg. When anybody enjoys the spirit of Bundaberg, that means something. So I hope Sir James carries on well in his role as Governor of Queensland.

Let me pass to a few important points. First, I thank the Government for the release of \$2,500,000 for the irrigation scheme in my area. Everybody knows that if this drought continues in Bundaberg, the sugar industry could lose \$50,000,000 in one year. The \$2,500,000 will at least employ a few men to complete some parts of the scheme, seeing that the Federal Government did not come good with its promised money.

I wish to refer to an editorial which took up half the front page of the Bundaberg "News-Mail" on 1 September under the heading "Stop this political bickering". This editor in Bundaberg—and I suppose he is one of the brightest in Queensland—always writes common sense. He is not afraid to attack either the Government or the Opposition about any of their political comments. He says in this editorial—

"The trouble is that so much of the party political propaganda which pours out at such times is distorted and misleading; some of it is deliberate misrepresentation. Seldom is achieved what should be the basic objective to create an informed debate on major issues so that electors may cast a responsible vote."

That is quite right.

He went on to refer to our former Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam. A few weeks ago Mr. Whitlam came to Bundaberg on his tour up the coast. He made one big blue in Bundaberg. He forgot to say that Bundaberg is one of the six leading cities in Australia; all he could say was that we had the worst unemployment in Australia. The editor of the Bundaberg paper got into him about his claim. The editorial said—

"... the number of unemployed persons registered for the Bundaberg region rose from 746 in November, 1975, to 1,260 in July this year. Why pick November 1975? The figure for December, 1975, around the time the Fraser Government was elected, was 1,111, and in December the previous

year—seven months after the Whitlam Government was elected a second time—it was 1,125.”

This is what happens when there is political bickering, as he calls it.

When I entered Parliament in 1969, I made speeches in which I quoted statistics for Bundaberg that were taken out by Harris of the university. At that time we had the worst unemployment in Queensland. It was three times the State average. The average was 1.5 per cent and we had 4.5 per cent. Today our unemployment is about 2 per cent over the average for the State—but we were then three times the State average.

Everybody today has been talking about unemployment, but nobody talks about the cure. Some people say that the Government has to put money in for unemployment relief but we know quite well that the money has to be found somewhere. I will now quote from the April/June issue of the I.P.A.. I hope all honourable members read the I.P.A.. That issue deals with a critical point. I am concerned about inflation. It concerns me, as it should concern anybody who looks after workers. The small person is the one who is hit hardest. He is the person who puts his money into savings banks, and inflation erodes his savings. He does not invest in building societies at 10 per cent or in Government securities. He invests in the savings banks.

The I.P.A. article reads—

“When interest rates start to fall, there will be a resurgence of confidence among businessmen and investors, and among the consuming public. Projects which at present are not viable will become feasible and the people will be more disposed to spend their hoarded-up savings, particularly on housing and consumer durables.”

And they do have hoarded-up savings, as I shall point out in a minute. The article continues—

“The crux of the Hawke argument is that a revival of consumer spending, which is necessary to economic recovery and a reduction in unemployment, will not occur unless the level of real wages is maintained.”

Mr. Hawke said that. The article continues—

“This argument is fallacious in two respects. People have ample funds in savings accounts and elsewhere which they can spend if they wish. They are refraining from doing so because of their fear of continued inflation.”

That is quite correct. The article continues—

“The more important second flaw in the argument is that businesses cannot afford to employ more labour while wage costs continue to rise. (In the last few weeks they have been faced with an addition of nearly \$10 a week in average wages).

“Mr. Hawke and many of his colleagues do not understand—or at any rate are not prepared to concede—that an economy such as Australia’s, in which nearly three-quarters of all jobs are provided by private enterprise, will simply not function effectively unless there is a prospect of healthy profits. It is profits that induce investments; it is investment that provides jobs;”—

that is right, too—

“it is investment that makes possible higher productivity; and it is higher productivity, and only higher productivity, that provides the basis for higher real wages and better social services.”

The author mentioned the savings of the people; they are the little people.

I have carried two cuttings in my wallet (not my wallet, my little notebook), one for the past three months and the other for the past six months.

**Mr. Frawley:** You haven’t opened your wallet.

**Mr. JENSEN:** No. I said “my little pocketbook”; I am sorry.

We are told that we are not getting enough wages. An article from “The Courier-Mail” of 2 April 1977 reads—

“Australians continued to deposit funds heavily in their savings bank accounts during February.

“Figures issued yesterday by the Statistics Bureau showed that savings bank deposits rose by \$245 million during the month to a peak of \$16,090 million.”

That is \$16,090 million in savings banks alone. The article continues—

“Total savings bank deposits are now \$1,860 million higher than they were a year ago.”

That means that the working man is saving at least \$2,000 million a year. In the past two years savings bank deposits have gone up from \$13,000 million to \$16,000 million. Who puts money into savings accounts—only the working man. The businessman invests in finance companies. Others invest in building societies because they can get 9½ or 10 per cent; but the only people who invest in savings bank accounts are the workers, and their savings are being eroded by inflation. And that is known.

An article dated 20 July 1977 reads—

“Annual bank deposits up. Deposits in major trading banks in June this year totalled \$17,198 million.

“Figures issued in Canberra yesterday by the Statistics Bureau show that this was \$203 million less than the previous month but \$1,813 million more than in June last year.”

It is going up nearly \$2,000 million a year and Hawke says that nothing can be done about it because the people will not spend unless they get real wages.

**Mr. Frawley:** Where do you invest your money?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I will tell the honourable member about that later.

In this same journal there is an article, "A Basic First Lesson in Economics". I hope some members read it. It reads in part—

"In no sphere of economic activity can more be given than can be afforded without facing inevitable bankruptcy. The benefits achieved through deficit financing are short-lived simply because the consequent inflation reduces monetary values. Perhaps the most alarming effect of such irresponsible government activity has been to create a generation of people who have grown up to believe that governments are capable of giving away such benefits without due regard to the costs."

This is most important. I quote a little more of this article—

"It would now take a brave government to reverse the trend but there are hopeful signs. The recent economic summit meeting in London attended by President Carter issued a joint communique which said, in part:—

"Inflation is not a remedy to unemployment but one of its major causes."

Now let us see what was said recently by the British Prime Minister. The article also states—

"In Britain there is a Labour Prime Minister who, perhaps too late, expressed his disillusionment with Keynesian economics when he said recently:—

"We used to think that you could just spend your way out of a recession and increase employment by cutting taxes and boosting government spending. I tell you in all candour that that option no longer exists and that insofar as it ever did exist, it worked by injecting inflation into the economy."

It was good to see Callaghan, the British Prime Minister, on television the other night telling British unions, "You just cannot get these wages. The economy just cannot stand it." Callaghan knows that and Hawke knows it, yet he goes on talking about the value of wages at a time when savings accounts are increasing by \$2,000 million a year. If the people were not receiving enough, they would be withdrawing money from their savings accounts, not putting \$2,000 million a year into them. That does not take into account, either, the money being deposited with building societies, finance companies, share markets and other investments.

It is private industry that employs 75 per cent of the people and private employers are expected to take on lads of 15 and 16 years of age and pay them \$60 to \$70 a week when the unemployment benefit for a

single man or woman is \$36 a week. What is a lad of 15 or 16 good for? It is no surprise that the honourable member for Sandgate speaks about drinking by kids of 15 and 16 years of age. Of course they can afford to drink, because they are getting \$60 to \$70 a week. They pay \$20 a week in board, \$20 a week for a car, and they are still left with \$20 to \$30 to spend on booze. They are seen mainly in clubs rather than hotels. It is no good saying that they are being ruined by pubs; just go to the clubs and see them there.

No business can afford these costs. When I was unemployed as a lad of 17 or 18 I received 13s. a week, which was equivalent to the wage of an apprentice. Nowadays an apprentice of 15 receives twice as much as an unemployed person has to live on. And we expect industry to go ahead in the face of these figures!

Let us look at some of the costs that industry has to meet. First there is pay-roll tax. Then there are 10 public holidays a year, which is more than there are in any other country. In America there are four or five. In addition, there are a few specials such as the butchers' holiday, the bakers' holiday and somebody else's holiday. There is then four weeks' annual leave, with a 17½ per cent loading. Then there is sick leave and now incremental payments. Long service leave has been introduced for people in industry who have done a good job. The next racket is incremental pay.

The unions once believed in equal pay for equal work. But they have gone back on all their principles and continue to go back on them while they introduce all these rackets. I can employ a good fitter and turner, one of the best in the world, and he will be paid less than someone who has been there four, six or eight years. He would probably be getting more under a sensible system of employment. The original cry was "equal pay for equal work", but that no longer applies.

Then we had claims for site allowances. When these allowances were introduced, the C.O.D. plant was closed down. Then we saw claims for allowances for clothing and petrol. Then we saw the introduction of a prosperity loading in the sugar industry. Workers in the sugar industry were receiving \$50 more than any other worker, but today when the sugar industry is in a depressed state the loading is not dropped.

We expect firms to employ as many apprentices as they used to, but with the wages apprentices receive these days firms can afford only one, and sometimes not even one. And let us remember that apprentices in their first year are useless. But today they are paid so much that they can afford to get around in cars and drink.

The honourable member for Cooroora referred to the percentage of wages spent on food today. He said that years ago we used to spend 24 per cent of wages on food, but that this figure had now dropped to about 14 per cent. Last week I watched a television documentary on Peru and I learned that the poor people of Peru spend 87 per cent of their wages on food, and they receive only about \$5 a week. They cannot afford to buy cars and drink beer in pubs. But we receive so much money that we can gamble and drink as much as we like. Our economy is so good that last year in New South Wales \$600,000,000 was put through poker machines. Just look at what is spent on racing in Queensland, on the T.A.B. and with bookmakers, and on raffles. I know that thousands of dollars are collected every week-end from sporting raffles in every hotel and club in my city.

**Mr. Gunn:** Would you say we are an affluent society?

**Mr. JENSEN:** A very affluent society. There are already enough gambling rackets, and I do not want to see poker machines in Queensland, especially when we realise that \$600,000,000 was spent on them last year in New South Wales.

The other day I was returning from a visit to my brother at Stones Corner and I saw a sign on a fence which read, "The workers built the factories, the workers should own them. Sack the boss." The workers were paid to build the factories; why do they not invest in them? All I see in the newspapers are squeals that the mining companies make millions. The workers never seem to squeal when a factory goes to the wall.

The workers are making so much money that the A.C.T.U. and Mr. Hawke should buy into some of these mining projects that the Minister for Mines and Energy has mentioned in this House. They should not squeal about them all the time. If they have the money, they should buy into them. Let the workers build and own them. But they do not want to build and own them; they want somebody else to put up the money and then they whinge and cry and say they should own them. But they will not put money into them. Let them put money into these firms and try to run a business. They would not know how to run a business. They do not know what it is to pay men.

**Mr. Frawley:** What about Bob Hawke's new L.T.D. with a cocktail cabinet?

**Mr. JENSEN:** I would not know about that.

The I.P.A. article continues—

"It is not possible to provide more and more Government services without ultimately having to pay for them via increased taxes. Restraint needs to be shared

throughout the whole community. There must be a community will to combat inflation'.

"If the Australian Labor Party really want to promote 'a community will to combat inflation' then they must be politically honest in admitting the disaster of their own Keynesian economic policies—and persuade the A.C.T.U. to do likewise."

That is quite true but Opposition members will not admit that they are wrong. They want the Government to provide money, which will create inflation and do no good whatsoever. Unions will continue to press for increases of \$40 or \$50 a week and then squeal because there is more unemployment. Even my own son-in-law is going to have to put off a man next week because of today's costs. Let the unions try to employ people.

Then we have problems in the lift industry, or at least it is referred to as the lift industry. I think the lift mechanics want another \$40 or \$50 a week. What industry is that? What does it produce that is of benefit to this country? It is an industry—

**Mr. Lindsay:** Neal Kane's industry.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Neal Kane's industry—the same Neal Kane who runs the Q.C.E. He should have been sacked. The A.L.P. would have won the election in 1972 but for Neal Kane and those like him, and everybody in this Chamber knows that. He was the bloke who said, "We will cut 10 of their heads off, not three or four. Ten will go."

**Mr. Frawley:** Pat Hanlon, Hughie O'Donnell—

**Mr. JENSEN:** I was No. 1 for a while but I lost my jersey. I went from full back to centre-threequarters; then I went to breakaway, and right through to rake. Casey got a jersey at the convention and he had not even had one before. That is how serious it was.

Even after the debacle when the Q.C.E. cruelled Jack Houston, at least Jack Houston had the guts to come down here and try to stop the rubbish that was going on when the South African Rugby Union team visited Queensland. He left the conference in Mackay and came to Brisbane to try to stop the demonstrations. Jack Egerton stayed up there to look at the football and sent Jack Houston down to do the dirty work. Of course, they would not take any notice of Jack Houston.

When I told the people in Bundaberg to get back to work, they cheered me. Those who sponsored the demonstration wrote to the Q.C.E. and said, "He smashed the meeting in half a minute.", and told the Q.C.E. to cut my head off. I smashed the meeting in half a minute, and it deserved to be smashed. I have no regrets about that. I supported

Jack Houston in what he was doing. It was nothing to do with trade unions; it was a political matter.

As I said, that was the reason why the A.L.P. did not come to Government in 1972. I have no worries about it now. I have seen what goes on in the Q.C.E. I thought I could do something by being on the Q.C.E., that I could change some things, but I could see that it was futile while one had to vote to a union ticket. People like Neal Kane were running it. How could we expect the honest, good citizen, who tries to do something to protect the worker, to get anywhere in a set-up like that? All they want is power unionism. The power is in this Parliament. They do not want to come into Parliament; they want the power to be outside.

Mr. Hawke will be standing up at the A.C.T.U. convention this week and telling us about real wages, uranium, and all the rest of it. What is going to cruel the Labor Party is the fighting of members amongst themselves. They are not fighting for Australia; they are fighting for political power. They killed the Labor Party in Queensland in 1972, under Jack Houston, and they ripped it right apart in 1974.

I have made these few points to try to get people to read some of these articles and understand what is being done. Private industry employs people, but private industry cannot afford to employ people at the moment. Who is going to invest his money in private industry if he cannot get 10 per cent profit, when he can invest it in a building society and get 9½ or 10 per cent?

**Mr. Gunn:** "Profit" is a dirty word.

**Mr. JENSEN:** The unions will invest their money in building societies, but they will not invest it in business. They say, "Let somebody else put it in business and then try to send them to the wall. If you can't and they make a profit, then abuse hell out of them for making a \$200,000,000 profit." The unions do not look at the amount of money in the business, and the newspapers do not show that—not a bit of it! There is a big squeal about the \$200,000,000 that the business makes. MIM's profit has dropped from \$50,000,000 to \$20,000,000, but nobody cares two hoots about that. When the dividends go to the people who invest, nobody cares about that.

Money has to go overseas to pay for the capital that has been borrowed, just as the Government has to pay for the capital that it has borrowed. Governments borrow from Germany or from the U.S.A. That money has to be returned to the people from whom it was borrowed. In business, the money has to be returned to the people from whom it was borrowed—the parent company—

**Mr. Gunn:** Or the investors.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Yes. It is no good squealing because the money has gone back to America, because it is going back to England,

America, Germany and other countries every day of the week, as a result of Government borrowings. The Queensland railways have been paying themselves off for the last 100 years, and they are still \$100,000,000 in debt. So people who talk about private industry paying money overseas should make sure of the facts. If they do not, they only talk rubbish. That is all we hear from some union officials—knocking Australia in every way possible, instead of trying to help the country and understand the economic position.

**Mr. NEAL (Balonne) (3.30 p.m.):** It gives me a great deal of pleasure to support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. In doing so I take the opportunity to pledge my loyalty and that of the constituents of the electorate of Balonne to the Throne and the Person of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I congratulate the new Governor and his good lady. I am sure they will ably carry out their duties in this State. I pay tribute to the former Governor, Sir Colin Hannah, and Lady Hannah for the magnificent contribution they made to the State.

In his Opening Speech His Excellency outlined a number of measures which the Government is to introduce. It is pleasing to note that this State is being governed well and that it is in a sound financial position, indeed, that it has the strongest economy of all the States. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be told by New South Welshmen that they would like us to shift the border south to incorporate part of New South Wales in this great State of Queensland. Quite a number of people living along the Queensland/New South Wales border cannot help but compare the lower Government charges of this State with the higher charges in New South Wales. It is only natural that they would wish to be part of this State.

**Mr. Houston:** Can you give us some examples?

**Mr. NEAL:** Yes, I can. I will later.

His Excellency touched on perhaps the three major factors which, if not overcome, will completely wreck the nation, namely inflation, industrial disputes and unemployment. Before lunch we heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition talking about the high level of unemployment and the other problems that beset the State. We must get things in their correct perspective before we can make an analysis of the situation.

Government is like any other business; it must be based on sound principles and it must provide sound economic management. Any deviation from sound economic management will be reflected in the short term. Any major deviation from sound economic management will be reflected in the long term. Unemployment, inflation and industrial disputation feed off each other. I know that Opposition members are not going

to like having this tossed up at them again but I must refer to what took place when their colleagues were in Government in Canberra. There was mismanagement during those years, and we are paying for it now. Five short years ago this country enjoyed a stable economy—

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

**Mr. NEAL:** We enjoyed a stable economy, nearly full employment and a low rate of inflation—4.5 per cent inflation and less than 2 per cent unemployment. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition knows that as well as anybody else. At that time the Federal Government was run on sound economic lines.

**Mr. Houston** interjected.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Miller): Order! Persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

**Mr. NEAL:** Since then this country has been brought to its knees. The Labor experiment was seemingly conducted by inexperienced men. Of course it was said that those men had not been in Government and therefore they didn't quite know what they were doing. But they knew exactly what they were doing. It was they who caused the galloping inflation.

**Mr. Moore:** They thought there was a money tree.

**Mr. NEAL:** Of course they did. They increased Government spending in two years by 80 per cent.

**Mr. Houston** interjected.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Bulimba has had his opportunity to speak. I ask him to allow the honourable member for Balonne to speak.

**Mr. NEAL:** In the face of massive unemployment they did nothing to stop the extravagant demands by their militant union friends and comrades, but rather encouraged them. They knew what they were doing. They intended to wreck the private-enterprise system that accounted for 80 per cent of jobs. They were not inexperienced men. They knew exactly what they were doing, where they were heading and taking the country. The only mistake they made was in their assessment of the Governor-General.

They intended to make such a mess of the economy of the country that it would take a long time for any private-enterprise Government to bring it back into order. That is exactly the situation we are faced with now.

**Mr. Houston:** You are not a private-enterprise Government; you are a socialist Government. Look at the Bills you put through.

**Mr. NEAL:** Any private-enterprise Government—

**Mr. Houston:** That is not private enterprise.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Miller): Order!

**Mr. NEAL:** No private-enterprise Government would be able to clean up in a hurry the mess they left. Labor created a political drought. The Leader of the Opposition received the short shrift he deserved with the amendment he moved, his crocodile tears for the unemployed, his great schemes and his criticism of the alleged negligence of the Government in rendering assistance.

This afternoon the Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the population drift from country towns. He said that bakers and butchers had closed their shops. I agree with him, but I remind him that the population drift has been on for many years. Even when Labor was in office it was in progress. Machines and chemicals have taken over jobs previously done by men.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition took us to task for the 40 per cent increase in freight rates, but he conveniently omitted to say that operating costs and wages have increased, and he conveniently forgot the nine-year moratorium on freight rates. In that time wages and costs increased by about 150 per cent. He also omitted to acknowledge the continual drift from rural areas caused by progress—by machines taking over from men with axes. He conveniently forgot the primary producers who depend on overseas markets, and who have not been able to keep pace with the inflation caused by his Canberra Labor colleagues. He conveniently forgot to say that, because of inflation, falling prices and excessive wage demands, many people who would fill the country towns can no longer be employed there. He conveniently omitted that the decrease in wool prices forced a great number of graziers into cattle, and cattle require nothing like the number of men required to look after sheep. We all know of the decline in cattle prices.

I remind the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the areas to which he referred are mainly sheep areas. If he cares to examine the statistics he will see that in the past 10 years the sheep population of Queensland fell from 24,000,000 to 13,000,000. If he does not know what that adds up to, I will tell him. It means that sheep numbers fell by about half, that about half the number of shearers, shed hands and station hands are required to look after the smaller number of sheep. That is the reason for the population drift from the country areas.

**Mr. Houston:** You blamed Whitlam before. You can't have it both ways.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Bulimba has made his speech. I want to hear the honourable member for Balonne.

**An Opposition Member:** He is not worth hearing.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. NEAL:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition does not like the truth when it is doled out to him.

**Mr. Houston:** I don't mind the truth, but I don't like what you are saying.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I have been very tolerant with the honourable member for Bulimba. I now warn him under Standing Order 123A. I will not tolerate persistent interjections. He has persisted for the past 7 minutes. I ask him to observe the decorum of the House.

**Mr. NEAL:** I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for your protection. Of course, I do not need protection from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; but he needs protection from his own colleagues, especially the shadow Treasurer, who is sitting behind him.

The Leader of the Opposition and his deputy have been shedding crocodile tears in this debate. They talk about what should be done and what should not be done. They remind me of the situation in grazing areas when we have gone through years of drought. I would like them to understand what a drought is really like, when a man is spending as much money as is at his command, to the limit of his resources, but still sees his stock weaken and die. All the time that is going on the crows are sitting on the fence cawing. That is exactly what the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy remind me of. They are like crows, sitting on the fence cawing about the situation and awaiting a demise.

The problem of unemployment is of concern to me, just as it is to other Government members. However, unemployment can be overcome. As I said earlier, inflation is one of our major problems. The Fraser Government has taken measures to reduce the rate of inflation. It is well to recall that the Fraser Government was unable to manage our finances in its own right for the first nine months that it was in power because it was saddled with a socialistic Budget—a Budget brought down by Whitlam and Hayden. Of course, no changes could be effected in monetary policy until the coalition could introduce a Budget of its own, which it was able to do only a little over 12 months ago. We have now seen the second coalition Budget. We have seen an easing of inflation and

I believe that, as a result of the Budget that has just been brought down, in the next 12 months we will see a further easing in the inflation rate.

I am concerned also about the loss of production caused by some of the radical elements in our unions. One has only to mention something about unions to be accused of union-bashing. However, in a nation such as Australia, which is so richly endowed with natural resources, with a stable Government employment should be a basic right of all citizens who have a desire to work. If we accept that we have a right to work and that we are entitled to a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, we must accept the responsibility of safeguarding that right. We are not entitled to abuse it and to continue reaping the benefits that come from it. Unfortunately, some of our militant union leaders have priced the labour of their members out of the market, and they have also priced our products out of world markets. Our costs today are among the highest in the world, while our production is well down the list.

Associated with unemployment is the problem of dole bludgers. Many people who are unemployed have a genuine desire to work but others have no intention at all of getting a job. The people who concern me, of course, are those who wish to get a job but cannot. An unemployed person who is genuine will take almost any job, and rightly so. We hear a lot of talk about job satisfaction. However, when we are faced with the current position of high unemployment, I believe that job satisfaction could more properly be construed as the satisfaction of having a job.

Just as there are dole bludgers and people who are guilty of not doing a day's work for a day's pay—and quite a number of people are ripping money off their employers in that way—a number of people in the business community are engaged in the ripping-off process themselves. To my mind they are just as guilty as the person who does not do a day's work for a day's pay. Some part of the millions of dollars that are going into the pockets of these people who are on the dole could well be directed towards creating employment in some of our country towns. This could be done, for instance, by paying for local authority jobs. Rather than have the money paid out to people to sit down and do nothing, it could be put to some use and I believe that it should be put to some use.

The Leader of the Opposition and other members of the Opposition have a job to do and I think that they should start convincing some of their militant colleagues to abandon their extortion and extravagant demands and their blackmailing and ransoming of the public so that the nation can get back to work and restore within the community the confidence so badly needed.

I shall now turn to a few of the problems that concern me in my electorate. One of the major problems we are faced with is

connected with the road system. We have a tremendous length of bitumen road and quite a good road system through my electorate but in numerous areas the roads are not all that good. In times of wet weather and flooding, people cannot get out and they cannot get their produce out. In the main, inland roads are the arteries that carry the lifeblood of those communities.

One of the old perennials is the township of Dirranbandi. A couple of times over the past few years it has been cut off by floodwaters. It has been cut off by both road and rail for up to six weeks at a time. Dirranbandi does not have an all-weather outlet. I would like to think that the Minister for Main Roads could give consideration to the release of funds for works on that section, or for a speeding up of works. I know that surveys for the realignment of the section from Noondoo to St. George are being carried out but I would like to think that there could be a speeding up in the laying of bitumen surfacing on the missing link between Dirranbandi and Noondoo. From there on, the road traverses fairly hard ridges and, in the main, without very much attention it could be considered to be an all-weather section.

Another problem that has created a considerable amount of dissension concerns the extension of the Barwon Highway east of Weengallon to the junction of the Carnarvon Highway. Over the years the construction of this road has been progressing from Goondiwindi and it is slowly being bituminised all the way westward. The last release of money will bring it to the little township of Weengallon. It would appear that money for the section from there in has been diverted elsewhere. I hope that the Minister will be able to give consideration to approving a scheme so that this work can continue. A number of people from that area travel west to the town of St. George to see their doctor, butcher, baker and other business people and to conduct their business.

Another point I should like to raise concerns the Moonie Highway. When it was completed in 1968 it was the ribbon of tar to St. George. It was a tremendous improvement for the people in that area at that time. However, the bitumen is only 12 ft. wide. It has been built over brigalow-belah country. It has many gilgais or melon-holes. During floods and wet weather the gilgais fill up with water and, because of heavy transports, the road subsides. A stretch of approximately 30 km to the east and west of Moonie has deteriorated considerably as a result of subsidence in this type of country. The road has a bitumen strip only 12 ft. wide and in times of wet weather, or even light showers when the sides of the road become wet, it becomes dangerous for heavy transports and other traffic that it is expected to carry.

With the completion of the Barwon Highway south of the Moonie Highway to the junction with the Carnarvon Highway, there will be another all-weather road from St. George east, eventually reaching Brisbane. The completion of the Barwon Highway as early as possible is important because it will relieve much of the pressure that is now on the Moonie Highway. The Moonie Highway, of which approximately 190 miles needs attention, is a very important road. It provides direct access from St. George to Dalby and then on to Brisbane.

The Government has released money for the eastern end of the Surat-Tara-Dalby road on which the Tara Shire Council is now working. The completion of this section, the Barwon Highway and the Carnarvon extension to Surat will have a very beneficial effect in reducing the traffic on the Moonie Highway.

Bearing in mind the length of the Moonie Highway and its present state, a very great amount of money will be needed to upgrade it to anything near the standard required for the amount of traffic that uses it. I realise that its upgrading to a full width of bitumen is out of the question for a long time. However, I believe it is most important that work be carried out on the other two roads, thereby taking much of the pressure off the Moonie Highway.

Another matter on which I should like to touch briefly concerns hospitals in my area. Of course, there have been problems with them. The Leader of the Opposition went out to my area. I do not know whether he spread any rumours but he certainly asked a lot of questions. He also made many statements that were not quite correct. The honourable member for Archerfield also went out and dragged his boots through my electorate. I was informed that that was exactly what he was trying to do, but it did not worry me as it is politically good to have the honourable member in one's electorate.

I am very pleased to see the renovations and repairs that are being carried out to the Dirranbandi Hospital. There were a number of rumours flying around out there, but the work being carried out by the Government is a clear indication to the people that there is no intention whatever of closing the hospital. We are very fortunate at present to have the services of a lady doctor who comes from Ireland. I hope she will remain with us for quite some time.

The other hospital to which I wish to refer is the hospital at Mungindi. Again I am going to get myself into hot water with the Opposition because again I am going to flog the previous Federal Labor Government. When it was in office it promised a new \$1,000,000 hospital, under the Aboriginal Affairs Department, for the town of Mungindi. The Queensland department drew up plans and specifications and got things

ready to go. We have never been able to find any of the money, and I hope that with the assistance of the Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and the Minister for Health we can now bring pressure to bear on the Fraser Government to come good with the money for that hospital that was promised by the Whitlam Government. The hospital at Mungindi in the main serves people from New South Wales, but it is of considerable vintage and a new hospital there would certainly be a tremendous benefit to the people of that community.

There are a few other points I would like to make. Under the Government's policy of providing pre-school centres, a number of very good pre-schools and libraries have been built in the electorate of Balonne. The standard of buildings being erected by this Government is something to be very proud of, and they are certainly assets to my electorate. We do have problems with the provision of septic systems in some of the smaller schools in my electorate, which are situated away from a township and so have no reticulated water. If there is underground water at a reasonably shallow depth, the department sinks bores to provide the necessary water, and in other areas it provides earth excavations.

I am very pleased to see that work has commenced on the new high school at St. George. This has been a bone of contention for many years. The Government promised that when there were a certain number of pupils at St. George a high school would be provided. That figure was reached last year and repeated again this year. I believe it was only right that the Government should want to be assured that this number of pupils would continue before it decided to expend the large amount of money required for a high school. It is to be hoped that the school will commence operations in the 1978 school year.

Another point I would like to raise in connection with education is the siting of teachers' residences in St. George. I know that this is a matter for the Works Department as well as the Education Department. Concern has to be had not only for the general outlook from the residences but also their placement in the town. The five residences, some flats and some married residences were built in a row, and I believe that this should not happen. They should be spread around the town. After all, the teachers work together throughout the day and they are being required to live side by side.

I would also like to draw attention to residences supplied by the Railway Department, especially those for station masters and fettlers along the railway line. We have a problem here in that there are no reticulated water supplies for some fettlers' houses at railway sidings. Some also have problems through lack of an electricity

supply. It is not always possible to provide power to these residences. Some of the residences provided even in towns need upgrading. I instance a case recently brought to my attention of a station master's wife who was very ill. She had undergone an operation that left her very weak and she was convalescing for a considerable time. She has a family of young children, and she has to heat water on the stove and carry it into the bathroom. I thought it was a ludicrous situation that that should be so in this day and age in a town in which there is a reticulated water supply and electricity, so I drew the matter to the attention of the Minister. I am very pleased to say that he has consented to the installation of a hot-water system, which will be a big improvement.

In conclusion, I congratulate the honourable member for Warrego for the manner in which he moved the adoption of the Address in Reply. He is not in the Chamber at present, but I will throw him a bouquet in his absence. He is doing a tremendous job in his electorate. He certainly has shown the people of Warrego what parliamentary representation really means, and I am sure that they will respond in the appropriate manner when the time comes. I also congratulate the honourable member for Belmont for the manner in which he seconded the motion.

**Mrs. KYBURZ** (Salisbury) (4.2 p.m.): In speaking to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, I give the greetings of the citizens of the electorate of Salisbury to the new Governor of Queensland and also pledge their allegiance to the Queen. We had an opportunity this year of seeing personally what a gracious lady she is, and I hope that she will reign for many years to come.

I congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply on their speeches, which were not only excellent but also interesting. I have come to know both the honourable member for Warrego and the honourable member for Belmont quite well. They are very personable men and also humorous and intelligent, and that is a combination rarely seen in this place.

Let me now discuss the Salisbury electorate. I must say that my electorate has received many benefits from this well-managed Government. In fact, the management of the Government has been so good that the millions of dollars that have been poured into the Salisbury electorate have been quibbled over by various honourable members who consider that the money should have gone into their electorates. I do not intend to discuss that further, simply because to do so would be to look a gift horse in the mouth. Of course, the Minister for Works and Housing does not look the least bit like a horse.

The schools and pre-schools in my electorate are indeed sights to behold. The libraries that have been built in some schools would equal the better libraries in this State. We also have senior citizens' centres, a community health centre (which includes a Maternal and Child Welfare Centre), a 24-hour police service in Woodridge, and parking lots at various railway stations. Housing Commission houses have been refurbished and repainted, and I am sure that they had not had anything done to them in the past 20 years. In fact, they look so good now that one can hardly identify them as Housing Commission houses, and that is indeed a change for the better. A Police Youth Club is now under construction in Woodridge, and finance has been made available to all manner of sporting bodies. This finance is of great advantage to the many sporting bodies in Queensland, but I hope that a close scrutiny is made of the books of the various clubs that apply for subsidy. The list could go on and on, and the benefits of a well-managed Government have indeed flowed on to the electorate of Salisbury.

It is always encouraging to see people helping themselves without Government assistance and I should like to mention particularly a group of active senior citizens calling themselves the Senior Citizens' Club of Woodridge. They have bought an old house for about \$22,000 and are doing it up, and they do not want any Government subsidy, because they believe that restrictions would be imposed upon them if they accepted it. They have saved about \$7,000 towards the cost of the house and are now paying it off. Those old people, without the help of any service clubs, are remodelling that house. The men who are working on it range from 69 years to 78 years of age. I think it is a pretty good feat.

The new freeway has been a boon to the electorate of Salisbury. Many of the people from that electorate who travel to town use the freeway. However there is need for some sort of freeway education. What particularly worries me is the practice of many drivers of remaining in the right-hand lane on the freeway when they are not actually overtaking, as against the correct procedure of moving to the right lane, overtaking a vehicle and then moving back to the left lane. This is a big worry to many drivers. It is very irritating, and it happens to me every day. One uses the freeway to get into fast-moving traffic. I am irritated by the number of drivers who do 40-60 km/h on the freeway.

They ought to be out on Ipswich Road if they want to dawdle along. Indeed, it is the "dawdle-alongers"—as I like to think of them—who cause many accidents because drivers behind them become irritable. In fact when caught behind one of them I feel like using my car as an aeroplane. If one

could jump over the car in front, one would. I often think that if I were game enough I would toot my horn, but that is such bad manners. But really and truly, those drivers are so irritating. If they want to drive at 50 km/h, they should travel along Ipswich Road or some other thoroughfare that takes them to their destination, not the freeway.

What we need is freeway education as is given in Europe. When a person goes to a driving school in Europe, he learns how to drive on freeways. It is a completely different manner of driving. A person learns that if he wants to overtake he should use the right-hand lane, but if he wants to dawdle along at 40 or 60 km/h, he should remain on the left-hand side of the road. The bad manners of some Brisbane drivers never cease to shock and appal me, as they do many other people.

Unfortunately I have in my electorate a crossing called Compton Road. It is a very difficult under-bridge crossing to negotiate. At that crossing we see the very worst in driving manners. There is a "Give Way" sign on one side of Compton Road, but nothing on the other side. I guarantee that only one in 10 drivers knows that "Give Way" means that the driver should halt his car and wait to see if there are any oncoming vehicles. The others push their way across. I have seen so many near accidents because of sheer bad manners at that underpass that I never cease to wonder about people's bad driving habits.

One of the departments with the greatest innovations in this State is the Health Department. I have chosen the Health Department to speak about today mainly because I think it is time to pay tribute to some of the new ideas. When I was in hospital this year, I learnt many things about the Health Department. When one is lying there for such a long time, one comes to know intimately various things that go on within the workings of a hospital. I certainly would not complain about any of the services or facilities in the Princess Alexandra Hospital. I must say that the staff made my extended stay there as comfortable as they possibly could. However, what I would comment on is the noise in that hospital. The noise is appalling. In the first week I was in hospital I was so distressed—I was quite ill—that I had to ask to be moved upstairs to another ward. The noise just numbs the brain and increases the pain. When one is in a lot of pain, noise can be a frightening thing.

I suppose the blame goes back many years to the planners who sited that hospital on such a major arterial road as Ipswich Road. I feel extremely sorry for the nurses in their quarters. They work long shifts and return to the nurses' quarters at irregular hours compared with what would be considered normal working hours. Often they have to try to sleep in the middle of the day when

traffic is roaring past. It is no wonder that the nurses were constantly complaining to me about the noise in the nurses' quarters. They often find it impossible to sleep without some form of medication. I personally believe that it is extremely unhealthy to have to take a sleeping pill—a Mogadon—to go to sleep in the middle of the day just because noise is so loud. What is the solution?

I believe that the noise is even worse at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. Patients and staff there have the speedway to contend with. Of course, the Royal Brisbane Hospital complex is now getting so big that it would be an impossible task to resite it this century. The suffering of many people, especially those in the acute wards at Royal Brisbane, must be absolutely shocking, particularly on Saturday night when cars are roaring round the track. The policy adopted by the New South Wales Government should be looked into. It has decided that no more money will be put into the hospitals in the inner-city area.

In my electorate the construction of the Charles Bliss Memorial Hospital is due to be started. If honourable members have not heard of Charles Bliss, they soon will. I hope that the so-called Mt. Gravatt Hospital will not be given that anachronistic name. It is not in Mt. Gravatt and should not have been given that name but, unfortunately, it was the only Liberal seat around at that time. I have not seen a worse example of politicking. It is in the Coopers Plains area and should have been given that name.

The hospital is to be placed in a park-like setting, as far back from the road as possible. When the contracts were signed the week before last, I made a point of asking the architects and management planners about noise, which, I believe, is a most important matter to be considered when siting a hospital today. I believe that hospitals should be much further out of the city than even this proposed hospital. Certainly 20 or 30 kilometres out is not too far. If people cannot be bothered travelling to a hospital, they are not sick enough for medical attention.

Some excellent plans in the Health Department should be mentioned. As well as the Aboriginal health programme, I cite the alcohol and drug dependence service, the acrylic artificial eye service, the Board of Nursing Studies (which is doing much for nurse education) and the completely new approach to the intellectually handicapped, to whom we often do not give enough attention. We now have a research and evaluation unit in the Psychiatric Services Department, and in-service training for registered nurses. Another innovation is the School of Dental Therapists scheme.

In our State we have a community health programme. The Division of Community Health is under the stewardship of Dr. Cheong. It provides and co-ordinates many support services within the community. Some of the services provided are so excellent and innovative that we should all be helping them as much as we can. The benefits of the home care service are very important to the elderly in the community.

The Children's Services Department has seen some innovations. I hope that it may see a few more. Some of the ideas propounded by the Children's Services Department are very important because they affect the social-welfare betterment of some people in the State. We now have a child protection unit established under the Children's Services Department. Many parents are now voluntarily seeking help from the department. I might term them the "battering" parents. They can now ring for help from a counselling service within the Children's Services Department to find out what their problems are, why they feel as they do and various other matters related to their societal consequential actions.

Another pilot teaching programme within the Department of Children's Services is very important. The department has tried to teach some parents how to be therapists to their own children. They deal with dishonesty, stealing, general aggressive behaviour and other things that go under the misnomer of "child delinquency". This counselling service will help parents understand their children's behaviour and how to deal with it themselves. It will also improve the ability of parents to communicate with their children. Quite often the parents are undisciplined in many ways and lack understanding of how to retrain their children. I hope that we may see an extension of the programme by which parents are taught to become therapists to their own children because in many ways the State could profit by it.

The matter of child abuse and child-battering deserves our closer attention in this State. In fact, the Department of Children's Services has extended its activities in many ways to cope with this. Recently I read that nursing staff throughout Australia have been alerted to watch for cases in which children have been deliberately burnt by their parents—a very frightening prospect. Some interesting facts emerge from an excellent study on child bashing entitled "At Risk". This book ought to be compulsory reading in high schools because it is so very frightening. Equally frightening is the number of teen-age girls who are becoming pregnant. They in fact are the persons who are at risk, and their babies are at risk, too. At the opening of the Family Planning Clinic in the Valley last week, the Minister for Health mentioned that we are not getting enough family-planning education into the high schools. That

is where the girls are getting pregnant—not when they are out in the work-force; not when they are 20 and 21. They should be learning about contraception from the age of 13 or 14 at least.

**Mr. Moore:** Make little whores of them!

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I won't comment on that now, simply because the honourable member is so uneducated in these matters that his interjection does not merit comment.

The important fact illustrated by this book is that battering fathers inevitably play a non-supportive role in family life and they are quite incapable of providing emotional support for either the mother or the child. That is a very important fact when considering the supportive roles within a family.

Battering parents were found to be very young, with mothers of 15 and fathers of 17. That age group obviously should not be having and keeping children. As a result, they were relatively low-income families and usually lived in rental accommodation. In all cases, in contrast with controlled parents, the battering father showed a combination of natural introversion and inadequate verbal skills. In other words, instead of speaking he either grunted or hit—or both. That, combined with the mother's immaturity and impulsivity made the whole situation explosive. The findings in this book—and I repeat its title, "At Risk", because it is so very important—imply that problems will be shelved in those families rather than talked through and that impulse will be acted upon rather than moderated by thought and reasoning. In other words, there is a complete breakdown in communication within those families.

One of the major recommendations of the researchers was that in some cases even after extended therapy the children could not be protected from these abusive and battering parents and that permanent separation—that is, that the children should be taken away from their parents—is the only solution. These results imply that for some battered children the future could well be very greatly improved by their being placed as early as possible for adoption or at least for therapeutic fostering. This is what we are now very quietly doing in our State. I think that it is a very, very important programme, and we all ought to realise that some children have lived such violent, unhappy lives that the poor little darlings at about the age of six or seven know no other love than a thump—and that is very frightening for the future.

One important measure that the Minister for Community and Welfare Services has discussed is giving abandoned children in institutional homes a future with normal adoptive parents. We are now seeing—and I have said this many times—a number of young girls who have been forced by various agencies to keep their child and, once the child reaches the age of two or three and

they are 16, 17 or 18, they realise that they are not having any fun, that they have missed out on their adolescence and that their life is virtually ruined. They put the child into a home and they do not bother visiting it. In fact, there are thousands of children in those circumstances, from the age of about 18 months to four years. They have very little future, and I believe that we ought to consider legislation taking away the rights of parents who never see their children from one year to the next—not from one day to the next, not from one week to the next, but from one year to the next. It is very tragic that these children have been abandoned when I know that many women would be very happy to have them.

**Dr. Scott-Young:** Their parents won't release them; that's the point.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I realise that their parents will not release them, but if neither parent has been to see a child in a year, it is fair enough to say that the child is not loved or wanted. It is just not good enough for parents to say that they were abroad or in Perth looking for a job, or to give any of the other young excuses that I have heard from various young people. I am not speaking about people who are extremely ill or perhaps paraplegics or disabled mothers; that is an entirely different situation. I am talking about uncaring parents who abandon children.

I believe that we should look towards appropriate legislation, perhaps in the next session of Parliament, because this is a very important problem. So many husbands and wives long to have a child and would be very happy to have an 18-month-old virtual baby in their home, not only to fill out their home but also to give them the opportunity to do something for the child. It would be a very good deed if so many of us could take these children out of the orphanages and give them homes.

In closing, I should like to give a blast to the Australia Council. I read the latest news digest of the Australia Council which is called "Art Course" because I am extremely interested in what the Australia Council does to foster the arts in Australia, and I saw that the Literature Board announced grants for 1976-77. I must say that there has been an appalling waste of money by that board. I have brought this matter up with various people who work within the arts in Queensland. Everyone seems to agree with me.

It seems to me that people who are given grants of \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$4,000 for living expenses while writing a novel as well as to research it, lack the motivation that one normally considers novelists have. If, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 20 years ago or even five years ago you wanted to write a book, you wrote it in your own time. You were not paid to stay home, to travel around or to have someone mind your children while you

researched and wrote the book. Now we are seeing this trend. This digest contains a double page of grants. The same applies to some of the grants given by the Schools Commission. I believe that these witty-wafty, airy-fairy pseudo-intellectual type grants are so much hog-wash. The money would be far better spent if it were put into fostering direct grants to arts organisations such as ballet.

**Mr. KAUS** (Mansfield) (4.23 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure and honour to rise to make my contribution to the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Opening Speech of His Excellency the Governor on 2 August. I reaffirm to Her Majesty the Queen the loyalty of the people of Mansfield.

I record the pleasure expressed in my electorate at the appointment of the new Governor (Sir James Ramsay). No doubt, because of his very happy disposition, he will be well received in his travels throughout Queensland. He has a very nice personality, as I found this morning when I spent an hour and a half with him at the opening by him of the Apprentice of the Week Display at Garden City. Quite a collection of people from all walks of life was there. He mixed with them freely and was well received. I wish him, and Lady Ramsay, a very successful term of office. No doubt history will record Sir James as one of the great Governors of Queensland.

In his Opening Speech, he outlined proposals and items of development for the future of this great State of Queensland. In speaking about development, I should like to let the Opposition know that, in the general approach of the Government and its overall success in its financial planning, the keynotes have been, in particular, development of the State's vast natural resources, the maximum and efficient use of available funds, the minimum impost on the people by way of taxation and charges for Government services, and concern for the prosperity of the State and the well-being of its people. That may seem a very simple statement, but it involves a wide area of financial activity that directly affects every Queenslander. Of course, it will be very interesting in the next week or so to see what the Treasurer brings down in his Budget.

The development of natural resources provides job opportunities, a higher standard of living and an increase in the State's prosperity. In the grand plan of development emphasis has been placed on Queensland's great mining industries. No doubt in the near future there will be a little trouble over uranium-mining, but that will be overcome and mining will go ahead. To develop the State's mineral resources large amounts of capital funds were, and still are, necessary. The Government, through positive negotiations, attracted this capital, and growing coal

towns such as Moranbah, Dysart and Blackwater are testimony to the success achieved by the Government's policy.

In addition to a general uplift in the State's economy, with more jobs, better pay, more industry, more profits and so on, the State gains financially by extra rail revenue and royalties. In 1972-73 royalties amounted to \$52,300,000 and in 1976-77 they are estimated to return \$129,400,000. It will be interesting to see what is revealed in the next Budget. Royalties flowing to the State's Consolidated Revenue Fund from the mining industry have increased from \$3,200,000 in 1972-73 to an estimated \$43,700,000.

Of course, the Government's developmental planning is helping strategically placed industries by guaranteeing loans in certain areas.

Again we must look at the export income generated by development of the State's natural resources. This helps to sustain the Australian economy as a whole and allows to accrue to the Commonwealth Government benefits that flow back to the State.

The development of the natural resources of the State (no doubt the Government will get it moving again in the very near future) is very desirable, firstly, to attract population to Queensland and, secondly, to ensure that the population is not concentrated in the capital city. That this developmental policy has been successful is shown by the State's annual population increase of 2.2 per cent between the 1971 census and that of 1976. During that same period the annual increases in the other States were—

State	Annual Population Increase
New South Wales ..	.75 per cent
Victoria ..	.81 per cent
South Australia ..	1.18 per cent
Western Australia ..	2.13 per cent

As honourable members can see from those figures, the two most progressive States in Australia are Queensland and Western Australia. This is due to the development of their resources and this will no doubt continue to improve.

The 1976 census revealed that 975,710 people, or 47 per cent of the State's population of 2,300,000, were centred in the Brisbane statistical division. The corresponding proportion at the 1971 census was 47.6 per cent. The success of our decentralisation policies is clearly illustrated by comparing the State's annual average rate of population increase of 2.2 per cent with the individual rate in the statistical divisions of Gold Coast of 6.7 per cent; in Bundaberg of 3.71 per cent; in Mackay of 2.7 per cent; in Townsville of 3.63 per cent and in Cairns of 4.03 per cent.

To enable this growth to continue we must have proper utilisation of funds and a balanced budget. Government members are not like the Opposition, which does not believe in balanced budgets and would like

to spend money it would not have. In line with our principle of introducing balanced budgets, the State has adopted a responsible attitude in the control of its finances. It can be proud of the fact that it has always tried for a virtually balanced budget. Its control of finances in recent years has been such that we have ended each financial year with either a small surplus or an easily managed deficit. This is in stark contrast to other States, which have, in most instances, not been able to achieve such a continuing degree of finesse in their budgetary control or the maximum utilisation of available cash resources. The careful husbanding of funds is necessary as there is no way in which a State can finance a deficit without detriment to the subsequent year or years or to its capital programme if funding is temporarily provided from these sources. The utilisation of scarce capital moneys would mean a slowing down of the State's expansion, an increase in unemployment and a general slow-down of the overall economy of the State, which would be quite contrary to the Government's aims. Closely allied to the policy of balanced budgets is a very responsible control of public funds, and the Treasury does a good job in this respect, as does the Treasurer, who is in charge of that department. His job is to implement systems and policies to ensure that departments live within parliamentary appropriations, and further to make sure that the moneys so appropriated are wisely and gainfully expended.

We remember that last year we helped small business by the lifting of payroll tax exemptions and the State as a whole by the very successful abolition of succession and gift duties from 1 January 1977. This, of course, represented a significant and widely welcomed reform in State taxation provisions. Queensland is the only State in Australia to wholly abolish these iniquitous taxes, and this action, through the inflow of private capital investments, has already brought significant improvements to the State's economy. No doubt the honourable member for Gold Coast could verify this by quoting the increased sales and development in his area. This has occurred of course, all over Queensland and not just in one area. It has occurred on the North Coast beach resorts and right up to Cairns. More and more southern people are coming to live in this wonderful sunshine State of ours. They appreciate the benefits to be derived from living in Queensland.

Another matter of concern—and the National-Liberal Government has always been concerned about this—is the prosperity of the State and the well-being of its people. This has always been to the fore in Government policies, and there has been a particular concern for the individual. In the current depressed state of the economy, the prime objective of the Government has been to ensure that, as far as is possible within its capabilities, people are given opportunities

for employment, and it is to be hoped that the Treasurer will come forth with the right answers when he brings down the Budget next week.

At this stage I pay a tribute to the teachers and parents and citizens' associations in the schools in the electorate of Mansfield. In particular, the parents and citizens' associations have done a great deal. I have received nothing but co-operation from them and I cannot speak too highly of their co-operation. The only sad note, of course, is that I am losing one of the principals and some of the teachers in my present electorate, but that will be the good fortune of the other electorates to which they go. No doubt I will receive similar co-operation from principals of schools that are to be included in my new electorate. I had the opportunity recently of meeting the principal of the Mansfield High School.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** I bet that was a very interesting meeting.

**Mr. KAUS:** Very interesting. The teachers have assisted me very greatly by being ever ready to exchange thoughts from time to time on different matters that have arisen.

The schools in my electorate are blessed with what I would say are some of the most progressive and active parents and citizens' associations that I have been fortunate enough to become involved with over the years. Apart from the fact that the parents and citizens' associations have hammered me hard to represent them in matters relating to the development of the schools in my electorate, they do not just sit back and do nothing. They are a classic example of the self-help principle; in fact, they are self-help organisations of the best type.

They are certainly not like our friends in the Opposition. While listening to the honourable member for Cairns speaking in this debate, I heard him say that he does not interfere with or assist the parents and citizens' associations in his electorate. He just lets them go along. Evidently he does not represent them. When I moved into the Mansfield electorate, I found one or two schools that I classed as more or less disadvantaged schools. I was never invited to the schools and it took me a long time to find the reason why they were in that situation. Finally, I went along to a meeting of the parents and citizens' associations at one of the schools and found out how it operated. I discovered that A.L.P. members do not look after the schools in their electorates and use the lack of attention given to them as an excuse for trying to criticise the department.

**Mr. Lindsay:** They want to whinge.

**Mr. KAUS:** They want to whinge. They are not worried about the kids in the schools, the staff or the principals. They are there only to criticise the system. I adopt an entirely different attitude. I am there to

listen, and if schools want my assistance I am there as a good back-stop to represent them either before the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities, who has just come into the Chamber, or before the Minister for Works and Housing.

Most good schools have an active, interested and, perhaps what is more important, involved parents and citizens' association. This fact is presented in many ways, not simply as can be seen by the eye but also in the attitude of everybody involved with the operation of the school. It is reflected, too, in the general appearance and attitudes of the students. Today many people are too quick to level criticism at high school students. Instead of being quick to criticise, they should look at the situation as it really is. Whenever I have been to the schools, I have been proud to notice the number of clean-cut keen students moving quietly about the business of learning. This reflects their own attitude towards their studies, the encouragement of parents and the co-operation of the staff. In all my schools we have this wonderful co-operation between the teacher and the pupil and the teacher and the parent.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** What a happy band of souls.

**Mr. KAUS:** I am not a stirrer like the honourable member for Archerfield.

Several schools in my electorate have undertaken night adult education classes, and are attracting some of Brisbane's largest attendances. It speaks volumes for the way in which people in surrounding areas support the schools as venues for further education.

I have here a cutting from one of our newspapers, probably "The Courier-Mail". It is headed—

"Children After School . . .  
One in four a latch-key."

It states—

"One in every four school children was a latch-key child, Mr. Lynn Reilly said yesterday.

"Mr. Reilly, a Queensland University social work lecturer, spoke at a seminar on day care for the school-aged child at Y.W.C.A. headquarters in the city.

"Latch-key children are those left without adult supervision."

A study was financed by one of the service clubs. The article continued—

"The survey found that 15 per cent of primary school children were regularly without adult supervision after school, and 11 per cent were unattended in the morning. In high schools, 12 per cent of children were unattended in the morning, and 8 per cent in the afternoon.

"In some cases, these figures rose to 17 per cent in the morning and 10 per cent in the afternoon.

"Mr. Reilly said some form of co-operative, community-based centre should be available to these children before and after school."

This is just what we have at the Mt. Gravatt East State School. Two ladies there, Miss Sue Erskine and Mrs. J. Hazell, are running after-school care for children. After-school care is a non-profit service provided by the Mt. Gravatt East State School P. & C. Association with the aid of a Government grant. It has been in operation for one term. The centre is provided so that the children of working parents will be able to play with other children under supervised conditions without leaving the schoolgrounds. Supervision is provided by those two wonderful girls between the hours of 3 and 5.30 p.m. Children may attend on either a permanent or a casual basis.

The centre operates from a large carpeted school-room in the centre of the school. This room provides a comfortable play area for the children as well as storage space for equipment and a television set. The entire schoolgrounds are available for outdoor play. This includes ovals, swings, adventure playgrounds and areas for the children to build cubby-houses. The school tuck-shop is also available so that the children can be given afternoon tea.

When I was talking to the mistress in charge, she told me that none of the children watch television after school. She said that the only time they watch T.V. is after dark before their parents pick them up. The children are invited to unwind after school. Physical activity is encouraged and, in their outdoor activities they take full advantage of the facilities available. Afternoon tea is served at about 4 o'clock. After that children can discover their creative talents when playing with the many materials provided. As we all know, children love to make things.

Although the ages of the children range from five to 12 years, generally they play and mix well together. Indeed, they tend to benefit from the experience. The number of children attending the centre is still low. However, as more people become aware of the centre, attendances will increase. To give an idea of the number using the facilities, I point out that from 16 to 31 May 85 children attended; in June, 167; in July, 193; and from 1 to 11 August, 89.

The service does not cost the parents much, but it is a very cheap method of getting rid of a child, if one cares to call it that. Personally I believe that parents should be responsible for their children. This service is provided for working mothers and fathers at a cost of \$1 a day. That is a very reasonable charge. It would be a

shame if this after-school service was discontinued. I hope that, in the future, the department continues to provide money for this service, because the ladies are doing a magnificent job.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the mover of the motion (the honourable member for Warrego) and the seconder (the honourable member for Belmont) on a job well done.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (4.47 p.m.): I associate myself with the messages of loyalty expressed to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. At the same time I congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply on the splendid contributions they made.

The recent Royal visit to Queensland was a grand occasion that was welcomed by all. Like my forebears I am basically a Royalist. I believe that Royalty gives this country some standing. Today, when travelling by taxi, the driver asked why we should have a Governor-General and not a president. I pointed out to him that Her Majesty's representative cost this country virtually nothing as a standard and a guide, whereas a president would cost the taxpayers a lot of money and, what is more, would still be open to the graft and corruption that we have heard so much about recently in the U.S.A.

On examining the Opening Speech by His Excellency Sir James Ramsay, I note that in the third or fourth paragraph he said that in the three to four months of his tenure he had travelled widely. That brought to my mind the meaning of the word "liberty". I associate human rights with the word "liberty". Recently we have heard much about this. Many people in Queensland and Australia have been ranting, raving and accusing our Premier of denying human rights to the citizens of Queensland.

I would like to discuss human rights briefly. Firstly, what are they? There are two types of rights. Looked at basically and philosophically, we have moral rights, which are not necessarily enforceable. The interesting thing about moral rights is that, while we may consider in our hearts that we have a moral right to do something, we have no proof of that right and a critic has exactly the same moral right to deny that right. That is in complete contradiction of the other right that we have, which is a positive right enforceable by law. There is a lawful or valid reason for it. When I use the word "valid", I refer to the interpretation given to it by the legal profession. It is tenable in law and court decisions have been given on it.

Human rights are rather interesting when we consider them. Threaded through the Opening Speech of His Excellency the Governor is the theme of preservation of our rights. Man's most precious possession is his own life—the right to life—yet basically

he is the weakest of all animals. He has no way of protecting himself when he is asleep, and in that regard is different from the porcupine. Even the invincible Joh Bjelke-Petersen is vincible when asleep. The Labor Party probably thinks he never sleeps, because he is always very much awake to any movement that it makes.

Children, too, have the right to life. This State has the most rapidly expanding population in Australia. We do not have abortion on demand. The Premier has said that while he is Premier that will not become the law of the land. A different state of affairs pertains in the State of South Australia, which allows abortion on demand. A session every morning at the Royal Adelaide Hospital results in mangled human foetuses being dumped in a bucket. For anyone who has served in war and seen dead men, seeing dead foetuses is not much different, and just as disgusting.

A rather interesting political party called the Australian Democrats is being formed at the moment in this country. It has been promoted by a man named Chipp—Chipp by name, Chipp by nature and Chipp by mentality, a glib speaker with a very shallow depth of mind. He has an offside named Millhouse, who was one of the perpetrators of abortion on demand in South Australia. I hope that the whole party receives the same treatment as those men have handed out to thousands of innocent children. In other words, I hope the party is aborted very smartly by the electors.

The right to life is found right throughout the Governor's Opening Speech, and there is also the right to possession. The laws in relation to succession and probate have been altered. The Government of this State considers that the right to possession of property should not be taken away when a person dies. A wife is justified in expecting that money and goods will be handed down to her so that she can obtain some benefit from the hard work and savings of her husband. The children also have a moral right to the property of their parents. In this State that right has been made positive by law. The right is reinforced by a law which allows the family property to be handed down to them in succession.

The right to liberty is a very interesting one that we must deeply consider. The Governor spoke about his travels. In early times the Greeks had considerable freedom. The Romans had considerable freedom—or *libertas*, as they called it—to move around, in and out of countries and from one State to another. They had the freedom to change their position and to change their employment. However, they also wished to have the same right to return to their homeland—their fatherland—so that they could say, "This is my land. This is my country. This is where I belong; but I am free to go anywhere without harassment and without restrictions." In Australia we have that freedom. In this vast State of ours we can

move freely without worries and without having to check in from one police province or precinct to another. That is one of the liberties and rights that we should cherish.

Our economic and civil rights are well covered in the Governor's speech. The freedom of enterprise is well illustrated by the fact that the annual value of mineral production in Queensland exceeds \$1,400 million—a threefold increase in four years.

**Mr. Moore:** Are you quoting from the Governor's speech?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I am.

We have provided \$80,000,000 for public hospital capital works, all again coming under our social rights and economic rights. We find that welfare is being looked after.

From the Governor's Speech, we find that—

“Education continues to enjoy the highest priority in my Government's programme. Pre-school facilities are now available to more than 60 per cent of children in the immediate pre-school year.”

The children are taught in the early days to receive and assimilate educational procedures. This is a moral right that they all have and now it is made a positive right under the law of this State. Nowhere in this State can anybody point a finger at the Government and say that it has oppressed the rights of human beings.

It is very interesting to read that Marx believed in humanity but agreed that humanity would only come into its own when men ceased to think of themselves as individuals and made themselves subject to the State. No one in Queensland is subject to the State.

It is also interesting to learn that the Soviet Union, in its Constitution of 1936 with amendments to 1965, formulated the rights of its citizens on the model of the U.S.A., France and other nations. Article 125 provided for (a) Freedom of speech; (b) Freedom of Press; (c) Freedom of Assembly, including the holding of mass meetings (although they seem to be held in the Red Square only on Stalin's birthday, or the date of Lenin's burial service); and (d) Freedom of street procession and demonstration.

Recently in this State we had considerable disturbances of our economy or attempts at disturbances of our economy and our mining industries by people who quoted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Article 21 has been mentioned very briefly by some of those people. So that the House will realise that a lot of these

people are only short-changing this statement, I shall quote the whole of Article 21. It reads—

“The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognised. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of the right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”

Throughout the Address in Reply debate it seems to have been forgotten that we have very sacred freedoms and rights to preserve. His Excellency, in his Opening Speech, said that this Government, under the control of the Premier, has done exactly that. It gives me great pleasure to take part in the reply to his Speech.

Motion—That the Address in Reply be adopted (Mr. Turner)—agreed to.

## SUPPLY

### CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE

**Hon. T. G. NEWBERY** (Mirani—Leader of the House): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.”

Motion agreed to.

## WAYS AND MEANS

### CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE

**Hon. T. G. NEWBERY** (Mirani—Leader of the House): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.”

Motion agreed to.

## ACTS INTERPRETATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (5 p.m.): I move—

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

The main object of this Bill is to correct an anomaly relating to the exercise of statutory powers between the passing and commencement of an Act. The anomaly came to light when the Victorian counterpart of section 17 of the Queensland Act was considered by

the Full Court of Victoria. The intention of this Bill is to ensure that section 17 will apply to all amending Acts as well as to principal Acts.

It is proposed to amend section 28A to ensure the validity of anything done pursuant to a regulation which is subsequently disallowed, before such disallowance is preserved.

This section also provides for regulations to be laid before the Legislative Assembly within 14 sitting days of publication in the gazette or of the commencement of the next session of the Legislative Assembly where the Assembly is not in session. If this is not done, the regulations shall be void. It is considered that at present it is not clear whether the regulations are void from the beginning or after the expiration of the time for laying on. The Bill proposes to clarify this matter.

Subsection (1) of section 35A of the Act makes reference to a division in an Act. As a division in fact relates to a division of a part of an Act and not to the Act itself, this anomaly will be remedied by this Bill.

It is also considered that the existing provisions of section 41 relating to additional penalties are not clear. The Bill also proposes to clarify this matter.

The Bill therefore contains proposals of a formal nature.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (5.3 p.m.): At the introductory stage the Minister said that the proposed amendments were required to overcome anomalies that have arisen in the Acts Interpretation Act 1954-1971. Today he again made the point that the amendments are required to clarify specific provisions.

I have been a member of Parliament for only seven or eight years but I have come to realise the importance of the Acts Interpretation Act and of having it free of all anomalies. If there is not a high degree of clarity in laws and clear and precise rules for the interpretation of Acts, it will be little wonder if we get nowhere in understanding what legislation is all about. After all, this is what this Act is supposed to do; it is supposed to make clear and very precise rules for interpreting Acts.

It has been suggested that this Act bears to statutes the relationship that a dictionary bears to most other books. Just as a dictionary is used to give some sort of authority to the interpretation of words in a book, this Act gives authority for the interpretation of statutes.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** There is that analogy.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** It is a good analogy. Without access to a dictionary an author's meaning could be lost to a reader. There is therefore an analogy between a dictionary and the Acts Interpretation Act.

The Act embodies rules and matters which, generally speaking, are common to all statutes. That being so, it is a great advantage to all of us members of Parliament in that instead of repeating certain things over and over again in all Acts, they are included in the Acts Interpretation Act. This removes the need for constant repetition.

The amendment of section 17 provides a means of overcoming a difficulty that has arisen. It ensures that the exercise of statutory powers between the passing and commencement of an Act will be seen to be acceptable and will also be lawful. The Minister referred to a specific case. After considering that case, it becomes apparent that we should ensure that if certain regulations are passed they are in fact lawful.

I could refer to a number of situations. Consider, for instance, the appointment of certain personnel. If they were not appointed by way of regulation, the Act would never become operative. There would be an impossible situation because those public servants would be needed to administer the Act. Likewise, without power within regulations to draw up certain forms, the Act could never become operative. The Minister referred to the Victorian case of Muldoon v. Johnstone. It said that unless devices or mechanical implements can be prescribed by regulation well in advance, again the Act could not become operative, so we accept that this is a need and that we need to be able to make these actions and regulations lawful.

While the Opposition agrees with what the Minister is intending with regard to section 28A, it is something we will have to look at very closely, and I will be raising other aspects during the Committee stage. As members would realise, section 28A is only a relatively new section which was added in 1971. This is one of those sections which is vital to every member of Parliament because it is the real power that we have over the bureaucracy; it is the control we have over the subordinate legislators. It ensures, as members no doubt realise, that all regulations made by the departments are going to be brought before this Assembly and that the members of this Assembly will have the chance to consider them and, if we do not agree, then we have the opportunity to move for their disallowance. Members who have taken the time to look at section 28A in the existing Act will know that it requires that these regulations have to be laid before the Assembly within 14 sitting days after publication in the Gazette or 14 days after the commencement of the next session, and if this is not done then these regulations shall have no effect. That is a very important protection that this Assembly has. Surely this is how it should be—that if the departments do not bring these matters before the Assembly, if they do not give us as ordinary

members an opportunity to see what they are doing, then they should not be able to become operative.

However, there is one aspect of the Bill which I question and which I will raise specifically during the Committee stage. I would ask the Minister to look at the proposed section 28A (6). He might be able to get some interpretation of it from his legal advisers because it could be that the failure of a department to lay these regulations before the Assembly within the prescribed 14 days does not in fact prevent them from having any effect. As I said, I will raise the matter later.

The other amendments, to sections 35A and 41, have also been considered by the Opposition. We see the need for clarity here and so we will be supporting them.

I want to bring to the notice of the Minister the report by the Committee of Subordinate Legislation. This report clearly states that it is the opinion of the committee that section 28A should be expanded so that as a committee we have the power to review, amend or recommend for amendment all types of subordinate legislation other than regulations, and this is a point that must exercise the Minister's mind. We need to have control over the various types of regulations. I notice these can be interpreted as being rules, by-laws and orders in council; but we must have this power because it is not good enough to sit as members of this committee, have matters brought before us and be told by legal counsel, "You can look at them but you can't do anything about them because the Act prevents your doing this." I would suggest, and I agree with the members of this committee, that as a committee of subordinate legislation we should have control over all areas of subordinate legislation, not just those that are catered for within a particular Act. So I hope that in due course the Minister will ensure that we do have control over these areas.

When it comes to orders in council, I can understand that the committee should not be questioning the establishment of boards or the date that a board should commence. I can also understand that, when it comes to other types of subordinate legislation that do not affect the community at large, perhaps we do not need much say, but surely when it comes to by-laws that involve a specific section of the community then this committee ought to have some say, just as we do with regulations, because they impose duties or obligations on people. So I ask the Minister to look at this section very carefully because it is a matter that does concern the members of the Committee of Subordinate Legislation.

Recently I asked the legal counsel attached to the Committee of Subordinate Legislation to please give me a clear definition of what were statutes, regulations, rules, by-laws,

orders in council, proclamations and so on. He made the point that it was extremely difficult to do so. In fact, I have here the brief delivered by the legal counsel, in which he says that no scientific distinction has been adopted in Australia, although there does appear to be some degree of uniformity in the use of these terms.

Time and time again we as members of Parliament have to consider legislation. Although it may be said that it is only a small part of our role—we have to carry out duties in the community; we have to represent people who have complaints—we do have to consider legislation, and one of the greatest difficulties that any member of Parliament faces is understanding the legislation that he has to consider and debate. If our legal brains tell us that it is very difficult to define the difference between regulations, rules, by-laws, and Orders in Council, how can we expect the ordinary lay person to understand? So it seems to me that we need some clarity in this respect.

The Acts Interpretation Act is supposed to bring about a clarity for all statutes. I think that a questionnaire could be sent round Government departments as to the interpretation of some of the laws that come before this Assembly, and even of some of the terminology. I heard the Minister read the new section 35A, and it would give most people a headache. It says—

"A reference in any Act to a part, section, schedule or form shall, unless the contrary intention appears, be deemed to be a reference to a part, section, schedule or form of the Act in which the reference is made."

The Minister smiles; I think all honourable members would smile. What does it really mean? That is a fairly simple one. Once we begin taking out one clause here and another clause there, it begins to tie in. But I think you would agree, Mr. Speaker, having been a member of this Assembly for such a long time, that some sort of layman's, grass roots approach is needed to legislation in this State, because departments do not understand it, the ordinary people do not understand it, and, I would suggest, the legislators do not understand it. What are we doing? We are leaving it up to draftsmen, who we know are keeping within the law, to interpret it for us. Actually, that is really not so. We leave it to the courts to interpret it for us. Regardless of what the Minister might say in his speech introducing legislation, regardless of the intention of this Chamber, it will finally be the courts that decide what we meant. No wonder the legal eagles have such a heyday, no wonder they make so much money in their profession because of the disputes that arise in the interpretation of the law.

I make a plea on behalf of the Opposition, and, I believe, on behalf of many other members of Parliament, that we come down to some simplicity in the law that we bring before this Assembly. I think that the Minister, the present incumbent of the portfolio, would accept that need. How is he going to do it? I realise that he has no magic wand. I realise, too, that it is not a problem that pertains only to Queensland; it is one with which every Legislature in this nation is afflicted. Surely it is time that we rid ourselves of the legal jargon that is involved in every clause, every part, every section of every piece of legislation and brought down legislation that is simply understood.

I will raise another matter when we come to the Committee stage. In general, the Opposition supports the intention of the Minister in this legislation.

Motion (Mr. Lickiss) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 3, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of s.28A; Regulations—

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (5.14 p.m.): Section 28A of the Act refers to the regulations. It States very clearly that departments or anyone bringing down regulations are required to lay them before the Legislative Assembly, as I said before, within 14 sitting days after publication in the Gazette if the Assembly is in session; and if not, then within 14 sitting days after the commencement of its next session.

I refer honourable members to clause 4 (d), which says—

“(6) A failure to lay regulations before the Legislative Assembly in accordance with paragraph (d) of subsection (1) or a disallowance of regulations shall not alter the effect of the doing, suffering or omission of anything done, suffered or omitted under, in accordance with or for the purposes of such regulations, prior to such failure or disallowance.”

It could be that that simply means that, regardless of whether or not the department fails to lay the regulations before this Assembly, the effect of them is going to be valid.

**Mr. Moore:** It will be unlawful.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** No, it is going to be lawful.

**Mr. Moore:** But unlawful from then on.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Well, that seems to be the problem. I am having a private conversation with the Acting Whip.

I see real problems here. I am questioning whether or not the requirement on the department to lay those regulations before the Chamber within the 14 days will still be enforced, or hasn't it got to worry any more? At the moment the Act says very clearly—

“(2) If any regulations are not laid before the Legislative Assembly pursuant to paragraph (d) of subsection (1) of this section they shall be void and of no effect.”

I am questioning now whether or not this new subclause is going to overcome that provision that they shall be void and shall have no effect. Will it be that it “shall not alter the effect of the doing, suffering or omission of anything done, suffered or omitted under, in accordance with or for the purpose of such regulations, prior to such failure or disallowance”?

There seems to be need for some clarity here. That is what the Act is all about—that we have clarity in the statutes before this Assembly. It is not clear to me. There may be a very simple answer, but I would like to hear it.

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (5.17 p.m.): The honourable member for Rockhampton quoted section 28A dealing with regulations, of which subsection 1 (d) states—

“(d) be laid before the Legislative Assembly within fourteen sitting days after publication in the Gazette if the Legislative Assembly is in session, but if not then within fourteen sitting days after the commencement of its next session.”

Subsection (2) provides—

“(2) If any regulations are not laid before the Legislative Assembly pursuant to paragraph (d) of subsection (1) of this section they shall be void and of no effect.”

The honourable member for Rockhampton raised a query about the proposed new subsection (6) in section 28A. I have had discussions with the Parliamentary Counsel, and he and I are both satisfied that the clause is in order. The purpose of the new proposed subsection (6) is to protect anything done under a regulation prior to its disallowance or prior to a failure to lay the regulations before the Legislative Assembly. The honourable member's query was directed to the apparent conflict between the new proposed subsection (6) and the existing subsections (1) and (2), which require regulations to be laid before the House within 14 sitting days or they become void. He thought that a department so minded could deliberately fail to lay the regulations before the House, and thereafter act under them, thus ignoring paragraph (d) of subsection 28A subsection (1) and section 28A sub-

section (2). I understand that the Parliamentary Counsel has explained the position to the honourable member, who I thought was quite satisfied with the explanation.

It may be helpful to the honourable member for Rockhampton to look at subclause (6), which protects only those things done prior to the failure to lay the regulations before the House. Such failure arises on the expiration of 14 sitting days if the regulations have not been laid before the House. Upon the expiration of the fourteenth sitting day, the regulations are void under section 28A subsection (2) and thereafter no department would dare to act under the regulations because it would have no protection. Subclause (6) is directed towards the occasion when some action must be authorised by regulation and carried out quickly, for example, health measures to prevent an epidemic. I hope that explanation is satisfactory.

**Mr. Wright:** You are saying therefore that within those first 14 days the regulations made shall have effect, but that if they have not been laid upon the table by the expiration of the 14 days, they shall have no effect from there on?

**Mr. LICKISS:** That is right.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 5 and 6, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATIONAL AND  
CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS ACT  
AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—  
Minister for Justice and Attorney-General)  
(5.22 p.m.): I move—

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

The primary purpose of this Bill is to enable the various charitable and other worthy bodies incorporated under the Religious Education and Charitable Institutions Act to change their names more easily, more quickly and less expensively than at present.

Under the Bill, the Governor in Council may change the name of a body incorporated under the Religious Educational and Charitable Institutions Act by the issue of letters patent.

When the Governor in Council declares a new name and style for a corporation, the Bill provides for registers containing records of property interests to be appropriately changed without payment of any fee to record the new name.

This Bill provides that different provisions of the Bill may commence at different times. It is proposed that the parts of the Bill allowing the simplified change of name be proclaimed to commence at an early date so that the Queensland Branch of the Returned Services League of Australia and other bodies incorporated under the Religious Educational and Charitable Institutions Act may avail themselves of these new provisions at their earliest convenience.

Once the Queensland Branch of the Returned Services League has changed its name in accordance with the new procedure, then the remaining parts of the Bill will be proclaimed to come into operation. These two remaining parts amend the Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia, Queensland Branch, Act and the Returned Servicemen's Badges Act so that references to the old name of the league are changed to those of the new name.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (5.24 p.m.): Whilst it could be said that this is really the “R.S.L. Bill”, I think what is really important is that we are simplifying the procedure to be followed in changing the name of a corporation incorporated under the Religious Educational and Charitable Institutions Act. This move must be supported by all honourable members. I am pleased to note that the Act is designed to overcome the difficulties experienced with costs that institutions may face if they wish to provide for a change in name when all sorts of properties and assets are involved. We have looked at this proposal. We cannot see any reason why it should be opposed. It is the sort of measure the Assembly should support, and the Opposition does support it.

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—  
Minister for Justice and Attorney-General)  
(5.25 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for his comments. He went right to the nub of the matter. Whilst it is primarily designed at this stage to assist the R.S.L. in achieving the purpose it set out to achieve, as the honourable member has pointed out, it also simplifies the procedures for the future.

Motion (Mr. Lickiss) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 16, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

SUCCESSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (5.27 p.m.): I move—

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

As I explained at the introductory stage, the purpose of this Bill is to overcome an unforeseen problem which has arisen as a consequence of the abolition of death duties in this State. Under some provisions in wills, dispositions of property are dependent upon death duty valuation of the property. With the abolition of death duties in Queensland, provisions of this type have been rendered of no effect unless all those who might be affected can agree on the course to be followed.

The Bill seeks to give effect to the testator's intentions in this regard by providing that the personal representative of the deceased person—

(a) Obtain a valuation; or

(b) Elect to take any assessment made for Commonwealth death duty purposes as the valuation.

As a safeguard, provision is also made in the Bill for an application to be made to the court by the personal representative or beneficiary or other person with an interest to vary the provisions in the will.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (5.29 p.m.): The abolition of succession duties was welcomed by all members of this Chamber. I think it goes without saying that, if any problems have arisen—and the Minister has outlined some of them caused by the abolition of duties (as well as succession duties there was also probate duty, which was abolished in 1973)—we ought to remove those anomalies. The Minister has explained that this is what he intends to do, and his actions have the Opposition's support.

Motion (Mr. Lickiss) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

FRUIT-GROWING RECONSTRUCTION  
SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENTS BILL

SECOND READING

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (5.30 p.m.): I move—

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

At the introductory stage there did not appear to be any disagreement with the provisions of the Bill. The honourable member for Mackay was concerned that it had taken my Government five years to ratify the agreement between the Commonwealth and this State. This is not so.

The principal agreement was made on 2 November 1972 and was ratified by the Farmers' Assistance Act (Amendment) and Reconstruction Agreements (Ratification) Act 1974. This Act was assented to on 18 April 1974. Not only did the Act ratify the principal fruit-growing reconstruction agreement; it also extended the principal agreements to 30 June 1974 and brought the canning apricot industry within the scheme. Average rates of assistance per acre of trees removed for both fresh fruit and canning varieties were also increased.

The Commonwealth Government recognised the continuing difficulties chiefly in the canning peach and canning pear industries and after consultation with the States agreed to further extend the scheme and provide an additional allocation of \$1,000,000.

The Bill now before the House merely formalises the extensions to 31 December 1976 for receipt of applications with removal of trees by 31 August 1977.

I wish to thank the member for Carnarvon for his comments on the Bill. I know that he has taken a very keen interest in this scheme and has been anxious to see a relaxation in the means test to enable a greater number of applicants to be assisted.

Following representations by the States, the Commonwealth did agree to liberalise conditions so that the net assets a grower could have after clear-fell tree-pull were doubled and this enabled the Rural Reconstruction Board to assist a further 14 orchardists who would not otherwise have been eligible for assistance.

I believe the fruit-growing reconstruction scheme has been a useful measure of assistance to those fruit growers in Queensland who were in necessitous circumstances, enabling them to adjust their enterprises to changed market conditions.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (5.33 p.m.): As indicated at the introductory stage, we feel that there are no problems connected with the ratification of the agreement. It is rather a shame in this day and age that action has to be taken to destroy food, but it is probably a sign of the times. It is most unfortunate. None the less it has helped to bring about viability again in some sectors of the rural industry. The Opposition supports the measure.

Motion (Mr. Tomkins) agreed to.

## COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 3, both inclusive, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

## DAIRY ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENT BILL

## SECOND READING

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (5.35 p.m.): I move—

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

The main intent of the amended and consolidated agreement to be ratified and approved by this Bill was to provide urgently needed interim assistance to the dairy industry by a short-term extension and modification of the Dairy Adjustment Program from June to December 1976. The Rural Adjustment Agreement from 1 January 1977 ensures availability of further dairy reconstruction assistance for a four to five-year period. The Bill to ratify and approve this agreement has since been introduced.

Honourable members have now had the opportunity to study both agreements and will probably agree that at this stage the dairy industry does not appear to be disadvantaged by the merger of the rural reconstruction measures. Queensland's announced allocation of \$6,400,000 for 1977-78 under the Rural Adjustment Scheme includes \$1,100,000 proposed for dairy industry assistance.

The honourable member for Mackay referred to the report of the committee of inquiry into the dairy industry. This report, of course, comes within the province of the Minister for Primary Industries and ample opportunity has been given by the introduction of the Milk Supply Bill for members to debate that issue.

There are still many uneconomic dairy farms which would qualify for disposal and there is ample scope for farm build-up and amalgamation. Whilst there is continuing interest in these measures, it is somewhat limited. The problems relating to farm disposal and amalgamation appear to be many: for instance, lack of suitable build-up land within a reasonable distance; high prices; uncertainty regarding ability to service a large debt; poor prospects of sales in some areas and a preference to retire on the farm rather than uproot and endeavour to re-establish in a city, town or other area, which is often a costly move.

The Commonwealth and State schemes between them provide a fairly comprehensive range of reconstruction assistance in relation to the dairy industry, including: disposal

of uneconomic dairy farms and rehabilitation; purchase of build-up land for existing dairies; improvements to dairy structures and plant; other farm improvements; stock and plant (including irrigation equipment); diversification of production; household support pending a firm decision to leave the industry; adjustment of uneconomic partnership or estate ownerships; and adjustment of family ownerships between parents and sons where parents are at retiring age.

Since November 1970 approximately \$20,850,000 has been approved for dairy industry reconstruction assistance. This amount, made up of \$17,400,000 from Commonwealth funds and \$3,450,000 from State funds, comprises: purchase of uneconomic farms, \$11,670,000; farm build-up, \$2,450,000; bulk milk conversion (interest free), \$1,290,000; dairy upgrading and farm improvement, \$3,480,000; dairy factory assistance, \$1,930,000; and carry-on finance, \$30,000.

The honourable member for Mackay also referred to the delay in ratifying the agreement. In measures of this nature, time is often of the essence of the contract and Queensland dairy farmers would have been placed at a considerable disadvantage by any delay in implementing assistance provided by the agreement. The Commonwealth itself encountered delays in preparing the agreement but in view of the industry crisis requested that the States implement all measures. Whilst the Bill has been prepared for some time, pressure of other legislation has unfortunately precluded presentation before this session.

I agree with the honourable member that considerable finance will be required in the future to help people in the dairy sector in Queensland. As mentioned in my introduction, the State is augmenting reconstruction funds by approximately \$1,000,000 per annum by reinvesting amounts accruing in respect of repayments of advances for dairy industry assistance. Whilst this amount cannot hope to meet total industry requirements, at least it is of some help.

I also mentioned in my introduction that in so far as assistance to the dairy industry was concerned, the measures provided in the Rural Adjustment Agreement will be administered by my Dairy Farm Reconstruction Section, which has operated since August 1970.

The committee and the officers administering the scheme are well versed in the industry's problems and have the confidence of all sections of the industry. I take this opportunity of acknowledging the capable assistance and co-operation given by Dr. Graham Alexander, Chief Advisory Officer, Department of Primary Industries, in the administration of the Commonwealth and State schemes. I am pleased to say that Dr. Alexander, who has been the representative of my colleague the Honourable the

Minister for Primary Industries on the Dairy Adjustment Committee since the original scheme commenced in 1970, is continuing in that capacity. I should like to mention that Dr. Alexander and Mr. George Parker of my department have co-operated extremely well in the administration of this scheme.

Honourable members may rest assured that the committee and the administration have sympathetically considered all applications for assistance and will continue to do so.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (5.40 p.m.): As I indicated in the introductory debate, and the Minister has again indicated, this measure is a ratification of an agreement that has already been completed. My main query is about the legal authority for actions taken before the agreement was ratified.

I agree with the point the Minister has made about the need for speed to get administrative actions under way, but, as we all know, things can foul up and when we have a measure such as this, which has no legal backing, problems can arise. I accept that the Minister was speaking with tongue in cheek when he made certain excuses, but none the less we will forgive him. It is important to recognise that when these separate programmes were introduced they were introduced as the difficulties arose and it is fortunate that they have all been amalgamated into one Bill, which is the next measure the Minister will deal with.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (5.41 p.m.), in reply: I would like to acknowledge the point made by the honourable member for Mackay, because I think it is quite a good one. The State Ministers meet with the Federal Minister and come to an agreement and, as the honourable member says, it might take years before this agreement is confirmed. But it is quite obvious that Governments treat one another as Governments made up of respectable, honourable people, and I have never heard of any trouble in that regard.

I think the point I just made, that it is necessary to get the agreements into operation, is a good one. For example, the new Rural Adjustment Scheme, which I will deal with shortly, was introduced in that way. In other words, the Ministers met and an agreement was reached. We are only going to confirm it today. But no trouble has occurred. It is good that Governments do recognise that they represent the people. They like to get the schemes into operation once they are organised and even before they are ratified. And really I see nothing wrong with that.

Motion (Mr. Tomkins) agreed to.

## COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 and 2, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

## RURAL ADJUSTMENT AGREEMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (5.44 p.m.): I move—

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

Honourable members have now had the opportunity to consider the agreement to be ratified. The honourable member for Mackay recognises the importance of the Bill to future adjustment in rural industries.

When considering the question of whether adjustment assistance should be provided to the rural sector after expiry of the Rural Reconstruction Scheme the Industries Assistance Commission found a number of issues were relevant. These included the pressures creating the need to adjust, the capacity of the sector to adjust to change, and the role of Government in facilitating structural change.

It was found that one of the major economic factors inducing change was the dependence of a significant section of the rural sector on overseas markets. Demand in these markets varies largely as a result of changing economic policies and production in the buyer countries. This is exemplified in the very serious decline experienced in prices for beef and the substantial fall in incomes of beef producers. It clearly illustrates the effect changes in demand from overseas countries can have on an industry heavily reliant on those overseas markets.

Much of the adjustment necessary has already taken place through amalgamation of properties and changes in land usage and human physical resources. Since its establishment in 1971 the Rural Reconstruction Scheme has materially assisted the adjustment process, and in Queensland alone \$43,200,000 has been made available. In addition, carry-on funds for Queensland beef producers in necessitous circumstances have been provided through the Beef Cattle Industry Assistance Scheme to the extent of \$20,000,000. Of this amount, the State contributed \$10,000,000.

The new scheme now draws together adjustment assistance previously available under various industry schemes with more consideration given to the adjustment needs of non-viable farmers.

The honourable member for Mackay drew attention to what he considered was a reduction in assistance available for 1977-78. As honourable members are aware, Government funds are provided on a financial-year basis. In 1976-77 a total of \$5,100,000 was allocated for the general component of the scheme, that is, debt reconstruction farm build up, farm improvement and rehabilitation assistance, whereas in 1977-78 \$6,400,000 has been provided for the same purposes.

The honourable member for Mackay is also concerned that the scheme will not be reviewed for sometime. A major review will in fact be carried out in four years' time, but the agreement does provide for reviews from time to time as considered appropriate by the Commonwealth and the State in the light of experience.

I should like to add that the Ministers, at their meeting earlier this year, decided that if the funds provided for this year appeared to be insufficient for the year's operations, a meeting would be held in February next to review the ramifications of the scheme and that, if necessary, further funds would be made available.

The agreement also provides for meetings of Ministers and officials at least once in each year to exchange information and negotiate allocations for the following financial year.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (5.48 p.m.): The problems of rural readjustment covered by the Bill have been with us in Queensland for quite a number of years. In such a great primary-producing nation as Australia, it is rather sad that it is necessary to bring down legislation providing for adjustment to the rural sector.

There has been a very severe decrease in population and a very severe decline in industry and commerce in the rural sector. This measure and the two Bills that have preceded it today, together with many other measures that have been before the House in the last five to seven years, could be termed stopgap measures, and I think it is about time we began looking for some realistic way in which to stem the rural decline throughout Australia and in Queensland in particular.

It is all very well for honourable members to say in this House that Governments are doing their bit and playing their part by introducing measures the implementation of which is helpful. In fact, most of these measures are putting the rural sector further in debt. That is the truth of the matter. In recent months I have spoken to primary producers in virtually every area of Queensland, from right out in the Far North-west on the Northern Territory border to Coolangatta. One of the day-to-day problems affecting them most is the burden of freight, and freight rates, particularly rail freight rates,

are under the direct control of this Government. The waiving of road transport charges does not have a great deal of effect on people out in the Far North-west of Queensland, as most of their goods must be carried by rail. For several months of the year their properties are completely inaccessible by road.

This is a very severe problem that the State Government has to look at. There has to be a readjustment of the freights schedule. It is so easy for manufacturers in Brisbane to obtain concessional rates from the Government so that they can manufacture here and send their products throughout the length and breadth of the State on a special contract rate basis. Primary producers do not get quite the same advantages.

Some of the finance made available under what is proposed will have to be used by many persons in rural industry to meet their local authority rates. Here again we run into a similar situation. We are taking money from the Commonwealth and State coffers to provide finance, particularly for persons engaged in the pastoral industry, so that they can keep their heads above water. One of the major debt problems that many of them have is the meeting of local authority rates. Members representing rural areas would well know this problem, particularly in western and north-western Queensland. What is really happening is that we are taking money out of one pocket and placing it in the pocket of the pastoralist, the cattleman or the wool-grower. He takes it from there and pays it to the local authority so that he can meet his rates, and he is paying interest on that money.

**Mr. Tomkins:** Four per cent.

**Mr. CASEY:** I accept it that it is low interest, which is quite good in these times. Just the same, 4 per cent provides a further indebtedness in this climate. At present, many of them cannot afford to make any interest payments at all. We need some sort of system whereby we can help the local authorities on a more direct basis, rather than by this indirect way through the rural producer's pocket. The rural producer is meeting his indebtedness, but he is still paying interest on the money. This is another area in which Governments have to come up with positive answers rather than this stopgap type of arrangement.

Even within the Lands Department itself we have a number of problems. I recognise that the department is waiving the payment of rentals in certain circumstances in some areas. The brigalow areas are one example. But in many cases persons are still debited with arrears. I realise that the department has obligations that it has to meet under the financial arrangements for such things as the brigalow development scheme, but at the same time this means added cost to the rural producer. Here again we are loading on charges

in this ad hoc type of arrangement. In many cases it is a little like shutting the gate after the horse has gone.

One aspect we should look at is speeding up the processing of applications. The Minister will recognise that in many cases there has been considerable delay. Certainly this has been reduced, but many rural producers have had difficulty in getting some sort of positive answer from the board.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I rise to a point of order. The clock is not working. The honourable member has been talking for 10 minutes already and perhaps he will keep speaking for another 40 minutes.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I thank the honourable member. It is a good job that somebody is awake.

**Mr. CASEY:** As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I had noticed that the clock was not working, but I didn't want to indicate to you earlier that there were problems.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The honourable member has 90 minutes in any case.

**Mr. CASEY:** That is quite correct. The honourable member for Toowoomba North is fairly new in the Chamber, and he won't be here much longer, and I don't suppose he has got around to reading Standing Orders yet.

I am concerned about the four-year period before there will be a major review of the legislation. Under the schedule there is provision for minor reviews as the scheme goes on. That will be essential. Queensland faces a disastrous year of drought and fire, which are much worse than other natural disasters for the rural sector. When a fire goes through a property, it destroys feed and kills animals, and reduces considerably the possibility of the property owner again becoming viable. He is placed in a worse financial plight. I forecast that very real problems will arise in Queensland in a matter of months, and that as the ravages of fire and drought take their toll we will have a tremendous increase in the number of applications under this scheme. At this stage there is no sign of general rain.

Other areas of production could well be affected. In recent years some people who had been concentrating on pastoral activities diversified into grain production, which helped them to remain viable primary producers. Because of the severe curtailment of grain production in some areas, particularly in the area represented by the honourable member for Balonne, those who have invested additional capital in order to diversify will be in worse trouble. Those who hoped to get out of trouble by diversifying could well lose much more. The situation is worsening. Queensland is more sorely affected than other States. We face big problems.

It could be said that amounts allocated throughout the Commonwealth under this measure are minor compared with the funds allocated by the Commonwealth to aid overseas countries. It should not be thought that I am knocking overseas aid; in fact, I favour it very strongly. Despite the situation in Queensland today, I have not seen the type of poverty that I have seen in some overseas countries. We have an acceptable standard of living that we are trying to maintain for all Queenslanders and Australians. It behoves this Parliament and the Government to ensure that the living standards of Queenslanders are maintained. Under no circumstances do we want our standards to decline, but many people in the rural sector are on the minimum income.

I referred earlier to my concern that not enough was being done on a long-term basis about the problems facing our rural industries. The State could help the rural industries by establishing overseas trade offices. The manufactured milk sector of the dairy industry is the worst hit. In recent months the Murray-Goulburn Co-operative in Victoria negotiated a major market in South America for about \$40,000,000 worth of whole-milk powder. The Australian Dairy Corporation had stated that the Australian dairy industry faced a severe oversupply of milk-powder, but the co-operative thought that the corporation was not doing enough and negotiated this sale by trading outside the Commonwealth sphere.

Queensland beef and dairy producers rely heavily on exports. It is well to keep in mind that 75 per cent of our beef production has to be exported, and therefore we in Queensland should have our representatives overseas looking for export outlets for this beef.

Returning to the subject of milk-powders—just yesterday I noted that the New Zealand Dairy Corporation had beaten the Australian Dairy Corporation in securing a contract for the supply of milk-powders to the Middle East.

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

**Mr. CASEY:** Just before the dinner recess I was speaking about the problems of rural adjustment and the need to spend so much of these finances to keep our rural community viable. As the Minister said in his opening remarks, some of the major problems faced by rural industries in Australia today are with export markets. Problems with our export markets have brought about the need for adjustment in our rural community and for major sums of money to be expended to keep some sectors of the rural community alive. Earlier I mentioned that I felt most of the measures taken to date have been stopgap, and I have been outlining some of the things that have been done in other

States and in other nations to avoid the need to spend money on rural adjustment and instead spend money on measures to help the rural community become viable and to obtain export markets.

I have drawn the attention of the House to the Murray-Goulburn Valley Co-operative, which is the major milk-manufacturing company in Australia, and to the way in which that co-operative recently secured markets in South America. The New Zealand Dairy Corporation has again outdistanced the Australian Dairy Corporation, which announced several months ago that it had high hopes of selling milk-powder to the Middle East. However, we have been beaten to the punch by New Zealand.

All of this leads me to the point that Queensland is not getting as good a deal as it should from our Australian trade offices overseas in securing primary production outlets. The only way we will get a good deal is by establishing properly, particularly in Asia, trade offices that specifically deal with our primary industries. This is one way we can try to do something about getting export outlets for Queensland organisations, which can negotiate through our own trade offices to secure markets in countries such as Japan, China, other eastern and South-eastern countries, and even the Middle East.

The other day in this House I drew to the Premier's attention a statement he made in London on 17 June last year that, as a result of a visit by him to Iran, there would be a tremendous increase in Queensland exports to Iran. The Premier specifically stressed sugar and meat. With the assistance of the Parliamentary Library, I have gone into this matter and found that now our trade with Iran in sugar is exactly the same as it was five years ago—and that is nil.

The Minister for Police, who is in the House and who comes from a sugar-producing area, would know that this is because Iran does not have the facilities to import bulk sugar. We can't afford to go back to a bagging operation so that we might send them bagged sugar. How ridiculous to say that we are going to increase trade with Iran when there is no possible chance of its happening!

Exactly the same applies to the Premier's statement that beef exports from Queensland to Iran would increase significantly. Again the figures available to us show that exports of beef from Queensland to Iran at present are virtually nil. So what is the good of the Premier's standing up in London, in this House and elsewhere in the State and making grand remarks about what are merely hallucinations in his own mind? We have to get down to a factual basis of doing something.

We will not be able to improve the export outlets for primary products from our rural areas until we have established our own

overseas trade offices. This is very important. We would then have experts on the spot. We have any number of agricultural scientists and agricultural economists who have specialised knowledge in this field and are looking for this type of employment. They should be engaged to seek out potential markets for Queensland's specialised products. In addition they could send back to us marketing expertise on what is likely to happen in the future. This would ensure that the money the people in the rural industries are receiving under this readjustment scheme will be spent wisely, and not as it was in the cases I mentioned a short while ago of producers who went into grain.

Grains looked a good prospect 12 months ago. But even 12 months ago it was known from reports coming back mainly through the Queensland Graingrowers Council—an extremely efficient body doing an excellent job in this respect—that there would be trouble in our grain markets by 1977. All of these things tie in with the fact that it is of little use the Premier's standing in this House or in any other place and making grand statements based on some publicity arrangement that he has in hand, or trying to make some sort of public relations project out of it.

Initially, we must have men on the job in Asia, I suggest, and also in the United States, particularly for beef outlets. One of the major sectors that will be supported by the Rural Adjustment Agreement is our beef industry. We need a man in America and one in Brussels. With all due respect to our former colleague Sir Wallace Rae, who is a great fellow and a great Queensland and is doing a good job perhaps as Agent-General in London, the job of Agent-General is no longer the old grace-and-favour job of many years ago. We must get down to the nitty-gritty of trade as the main involvement of our overseas offices. The office of the Agent-General in London should be transferred to Brussels, which is the headquarters of the E.E.C. That is where we have to break down trade barriers because it is the trade barriers in the E.E.C., in the United States, in Japan and in so many other countries that work against the export of our rural commodities.

This Bill is helping to treat effects, not to treat causes. That is what Governments in Australia must get down to. It becomes the basic essential for the Queensland Government. It has to try to sort out ways of bringing in legislative programmes that will overcome the real causes of the decline in our rural community, the real causes of the drop in income of our farm sector, and the real causes of the need for farm build-up programmes, for programmes of debt reconstruction in our rural communities and for programmes of rehabilitation of our farms.

In this way we will not need household support provisions such as are in this Bill to ensure that the men on the land

are able to put their hands out for some sort of pittance to keep them and their families. We must have realistic programmes that will be effective in the long term and that will help this great State of Queensland to get back again to being a viable, primary-producing State providing food outlets for the remainder of the world, as it has been in the past.

**Mr. NEAL (Balonne)** (7.25 p.m.): I should like to make a few comments that I did not get the opportunity to make at the introductory stage of the Bill.

I believe that the Rural Reconstruction Board has done a great deal of good over the years. I listened with interest to the honourable member for Mackay, who said that it has not got down to treating the cause of the present situation. That may be so, but if he can tell us how export prices of beef, wool and other commodities can be increased he will have solved the problem. What we are talking about is keeping people on the land until export prices improve.

As I have already said, the Rural Reconstruction Board has done a particularly good job over the years. The honourable member for Mackay referred to the board. I direct his attention to the time when the wool industry went through the doldrums for a number of years. Its problems were compounded by drought and a decrease in wool prices. One of the problems now besetting the beef industry is a result of the fall in wool prices, which led many of those in the wool industry to move into beef production. I inform the honourable member for Mackay that prior to the 1972 increase in wool prices a great many applications from wool producers were coming before the Rural Reconstruction Board. For a short period in that year there was a considerable increase in wool prices and applications by wool growers dried up overnight. The reason was obvious; they were again viable in their own enterprise.

**Mr. Casey:** Will you accept that the real trouble in the wool industry came about because of an increase in the production of artificial fibres?

**Mr. NEAL:** I cannot hear what the honourable member for Mackay is saying.

**Mr. Casey:** Will you accept that the problems of the wool industry came about because there was an increase in the production of artificial fibres which caused a drop in wool prices?

**Mr. NEAL:** One can speculate as long as one likes on that point. What I want to say is that this scheme has proved to be of great assistance to those who, because of low prices and various other factors, got into difficulties.

The schedule in the Bill shows the various forms of assistance that will be forthcoming to those who apply for them. This is where the meat of the legislation will be found.

There are a couple of further points that I should like to make. It seems strange to me that under the Rural Reconstruction Scheme family concerns should be debarred from borrowing for farm buildup. I refer specifically to situations in which a father and sons may be running a property and have blocks of land in each other's names. The sons are probably young and the father is probably getting on in years. There are other situations in which a couple of brothers may be on blocks of land side by side, neither of which is viable on its own. One may wish to build up his property by buying out either his father or brother. Under the terms of the Rural Reconstruction Scheme, this cannot be done. To me, that does not seem right. I know of cases of family involvement with properties in which one member of the family was in possession. The members of the family did not hold all the land in their own names and, because other members of the family wanted their money out, the one who was in working operation of the property was unable to borrow through the Rural Reconstruction Board to buy the rest of the property. To me this is no different from farm buildup. As far as I am concerned, it is no different from the chap who wants to buy his neighbour out and I do not see why this should not be included—

**Mr. Gunn:** In other words, a father could not sell to his son but could sell to an outsider?

**Mr. NEAL:** That is entirely correct. If a father wanted to get out he would not be able to sell to his son to build up the son's area to a viable proposition, but he would be able to sell to a complete outsider. I think this is forcing some families off the land. I believe that is wrong, because those people already on the land are the ones who have the experience. After all, it has probably been a family property, and what more would we want than for a family to continue to farm land which they have probably pioneered?

I appreciate the work that the Rural Reconstruction Board has done over the years since its implementation. This Bill merely ratifies the new agreements already in operation. I whole-heartedly support the Bill.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (7.31 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable members for Mackay and Balonne for their contributions to this debate. Of course, I would have to say that the honourable member for Balonne

effectively answered many of the propositions put forward by the honourable member for Mackay.

I would like to comment on some of the points raised by the honourable member for Mackay because he did go into a fair bit of depth in relation to some of the problems facing rural industry, and that is to his credit.

The honourable member admits that our Government has helped people but claims that we are treating the problem and not the cause. I suppose that is easy enough to say; but in view of many of these export markets, I do not know how the Government can help to treat the cause.

**Mr. Casey:** The Goulburn Valley Dairy Co-operative has just showed the way on this; there is no question about it.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** It can be done in certain cases. That is why I want to get back to the wool industry. I thought my colleague from Balonne covered it well.

The wool industry was in real strife in the period prior to about 1970-71. As the honourable member quite rightly pointed out, our Government made money available to the wool industry at 2 per cent. This enabled it to carry on at a time when the situation was absolutely desperate. In 1971, thanks to the McMahon Federal Government, the reserve price scheme was introduced. That was the first time I have seen one of these schemes work effectively. It gave a lot of stability to the market, and many of the measures we had undertaken prior to its introduction were then taken up to such good effect that wool prices rose. That in turn enabled a lot of growers to get out of trouble. I believe that the McMahon Government's decision was the right one. The scheme has been carried on since, and I believe the wool industry has benefited thereby.

As to the present situation—I find that the Rural Adjustment Scheme is not actually helping wool growers a great deal, but this is simply because they were helped by the earlier measure.

The honourable member for Mackay spoke about the scheme as it applies to cattle and the position of the beef industry. But as he has said himself, 75 per cent of meat produced in Queensland goes overseas. Consequently we have to contend with a market over which we as a Government have no control whatever. Despite the fact that a lot of people claim we can introduce a reserve price plan for beef in three or four years, nobody has yet come up with such a plan and said, "You can do this and that." It would be jolly good if anybody could come up with a worthwhile plan. As a matter of fact, in a few days on behalf of the Minister for Primary Industries I shall be introducing a Bill expanding the powers of the present Queensland Meat Industry Authority in an

endeavour to boost overseas markets. I say again that the expanded powers will help the authority in Queensland to co-operate with the new Meat and Livestock Corporation, which has been set up by the Federal Government, in introducing with the co-operation of the States a scheme which it is hoped will work along the lines of, say, the wool industry scheme, which was a reserve price plan.

The problems of the beef industry are quite different from those of the wool industry or, indeed, the sugar industry, and they are more difficult to handle. It has always been said, "If the cattle producers can do what the sugar producers do, it will be their salvation." All I can say is that once beef is sent to market and a reserve price is fixed for it, it has to be killed and storage facilities have to be provided, which costs a lot of money. The beef industry is quite unlike the wool and sugar industries, and that is the big problem that we face.

I support part of what the honourable member for Mackay said. I should like to think that the new Queensland Meat Industry Authority would interest itself in overseas markets, because I believe that on the domestic market in this State there are no problems caused by competition. The real problems arise because the overseas market is depressed. Because meat is sold on the domestic market and also on the overseas market, one is affecting the other.

**Mr. Casey:** Except that we are not getting quality in some sections of the domestic market. That is why special rumps, and so on, are being brought in from New Zealand and Victoria.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I would not agree with the honourable member on that. Generally speaking, the best quality beef brings the best prices on the domestic market. I will agree that some good meat goes to the United States of America and perhaps to Japan. The point I am trying to make is that the marketing of meat on the domestic market in Queensland is good because of competition. On the other hand, our big problem is the overseas market. I hope that the extended powers to be given to the Queensland Meat Industry Authority will enable that authority to dovetail its scheme in with the scheme of the Meat and Livestock Corporation, which eventually will do some good.

I know that there are problems on the Japanese market, and that there are problems in getting access to the European Economic Community, but I think that these can be overcome. The honourable member for Mackay mentioned the meat market in Iran and said nothing much has been done yet. At least we have tried, and I am hopeful that, in due course, this move will lead us somewhere.

The honourable member for Mackay said that the Agent-General should be shifted to Brussels because of the influence of the E.E.C. I think that the Agent-General is doing a terrific job where he is.

**Mr. Casey:** I did not say that he was not.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** No; I am saying that he is. I do not think that he should be shifted at this stage. He visits Brussels regularly and knows exactly what is going on in the E.E.C., and in reports to the Government he has indicated certain trends. I believe that Sir Wallace Rae is doing a tremendous job for Queensland; indeed, I have heard nothing but glowing reports of what he has been doing over a long period.

The honourable member for Mackay said also that the Government has not done a great deal for producers and mentioned cattle freights. Cattle freights in Queensland now are the lowest in Australia. They have been running about 28 per cent—

**Mr. Casey:** So they should be, too, because beef is the basis of so much of our economy.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Give credit where credit is due; they are the lowest. In the freight increases announced in the Budget last year, the Government saw fit not to raise cattle freights.

**Mr. Casey:** That was because you put them up 40 per cent the year before.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Then we dropped them 28 per cent, and I repeat that they are still the lowest freights in Australia.

The honourable member mentioned local authority rates, which are paid by the Rural Reconstruction Board at 4 per cent interest. I challenge the honourable member to say how we can do any better than that. There is no other way of doing it. Unfortunately, we cannot wave a magic wand and say, "Cattle prices will be doubled." If we could do that, we would fix everything. I think that the honourable member is being a bit unfair when he says that, despite all the help we have given to the industry, we must do a little better. I should like to think that we could do better, but I do not know how we would go about it. At least we are trying, and in making money available to local authorities we are keeping councils in business, and I think that is absolutely essential. As the former chairman of the Laidley Shire Council knows, if we didn't help the local authorities there would be none.

**Mr. Casey:** You were going crook about Gough Whitlam. Gough Whitlam was the first bloke who ever gave direct grants to local authorities in Queensland.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Fair enough, but on the other hand—

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You must agree that the Laidley council is a very moderate National Party council.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The Laidley council doesn't ask for any more assistance than anyone else. It has done a good job. As a Government we have helped all councils in Queensland to survive. The honourable member talks about Whitlam's grants to local authorities. Let him look at the present grants being given by the State Government. Where Whitlam used to give them \$5,000 we would probably give \$105,000.

We have deferred rents and freeholding payments, with an interest rate of 5 per cent. I don't think any Government could do much more than that.

**Mr. Casey** interjected.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I ask the honourable member to listen. I want to educate him a bit. He does a good job in some ways. He spoke about speeding up applications. There is no real delay. As a matter of fact at the present time applications are not coming in as fast as they used to as people are not trying to borrow so much because they have already gone so far.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Do you know that people are getting sick of the National Party Government?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I don't know what he means by that. I am saying that there is no delay in applications.

What else did the honourable member for Mackay say that I did not like? I noticed that he supported the Premier in his attitude towards overseas aid.

**Mr. Casey:** Far from it. I didn't support the way he is going about it.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The honourable member supported the curtailing of it. It helps some of our people.

**Mr. Casey:** Oh, no.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** That is the way I took it.

Sure, this year we got \$6,400,000 from the Federal Government under the Rural Adjustment Scheme, which includes the dairy scheme, the R.R.B., household support and so on. This State has joined with the Federal Government in providing a further \$7,000,000 for what I call "cattle carry-on"—\$3,500,000 each. Considerable funds are available there.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Is that quote of yours "cattle carry-on" an original quote?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I am glad the honourable member asks a question or two. I thought he knew all these answers. In all these schemes there has to be carry-on. I call it "cattle carry-on" because that is exactly what it is. It has been an effort to

keep the industry afloat. In the years to come the honourable member will find that this Government saved the cattle industry.

My colleague the honourable member for Balonne covered the wool industry because he knows a bit about it. He has been associated with it all his life. He mentioned the unfortunate situation presently facing grain producers.

**Mr. Casey:** He didn't mention that, I did.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** He commented on what the honourable member said. How unlucky we as a Government can be in this business! We have those people who have worked extremely hard. They have to pay their way just the same as everybody else. Now they find that they can be defeated by drought. I am only hoping that the crop can be saved by rain even at this late stage.

I think I have covered the points raised by both speakers. I thank them for their contribution. If we look like running out of money for these schemes the matter will be reviewed next February by a sympathetic Federal Government and a sympathetic State Government, and we will get the money we want.

Motion (Mr. Tomkins) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Schedule—

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (7.46 p.m.): The schedule provides the basis for the whole Bill. The clauses are merely introductory. In most of my comments at the second-reading stage addressed to the Minister I was trying to put forward some constructive ways in which the rural sector could be helped.

The honourable member for Balonne spoke about the wool industry. Certainly the earlier legislation did a good job to assist people in the wool-growing industry, but the schedule under this Bill and others will treat only effects, not causes.

Many honourable members, including the honourable member for Toowoomba South, know a little about the wool industry. They recognise that the main problem confronting the wool industry in the late 1960s and early 1970s was the competition from artificial fibres, which caused depressed wool prices and returns to producers, and necessitated a rural debt readjustment scheme. For a number of years the real cause of the trouble in the wool industry was the unwillingness of the Australian Wool Board to accept that artificial fibres were competing with wool. Since that body accepted woollen blends in the late 1960s or the early 1970s, the wool industry has progressed. It has been

accepted that when wool is used in conjunction with certain artificial fibres a far better cloth can be produced than the material made of pure wool or artificial fibre alone.

At that time the industry had its head in the sand. In Queensland, which is virtually a tropical State, it is almost impossible to buy a light-weight woollen cloth, but in Singapore, Hong Kong and other Eastern countries with large populations light-weight woollen cloth is available. Perhaps it is spun in the English woollen mills but in those areas one can get a light-weight woollen suit made up. In tropical Queensland we have to take the heavy woollen cloths spun in the South. That caused much of the trouble in the wool industry.

The schedule provides for farm buildup and debt reconstruction. The general principles in the schedule explain why finance is to be made available. One of the problems referred to by the Minister relates to the sale of beef. He asked how we could sell more beef. We cannot do that unless we do something about it.

In 1974 the honourable member for Balonne and I visited a meat factory in Japan. Before we left Australia we received information from the Australian Meat Board that while sales to Japan had been on the downturn they were coming up again, but men who operated the factory in Japan told us clearly that they would stop buying Australian beef for 12 months. That is what happened. The information coming from Australian Meat Board officials in Japan was completely erroneous; it was way off beam. As a result, beef producers in Australia who had changed from wool to beef production by using finance made available under the rural adjustment scheme were floating on air and, sure enough, the crash came in 1974. When Japan stopped buying beef we finished up with many problems.

I believe exactly the same thing will happen with our sugar sales in Japan. It could well be that unless all the problems are sorted out the schedule we are now talking about will have to make provision in the future for finance to be made available for the sugar industry. I sincerely hope that the Minister for Primary Industries is successful in negotiating a new international agreement in Geneva, where he is at present. No matter what happens with our Japanese sugar agreement, which is presently in dispute, as soon as it has run its term the Japanese will stop buying Australian sugar for 12 months to make us pay for putting them in their present position. But it is their fault, not ours. In good faith and in all honesty we entered into a trade deal through the Queensland Sugar Board.

Once again I am looking at causes rather than effects that have resulted in the principles as set out in this schedule. If we have to extend these principles into the sugar

industry as well, we will find a very serious problem indeed. Consequently, part of the treatment of the causes entails getting out and chasing deals in China and other countries—really going all out to sell our sugar in other areas.

Finally, I wish to reply to the comments of the Minister that we in Queensland cannot sell our beef. In actual fact, we do. Some of the major exporters from this State are the people who are negotiating the meat sales. Those deals are ratified by the Australian Meat Board. Take the Borthwick's sale to Russia.

**Mr. Tomkins:** The Australian Meat Board does the licensing for the sale.

**Mr. CASEY:** Yes, but it simply writes out a piece of paper authorising something that has been done quite often. Certainly the Australian Meat Board initiates some of the sales. However, what helped get rid of some of Queensland's surplus beef in the last 12 months was the major sale to Russia, which was initially negotiated by Borthwick. A number of other companies are to enter into that agreement with it. When it had it all tied up, the Australian Meat Board ratified the licence. There was no reason why the proposed Queensland meat industry authority cannot cover that situation. I feel that that has to happen. One positive way in which the Queensland Government can ensure that it does is the establishment of overseas trade offices. I pledge that if this Government is not prepared to do it, a Labor Government will do it for the primary producers in this State.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service) (7.53 p.m.): I was interested in the remarks of the honourable member for Mackay about marketing. I made the point before and I make it again that, as a State Government, we have very little control in the export field, whether it be for meat, sugar or wheat. As to sugar—this is a delicate arrangement at the moment. It is not particularly my cup of tea, although I might be responsible ministerially for it. I am not prepared to say what is going to happen in that field, because it is a dispute between Governments. I do not propose to come into it.

Turning to the meat side of it—the Japanese meat market is very hard to follow. And I mean that in exactly that way. We have no control over what the Japanese do. Their history has been one of stop, go. All of a sudden the market opens up, it gets extremely good, and then, for no reason we are aware of out here, they say, "We will not take any more meat." That has been the history over the last four or five years.

**Mr. Casey:** Don't you think that if we had a fellow established over there he might be able to find out the reasons for it? If he had his finger on the pulse he could do that.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I think I know the reasons already, but I am not prepared to debate them here. This is a matter that I think is purely the responsibility of the Federal Government. But what I do say is that the Japanese, through their Livestock Industry Promotion Corporation, operate under a system whereby, no matter what price they pay for meat out here—and Australian meat would be the cheapest in the world at the moment—the price is lifted from the low Australian level up to the Japanese high level, which would be 30 to 40 times the price. They do this and they do it under their own set-up. My point is that we have no say in what they do. I am one who believes that Australia should trade with Japan on a single authority basis. We should sell from one authority to the Japanese Government in an effort to circumvent the L.I.P.C. because we, as a trading nation, are losing by it. I make the point again that the new meat marketing authority which will be set up shortly should be able to co-operate with the Federal people in having a look at some of these things.

The other point raised by the honourable member was the establishment of trade offices in Japan and in Brussels. Fair enough. I think that is all right. I would like to think that, in due course, we can do some of these things because not all of the problems in Australia today are caused by Governments. Our Government operates in a free-enterprise spirit. We do not have much say in what other countries do, and we could get trapped on these overseas jobs. Indeed if Labor gained office—and that is what the honourable member was talking about although he does not think it will happen—it would not do any better and he knows it. It would not have any more expertise in this field—

**Mr. Gunn:** It would put an export tax on it.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The honourable member for Somerset is right. It would, if it was any good, and it would transfer the money to some other field. A Labor Government would not act in a responsible manner, which is one thing our Government always does; it is always very responsible in this field.

I think that I have answered any criticism. The rural adjustment scheme and the schedule have stood the test of time. They have been in since the beginning of this year. This Bill ratifies the scheme and is helping no end of people in this great State of Queensland, and will continue to do so.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

VALUATION OF LAND ACT AMEND-  
MENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. J. W. GREENWOOD** (Ashgrove—Minister for Survey and Valuation) (7.58 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Valuation of Land Act 1944–1977 in certain particulars.”

This is the second Bill which I have brought before the Assembly this year to amend the Valuation of Land Act. Honourable members will recall that when introducing the previous Bill on 24 March this year I informed them that my colleague the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads and I were undertaking a fundamental review of problems associated with the financing of local authorities and particularly the use of land-ownership when measured by the unimproved value of such holdings as a method of apportioning rate payments within the community. This review has not yet been completed. However, as it progresses, various anomalies are becoming obvious; anomalies which restrict the efficient functioning of the Valuer-General's Department, and in some instances impose an inequitable rating burden on certain land owners. Some of these anomalies are such that they can and should be corrected now, without waiting for the completion of our review.

The first problem arises out of the impending introduction of the proposed modified Brisbane Town Plan. If it is adopted in its present form, many properties will be affected in a way that will drastically reduce their value. The owners of this land have compensation rights to reimburse them for their capital loss but, in addition to this, there is the problem of rates. It would be quite unjust for a man whose property value was reduced from \$30,000 to \$10,000 to continue to pay rates on \$30,000, yet this is what will happen unless the Valuer-General is able to carry out a revaluation.

The problem arises because there are quite stringent limitations on the Valuer-General's ability to revalue between area valuations. The only provision that allows him to do this is section 13 (2). The relevant provision is section 13 (2) (i) which allows the Valuer-General to amend a valuation between general revaluations if he is of the opinion that it is altered by reason of implementation of, or alteration in zoning under, or amendment of, a town plan. However, the term “town plan” is fairly narrow. Nowadays it is often not the town plan but something outside the plan that achieves the result.

Town-planning policies are often affected by a change of by-law or ordinance, or by a policy decision of a council which affects the use or development of land. As the Act presently stands, the Valuer-General can alter a valuation because of changes due to the town plan *stricto sensu* but cannot alter a valuation where the change was caused by by-laws, ordinances, policy decisions and the like.

For example, since the 1974 flood in the city of Ipswich and the shire of Moreton, the councils of these areas have prevented land-owners from building on certain subdivided lands below stipulated flood levels. The prohibition of building has severely affected the values of these lands but the Valuer-General does not have the power to alter the valuations until the time of the next general revaluation of these local authority areas, because the actions of these councils were not taken under a town plan.

Such anomalies in the Act must be corrected as the owners of these lands continue to pay rates on values assessed on a residential basis when the lands cannot be built upon. The Bill therefore extends the provisions of section 13 (2) (i) to give the Valuer-General power to alter valuations between general revaluations when, in his opinion, those valuations are altered by the application of an ordinance or by-law, or by any other action or decision of a local authority which affects the use or development of land.

Another provision requiring amendment is section 14, but the actual problem will be dealt with by an amendment to part of section 13. The problem, however, is in section 14. This section of the Act allows the Valuer-General to include in one valuation several parcels of land which adjoin and which are in common ownership. However, the present Act only allows such an amalgamation at the time of a general revaluation and not between revaluations, unless they should have been amalgamated at the time of the general revaluation but, through an error, this action was not taken.

Frequently between general revaluations a person buys two adjoining but separately valued properties or a land-owner buys an adjoining property. Despite the fact that the properties are then in common ownership, the valuations cannot be amalgamated until the time of the next revaluation.

This often results in such land-owners paying additional rates for several reasons, one of which is the power local authorities have to fix quite substantial minima for general rates and to levy those minima in respect of individual valuations. This occurs when one or more of the valuations considered separately is below the amount which attracts the minimum general rate, whereas the sum of the valuations considered together would attract total rates at a lesser figure.

In addition, the concession in value provided for in the reforms introduced by the amendment Act earlier this year in relation to land which has been subdivided by survey, and which is used exclusively for purposes of a single dwelling-house, can only be granted in those cases where the lands are contained in one valuation. This concession is therefore denied to such landowners until the amalgamation occurs at the time of the next general revaluation. This should be corrected, and the Bill therefore provides that the Valuer-General be given the power to amalgamate and amend valuations on lands which adjoin and which become the subject of common ownership in the period between revaluations.

In order to explain additional amendments in this Bill, it is necessary for me briefly to set out the history of some sections of the present Act with respect to valuations and the time when they come into effect.

When the Valuer-General undertakes the revaluation of a local authority, he must make an estimate as to when that revaluation will be complete. He has to do this in order to determine when the valuation notices would be ready to issue to landowners and the copies of valuation rolls forwarded to the local authority concerned and the Commissioner of Land Tax. These valuations will then usually have force and effect from the 30 June next following issue of notices to owners and supply of rolls to the local authority.

The Act prescribes certain time limits for these actions to be undertaken. In the first place, the Governor in Council is required to fix the date of effect for any valuation made by the Valuer-General. The Act requires that the Governor in Council proclaim this date in the Government Gazette at least 12 months prior to the date of effect. There seems to be no reason for such a long period. Six months is adequate notice and may have the effect of enabling an additional shire valuation, perhaps for a small shire, to be brought into the programme if the resources become available within the department to carry out an additional valuation.

Another requirement that should be changed is the requirement that valuation notices issue and rolls be supplied at least eight months prior to the date of effect. The eight-month requirement was enacted at a time when new local authority valuations ordinarily came into effect on the 30 June following the issue of valuations. They came into force automatically unless there was a special decision of the Executive Council to postpone. In circumstances where the valuation came into force automatically, it was obviously desirable to have a lengthy period between issue of valuations and date of effect to enable objections, and possibly appeals, to be finalised, otherwise the local authority concerned could find itself having to make very substantial rate refunds to successful objectors and/or appellants for which

it might not have budgeted. Eight months was regarded as a necessary period to allow these objection procedures to be completed.

For practical reasons, however, this scheme did not work as planned, and in 1971 a provision was inserted into the Act whereby, if outstanding objections or appeals amounted to more than 10 per cent—a provision which was amended in 1974 to 15 per cent—of the valuation of that local authority, the date of effect of that new valuation must be postponed. This provision has the desired effect of preventing a local authority from being financially embarrassed by being called upon to make substantial refunds of rates.

It is therefore considered that it is now unnecessary that the eight-month requirement be retained, and the Bill proposes to shorten the period to three months. The more lengthy period is serving no good purpose and is merely imposing an unnecessary burden upon the Valuer-General and his staff and interfering with a sensible distribution of the work-load.

In dealing with this group of provisions, I have referred to the section of the Act which prevents the valuation of a local authority area from coming into effect if the amount of undetermined objections or appeals exceeds 15 per cent of the amount of the valuation of the local authority area. In general, this provision has worked well and no longer are local authorities embarrassed by having to make substantial unexpected rate refunds. However, the Act was not drawn having in mind the fact that a local authority might wish to have the valuation come into force despite some attendant inconvenience.

One example is the Shire of Kolan. The date of effect has been postponed from 30 June 1976 to 30 June 1977 and, because the amount of undetermined appeals is 24 per cent of the new valuation, further postponed to 30 June 1978. This has also happened in some other shires, and the result is that when the new valuation finally does come into force and effect, it is almost out of date itself and the local authority presses for a revaluation almost immediately.

I believe that many local authorities in such circumstances would prefer that a new valuation come into force and effect notwithstanding that the amount of undetermined objections or appeals exceeds 15 per cent. Being aware of the disputed valuations, they would be able to make provision in their budgets for possible rate refunds. In the case of Kolan, if the new valuation had come into force and effect, the cattle lands would have received relief from the new valuation, while cane lands would have received an increase, as that valuation has taken account of the fluctuations in these industries as against one another.

Nevertheless, I do not consider that the local authority or the Valuer-General should have the final say in whether or not a new

valuation, where the amount of undetermined objections or appeals exceeds 15 per cent. should come into force and effect. The Bill provides that where a local authority makes application that a valuation should come into force and effect in those circumstances, and the Minister so recommends, the Governor in Council may determine that the prohibition preventing the valuation from coming into force and effect shall not apply. The Bill also provides that any application in this regard made by a local authority will not be considered unless it is made not later than the 7th June (or if that is not a working day, the next working day thereafter) preceding the 30th June, being the date from which the local authority wishes the valuation to take effect. This, of course, is to allow the Minister time to make the necessary recommendation and for the Governor in Council to take the necessary action before the 30th June.

The proposals contained in the Bill, which I have just outlined, are reforms that are in urgent need of implementation. My Cabinet colleague the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads and I are continuing to undertake a review of the present valuation and rating system. It is our earnest hope that we will be able to improve on this system, and the present Bill goes some way to achieving this end. I therefore commend the Bill to the Committee.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER** (Archerfield) (8.14 p.m.): Let me say on behalf of the Opposition that any amendment to this antiquated and totally inadequate Act is welcome. In all fairness, I must say that the present Minister has had the responsibility for looking after this portfolio for only the past 12 months.

The Minister extended to me the courtesy of providing me with a copy of his speech notes before he rose to speak. When one gets the speech notes only an hour or an hour and a half before the Bill is due to be introduced, it is a little difficult to absorb them. Nevertheless, he extended the courtesy, and I thank him for it.

Under this Government's inept administration the land valuation system is a matter of great controversy and crippling injustice for a good number of land-owners in this State. The land valuation system in Queensland is completely outmoded, obsolete and a public scandal. I am sure that most honourable members on the Government side would agree with me.

**Mr. Frawley:** Rubbish!

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** It is not rubbish at all. What I am saying is cold, hard fact. It rather surprises me that the honourable member for Murrumba should make such an inane interjection.

The Bill should alleviate the position to a small degree, although I would like to see more teeth in it. Valuation in Queensland falls into three broad categories:

- (1) areas where there are predominantly urban valuations;
- (2) areas where there are predominantly rural valuations;
- (3) areas where there is a close mixture of urban and rural valuations.

Of course, spiralling inflation is skyrocketing the price of land. In 1975 under the last revaluation Brisbane land increased in value by 81.88 per cent. The effect of the revaluation is supposed to be redistribution of the rate burden among all landholders equitably. However, this outrageous system of valuation means that in Queensland ratepayers in areas of slow growth benefit and those in areas where valuations are rising fast pay a larger proportion of rates. That is just another cold, hard fact of life in Queensland.

The great discrepancies in valuation defy logic and reason. In short, for ratepayers it is a case of valuation roulette. Last year valuations soared by many hundreds per cent. As far north as Port Douglas land-owners suffered an increase of 3,100 per cent. One ratepayer's land increased in valuation from \$1,120 to \$24,500 overnight. That may seem incredible, but I make it quite clear that what I am saying is spot on and 100 per cent correct.

**Mr. Tenni:** Are you talking about Port Douglas in my electorate now?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I am talking about Port Douglas in the electorate of the honourable member for Barron River. Of course, he does not know where it is. He has never been there.

**Mr. Tenni:** Why don't you keep out of my electorate?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I would be quite prepared to keep out of his electorate if I were quite certain that he was looking after it effectively, which of course he is not.

**Mr. Jones:** He won't have much opportunity.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** As a matter of fact he won't have much more opportunity. Probably the interjections he is making tonight are his valedictory interjections. It is quite obvious that in the next Parliament one of the faces missing will be his.

A Mossman ratepayer wrote to me complaining about an increase in the valuation of his property by 800 per cent. In the south of the State we saw values in the Moreton area—we all know that the Moreton area is probably the largest growth area in Queensland—go up by almost 3,000 per cent. In a letter a ratepayer complained to me that he had no sewerage and no town water on his property yet its value went up from \$380 to \$15,000. That sounds incredible, but it is true. I know the Minister is not going to deny this when he replies.

**Mr. Frawley:** Who wrote that?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** My old friend from Murrumba once again interjects. I just said who wrote the letter. As a matter of fact the person who wrote the letter is a paid-up member of the National Party. He was so dissatisfied with the representation he was getting from the local member, the honourable member from Redlands, that he wrote to me. He knew that if he wrote to me he would receive some satisfaction. Of course, he has received it. The rates in his case were virtually for the right to breathe air. The method of rate calculation bore no rhyme or reason.

Property valuations on the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast have soared up to 20 times greater than the previous valuation. In the Noosa and Burrum Shires the average valuation increased by more than 600 per cent. On the Gold Coast the increases are astronomical. The Gold Coast residential valuation was based on rates of 1900 vacant blocks of land between 1974 and early 1976. As a matter of fact, I know that the honourable member for Murrumba owns several blocks of land there and was seriously embarrassed by the sudden, savage valuation increase.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I rise to a point of order. I should like that remark to be withdrawn. I find it offensive. I own no land on the Gold Coast. I own 60 perches at Caboolture.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the honourable member to accept that explanation.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Of course I accept the explanation. Perish the thought that I would think otherwise.

In other words, the absurd criterion was based on the market values of slightly more than 5 per cent of the 32,000 assessments in the area. That provided the basis for determining the unimproved capital value of the land.

It is quite clear to me that this system needs urgent overhauling. Why should such a small number have such a potent effect on values? I shall be very interested to hear the Minister's reply to that at the end of the debate.

It is quite obvious that a large number of people, including retired couples who wish to spend their last years in peace, are being plagued and hounded by this bombshell valuation for rating based on modern sale prices.

Even the Minister for Local Government and Mains Roads, as reported in the "Gold Coast Bulletin" of Saturday 18 December 1976, acknowledged the anomaly in having the unimproved capital value of the large number of blocks in the area governed by the sale of a very small number of blocks. The Minister for Local Government—and

far be it from me to speak of him disparagingly—is certainly not regarded as the champion of the little man. Nevertheless, in fairness to him, he saw fit to make these remarks and this Minister should take cognisance of them.

People are being rated off their properties. Valuations—which are extraordinarily inaccurate—are bringing ratepayers all over the State to boiling point. Bombshell valuations of a virtually unprecedented range of fluctuation make it almost impossible for local authorities to strike an equitable rate in terms of an increasing number of people meeting the increased costs.

After the 2,000 per cent to 4,000 per cent increases even one of the States' most experienced valuers called for differential rating in Queensland. Mr. V. L. Brett, who spent more than five years in Ghana and New York with the United Nations as a technical adviser on valuations, supported calls for a revision.

**Mr. Lowes:** He did the valuation for Mason Dixon, if I remember correctly.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I did not know Masons had any valuations. It was his brother? I am sorry.

Mr. Brett suggested that possibly a top-level expert committee, established by State Cabinet, should investigate the unimproved valuation system. That makes good sense and it is certainly worth the Minister's consideration. I ask him to take it into consideration.

**Mr. Elliott** interjected.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** It is rather odd to hear that interjection from probably the most junior and lightest of light-weights in State Parliament. He is rather a pleasant fellow but so far as ability, drive and verve are concerned, he is probably the most inept. It is just as well he represents a safe National Party seat. If he did not he would probably have to spend more time looking after his business of providing trailers or something for farmers in his area.

How does one assess inner-city properties, such as Queen Street properties, and other commercial sectors in the inner-city area? For a typical property auction on a Saturday morning it may be fine to assess the value where there are many allotments, but where the unimproved value is clouded by other factors and where there are few sales of vacant land to use as a yardstick valuing is extremely difficult.

Mr. Brett spoke of the need to combine the unimproved-value system with the differential-rate usage. This, unlike the present single rate levy of so many cents in the dollar of the property valuation, would vary from property to property depending on its use or potential use. Thus in Brisbane, or even in the electorate of Ipswich I should

imagine, this could be linked with the existing town plan zoning system. The Minister for Health would be quite aware of that. The use of outmoded valuation methods for the more than 800,000 properties throughout Queensland's 1 700 000 sq km, administered by 131 local authorities, has created a monstrous mumbo-jumbo in injustice in rate payments. In my opinion—and I am on record as saying this publicly—there is a very strong case for the amalgamation of local shires.

**Mr. Gunn:** That would go over well in the country.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Whether it does or does not go over well in the country, it is a cold, hard fact of life. It is common sense. The Laidley Shire is certainly much more competently run now than it was some years ago when the honourable member for Somerset was chairman of the shire. Nevertheless, the amalgamation of a lot of these shires is common sense. A lot of people in local government, irrespective of their political affiliations, agree with me.

**Mr. Gunn:** Your policy wouldn't be centralisation, would it?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I don't think the honourable member for Somerset would be able to spell it. I don't think he knows much about centralisation, let alone how to spell it. I do feel that this is long overdue and, no matter which party is in power in Queensland, in the near future we will see the amalgamation of a lot of local government shires.

**Mr. Frawley:** Is it right that you drew up the course for the rider for democracy and got him lost?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I suggest the honourable member does not respond to that.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I certainly want to address the Committee through you, Mr. Hewitt.

I draw the Committee's attention to an obvious display of incompetence and ineptness by the Minister for Survey and Valuation. I am sure the Minister would be rather disappointed if at some time in my speech I did not mention him in rather disparaging terms. I am glad he is listening. However, I would suggest that when I am making my oration, instead of speaking to his colleague the Minister for Health, he should take cognisance of what I am saying.

When the Gold Coast valuations increased by up to 4,000 per cent, the Minister, in the "Gold Coast Bulletin" of 12 November 1976, after attempting to dodge a meeting of con-

cerned citizens at the Senior Citizens Hall at Palm Beach, said that the valuations were not likely to be wrong. He said—

"Frankly, however, I will be surprised if there are many cases of inaccuracy. Our people are highly qualified professionals. They have taken a lot of care with the Gold Coast assessments."

However, within a month the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads (Mr. Hinze)—that champion of the little man—was questioning the valuations. Lo and behold! On 9 April 1977 Mr. Hinze said that thousands of ratepayers in 43 local authority areas could apply for reductions.

Another anomaly in the system is that, because valuation is based on the number of sales made, valuations for many flood-affected properties have not taken into account difficulties such as floods and land needs. The mistakes are obvious. In the Land Court the valuation of a 59-acre Slacks Creek property owned by Mr. T. S. Dennis was reduced from the official assessment of \$88,500 to \$20,650. That might sound far-fetched, Mr. Hewitt, but if any honourable member doubts the truth of what I am saying he only has to look at the Government Gazette and he will find that what I am saying is correct.

The cold hard facts of life in the field of land valuation is that most people don't object. I think we have to take into consideration that the average person in the street, when legal actions are mentioned to him, goes to water. I know that one of the most prominent legal people in Queensland, the honourable member for Brisbane (the future Liberal candidate for Wavell) would agree with me. People become frightened because they are not used to this type of thing. Of course, they do not object. In actual fact, they are kept ignorant of their rights by a myriad of bureaucratic laws and legal mumbo-jumbo. If more people objected, the absurdity of the present system would be exposed.

Mr. John Crabb, a former councillor of the Calliope Shire Council, which is in the electorate of Port Curtis, found that his rate bill jumped from \$220 to more than \$59,000 after the valuation of 59 undeveloped acres which are near the Gladstone airport and which, I am told, the honourable member for Murrumba had shares in. The value of the land was supposed to have jumped by 26,850 per cent. I think you would agree. Mr. Hewitt, as a very erudite member of this Parliament, that this Government boasts that it is a free-enterprise Government. However, in its incompetence it is doing all it can to destroy incentive and enterprise. As a contrast, the A.L.P. Government in New South Wales has introduced a rate relief scheme that Queensland could well afford to follow. I recommend this as being worthy of consideration by the Minister for Survey and Valuation. The Wran Government intro-

duced a scheme whereby councils now have power to waive or defer payment of all or part of rate charges. I think this makes common sense and merits some form of investigation by the Minister. Councils may levy different rates on separate types of areas or types of property, and rates may be indexed to stop sudden leaps after valuations. Councils are also limited to a ceiling of 12 per cent per annum in rate rises.

Another problem which has become quite prominent in recent years has been due mainly to the decline in rural industries because of the neglect by the National Party and the Country Party not only in Queensland but throughout Australia. It is where there is a mixture of rural and urban properties and there is a demand for these urban properties for speculative development.

One area that lends itself to this type of development is the city of Warwick. It is a very fine rural city. Because it is only 100 miles from Brisbane, many people have purchased land in and around that city and these conditions have arisen. If something is not done there, the people will certainly be discriminated against when they purchase their land.

This has occurred in areas such as Boonah. I am sorry that the honourable member for Fassifern is not in the Chamber. It has happened in Laidley. I am glad that the honourable member for Somerset is in the Chamber. It has happened in Bowen and in the coastal areas south of Cairns which are not used for sugar-cane production.

**Mr. Frawley:** What about Caboolture?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Candidly I am very concerned about Caboolture. I am worried that if there is not some sort of electoral justice at the forthcoming election, Caboolture will be represented by a donkey.

What happens under the present valuation system is that the rural lands are kept at or below the previous valuation. The valuations of the urban lands around the town are increased tremendously, sometimes even over 1,000 per cent. When the local authority decides to levy rates in circumstances such as this and is bound by the law that rural rates have to be less than urban rates, it is obviously faced with a serious problem. In conclusion—to fix a rate in the dollar to extract an equitable amount from the rural ratepayers, it places an unbearable burden on the urban ratepayer. While this is basically a rating problem in its solution, it is nevertheless a by-product of the archaic valuation system under which we work in Queensland.

This Bill will do very little to solve the problem that exists in this State. As I said in my opening remarks I think it is a step in the right direction. It is the second Bill that the Minister has introduced in the space of six months. I feel that he should give

more consideration to this matter. I do not suppose we will see much more done in the next couple of months of this Parliament but I can tell the Minister quite bluntly that when this Parliament meets next year under a Labor Premier in Tom Burns, the appropriate Minister for Survey and Valuation will introduce a Bill into the House with far more teeth and verve than this one.

**Mr. TENNI (Barron River) (8.33 p.m.):** I rise to support the Minister on the introduction of the Bill. However, I should like to give some of my views on the present Valuation of Land Act and to comment on the remarks of the honourable member for Archerfield.

I agree with the proposals in the Bill. However, the Minister said there are certain anomalies. I go a little further and say that the whole Act is one very big anomaly. Inflation has caught up with it. As we all know, inflation was brought about by the honourable member for Archerfield's great friends Gough Whitlam and his crew when they were in power. Inflation caught up with the Act two or three years ago and has progressively made the Act a darned sight worse. It is a crippling Act. It is not worth two bob. It is not worth the paper it is written on.

The Minister is trying to improve the Act. The only way to improve it is to throw it out the door and introduce a completely new one. That is absolutely essential.

However, I shall turn to the provisions outlined. I go along with the Minister's remarks concerning a person who purchases an adjoining property or two properties. However, I do not go along with his reasoning. The main reason for purchasing an additional property these days is that the new-style homes that are being constructed will not fit comfortably on the old-type subdivisions which provided 16 or 20-perch allotments. A person therefore purchases the block next door or the blocks on either side to obtain an area that can be landscaped and on which to build a home of the type that is being built today. I agree with the Minister that such land should be combined to make one block and should be valued as one block. I also agree that people who buy adjoining land should not have to wait for the Valuer-General to revalue the area. I congratulate the Minister on his efforts to introduce some sensible ideas into the Act.

With zoning or town planning by councils and alterations that take effect after valuation, one of the biggest problems that I have encountered in the period of almost three years in which I have been a member arises from the creation of high-rise areas. A person who has a 16-perch block of land and a small house suddenly finds himself in a high-rise area and his rates go sky high. At the same time, some councils say, "You cannot build a high-rise building

on a 16-perch block." A person in this position therefore has to pay enormous rates for a block of land that can have nothing but a single-storey cottage constructed on it.

I have spoken about this matter to the Minister and he has assured me that the proposed provision will overcome this problem. If it does, it will mean great savings to the people concerned. I could name a pensioner in my electorate who, because his land is in a high-rise area, is paying rates of \$880 a year on a 16-perch block. That is quite unreal. I therefore again congratulate the Minister on this move.

However, I stress the point that the present Act is not worth two bob. The Bill will help but the only way to overcome the present situation is to change the system completely. I do not profess to be an expert in this field and I do not know how the Minister should go about making the change. But he has a department with officers who are supposed to be experts and it is about time that they got to work and framed an Act that would suit the people whom the Government supports. I suggest that the Minister give a direction to his departmental officers to do something about the complete Act. The whole thing is anomalous and talking about the Valuation of Land Act is, for me, like waving a red rag at a bull.

I turn now to what the honourable member for Archerfield tried to say. He is a funny guy. He reminds me of a record player; when it has a record on it and it is plugged in and switched on it will play for ever. Provided he is standing up and has his little pieces of toilet paper with notes written on them by someone else, the honourable member for Archerfield can keep talking for ever. But he must have those little bits of toilet paper with the notes on them. Of course, they are not worth two bob and he does not know what he is talking about but that is the sort of comment that he makes.

The honourable member said that I did not know what was going on in the Douglas Shire. Let it be known, seeing that he does not know, that I am fully aware of what took place concerning new valuations in the Douglas Shire. I am completely aware of the situation because I happen to be a landowner in that shire. Perhaps I can afford what happened to me but there are many pensioners in the shire who cannot afford it. The Valuation of Land Act as it stands at the moment has made things very sad and sorry for many people in the Douglas Shire, particularly in Port Douglas and the Mossman/Newell Beach area.

**Mr. Houston:** Doesn't the shire council give rebates?

**Mr. TENNI:** I have an interjection from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Which electorate does he represent? I cannot say, and apparently he does not even know himself. He has been in this Parliament for a

long, long time; he was Leader of the Opposition for years, and if he does not know the answer to the question that he has asked, I am not going to tell him. He can find out for himself. I know the answer because I do my job. He should get the fellow who writes the little notes on toilet paper to send some to him, just as he sends them to the honourable member for Archerfield. That is the best thing he could do.

**Mr. Frawley:** That's why he's not the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. TENNI:** He is not now. No wonder they got rid of him. Anyway, the one they have got is not much better. He has toilet paper notes, also.

The fact is that the valuation system has to be completely changed. I have spoken to the Minister on numerous occasions about this and he is looking into it. For the sake of the people of this State I sincerely hope that the Minister's officers sitting in the background get to it quickly before it affects more people as it has affected the people of the Douglas Shire and many other shires. People living on 24-perch blocks in the Douglas Shire are paying enormous rates yet we have farms of 100-odd acres paying very little more. That is just not right.

**Mr. Houston:** That is a matter for the council, and you know it.

**Mr. TENNI:** The honourable member does not know what he is talking about. We do not have divisions in that council. We strike a rate in the dollar in the Douglas Shire Council.

**Mr. Houston:** You want to do something about that.

**Mr. TENNI:** Thank you very much. I will let the people of Mossman know that the former Leader of the Labor Party is suggesting that the Douglas Shire be faced with increased costs because he—these are the sort of people who are supposed to be representing Queensland—says that the council should do something which will increase costs which in turn will have to be paid by the ratepayers of the Douglas Shire. I thank the honourable member very much. Next week-end when the Minister for Works and Housing is in Mossman opening a brand-new wing of the Mossman High School all the people will be there and I will make a point of telling them that the former Leader of the Labor Party, Mr. Houston, says we should burden the ratepayers of the Douglas Shire with increased costs by having different rates in the dollar for different divisions.

**Mr. Frawley:** More inflation.

**Mr. TENNI:** That is right, more inflation, just like we got from his friend Whitlam. He backed Whitlam, so did Tom Burns. They backed him all the way to create the

inflation we have at present. I am pleased to hear that and I will make certain that I let the people know—

**Mr. Greenwood:** The Labor Party understands multiplication better than it understands division.

**Mr. TENNI:** The Minister is dead right.

**Mr. Warner:** You can bank on Burns but they don't know what to do with him.

**Mr. TENNI:** That is right. It is also said, "See Queensland before Tom burns it."

I have stressed that I do not like the present Act. I am certainly not interested in what the honourable members for Archerfield and Bulimba tried to say—they do not know what they are talking about—but the people will be interested to know what they have said just the same, because what they are suggesting will be detrimental to them. As the honourable member for Archerfield did say, the Minister has introduced two amendments to the Act in the last six or eight months. I believe he will come up with a completely new Act, something that is not detrimental to the people of Queensland. It should be something like what the Act was many years ago before inflation took effect. It was a good Act then. I certainly hope this is attended to very quickly.

**Mr. LOWES (Brisbane) (8.44 p.m.):** When introducing the Bill the Minister said that this is the second time within the year that he has brought forward amendments to the Valuation of Land Act. I believe that in doing so he has acted in the very best interests of the landowners in this State and wishes to give relief where there may have been some hardship. I believe he has done it for this purpose and not for the purpose suggested by the shadow Treasurer, the honourable member for Archerfield, who said the Act is antiquated and inadequate. That is not the case.

I listened to the honourable member for Archerfield for some time, and he was talking about teeth. I thought he was under the impression that the Bill amended the Dental Act. The Valuation of Land Act is not an Act which requires teeth. It is not a penal Act. On the contrary, it is an Act which requires equity and good sense to prevail, and for those reasons the Minister has seen fit to amend it for the second time in 12 months. He is to be commended for recognising these things and being prepared to act so promptly.

The honourable member for Archerfield, in talking about valuations—and valuations that he suggested in one part of his argument were inflated—demolished his own argument by then referring to them as the market price. I must say that in the years of practice I have had, I cannot think of one occasion when land-owners who have complained about their valuation—and many

of them have, under the Valuation of Land Act—would have been prepared to accept the valuation of the Valuer-General as the market value of the land. There was a time some years ago when the valuation was substantially below market price; but in recent years the valuation as fixed by the department has become a very realistic figure. Realistic as it is, I still cannot remember an occasion when the valuation of the department has exceeded the market price, and I think that is a tribute to the officers of the Minister's department.

The honourable member for Archerfield went on further and showed that he probably suffers from a lack of understanding of the principles of the Act and the purposes for which it is on the statute-book. He showed a complete misunderstanding of the purpose of valuation when he referred to rating, and this, I am afraid, is a rather popular misconception that the honourable member shares with many members of the public. It is regrettable, but it is none the less mistaken. Whatever a ratepayer may have to pay for general rates has only a correlated connection with the Valuation of Land Act.

I think it was the honourable member for Barron River who made some reference to the linchpin of it, which is the rating established by the local authority. I believe that all honourable members would be aware of that and would not attempt to confuse any constituent or landholder into thinking that the valuation of land is the cause of his getting a rate notice for a sum that he might find something of an embarrassment. The question is "What is the rating?", not so much, "What is the valuation of the land?", and I come back to my earlier premise that the valuation of land and the value fixed by the department has, to my recollection, never been in excess of what would be the true market value of that land.

This raises some of the basic principles of valuation of land and of the funding of local government. Should local government be funded by rates assessed on the valuation of land? There would be many people in the community who could put forward a very strong argument that that should not be the basis of it, that perhaps there are other means by which local authorities should be funded.

In the period 1972 to 1975, the then Prime Minister of Australia suggested that local governments should be funded directly from Canberra. That is a concept which is contrary to the whole of the history of Australia. It is a concept that completely ignores federation and the federal system. It is a concept that has centralisation as its very principle. It is a concept that no doubt comes about because of a wartime expedient measure of 1941, when the States passed to the central Government the responsibility for the collection of taxes. Since that time, almost two generations of electors have

grown up to believe that the Federal Government is the tax collector. Again, nothing could be further from the truth. The fact that it may have been a matter of wartime expediency does not make it any more correct now.

I certainly would be opposed to any suggestion that local governments should be funded by a central Government in Canberra. We must never lose sight of the fact that the States have a sovereign right. The Federal Government is a creature of the States, and so, too, are local governments. We created them; we made them. Although there may be some misconception as to the source of the money and to whom it belongs, I suggest that we should always go back and see what the situation was prior to 1941. The States virtually own the money. They have the right to the money and they are therefore entitled to direct the central Government as to how it should be disbursed. If the local authorities are to be funded by another Government, surely that Government must be the State Government.

Then comes the question of how the State Government is to raise the funds. It might be by way of land tax. Land tax is not a very popular tax. No taxes are. Land tax at the present time—both State and Federal—does not bring in a great deal of income. The revenue from land tax is minimal, but it may be another way to fund local authorities.

It is unfortunate that so often the ratepayer comes to believe that his rates are the direct result of what the Valuation of Land Act prescribes. The Valuation of Land Act has a very worthwhile and important function. The principles of the valuation of land are principles which are frequently under review. I believe that at the present time we are in a state of flux. There have been quite violent fluctuations in the valuation of land right through the State. Some of the instances referred to by the honourable member for Archerfield may well have been the result of different demands that are being made for land in various places.

Parts of Queensland are still being discovered or rediscovered. The demand for choice blocks of land in areas which were previously virtually uninhabited has resulted in higher prices being paid. People who have money available to buy particular sites are prepared to pay what may be in the minds of others unreal prices. The prices paid should not become the basis for valuing adjoining land. When land is being valued I know that the valuer goes out and inspects the property and then he returns to his office and has searches made for comparative land sales in the area. So often is the comparative sale the basis of his valuation, supported only by an inspection of the land.

The valuation of land in Queensland is based upon unimproved value—land in its natural state. The Minister referred to the way valuations of land can vary in accordance with the use being made of the land. I have no doubt whatever that the courts, valuers, indeed all of us, have come to accept that when valuing land not only should we take its unimproved value into consideration but also we should take into consideration the use to which that land is being put and the use to which it may be put. So there are further considerations which must affect the valuer, and there are further possibilities that the Minister and his officers might well entertain at a later date when amending this Act, and consider whether the old established system of valuing land in its natural state, and fixing an unimproved value, should give way to some other form of valuation.

I remember a former Minister referring to site valuation and factors such as the improved condition of the land, that is, land as it is, fully developed, with kerbing and channelling and houses or other buildings on it—buildings that can produce income. Perhaps the income-producing potential of the land may well be a factor in fixing valuation. What is the situation when a person owning land with great potential is not utilising it to its fullest? Perhaps the ultimate use of the land could well be a consideration. Use of land was referred to by the Minister. That must always be taken into consideration in addition to the value of land in its natural state.

The Minister referred to the prospect of landholders being entitled to compensation following the introduction of the modified town plan for the Brisbane area. He cited the case of a landholder's property being reduced from \$30,000 to \$10,000 and said that the landholder would be entitled to compensation. The Minister should not let this opportunity pass without bringing to the attention of all landholders what their rights will be when the modified town plan becomes law. Landholders will have rights to compensation. They should look to their rights and follow up every opportunity to obtain adequate compensation for any loss suffered.

The honourable member for Archerfield is just about to suggest to me that whilst one person may suffer a loss others may derive a benefit through increases in the valuation of their land because its best use changes. That would give an improved income-earning potential. It is not possible to imagine that if someone enjoys an enhanced land value—to reverse the Minister's figure, a block of land valued at \$10,000 could increase in value to \$30,000—he should pay \$20,000 into some fund to compensate another. In fact the landholder pays for the enhanced land value by way of increased rates and land taxes.

I am assured by the Minister that when it comes to amending valuations between general valuations the Valuer-General will be entitled to make a change in valuation whenever application is made. Again, all landholders should be made aware of this. When an amalgamation takes place landholders should apply forthwith to the Valuer-General to amend the valuation. In that way they would gain the benefit intended by this amendment.

The amendment is for the benefit of all landholders. It is based on good sense and equity. It comes about mainly because of the great fluctuations in land valuations but also because of the use of computers. As a result of using computers the Valuer-General has been able to process many more valuations in a shorter period. Therefore the reduction of the restrictions in time from 12 months to six months, and from eight months to three months, are quite reasonable.

I accept also that the increase from 15 per cent to 24 per cent is not unreasonable, particularly in these days when combined appeals are lodged. It is not unreasonable to imagine that quite often combined appeals are lodged simply for the purpose of frustrating the taxing powers of the local government.

All in all, I believe the Bill is well intended, and it is in keeping with the change of attitude and the change in the law and thinking on valuations. Therefore, I support it.

**Mr. HOUSTON** (Bulimba) (9 p.m.): I was prompted to speak for a few moments on this Bill by the illogical outburst by the member for Barron River. I asked the honourable gentleman a simple question about whether or not the Port Douglas local authority gave rebates to pensioners. He went into a tirade of abuse and virtually said that I did not know what I was talking about. Perhaps I do not know as much as the experts in the department—I do not profess to know that much—but I certainly know a lot more than the honourable member for Barron River. The facts are that Queensland has 131 local authorities, some of which are controlled by administrators. In the main, each has its own way of handling the position of pensioners—people about whom we are all concerned. Some local authorities give greater rebates than others. All I was interested in was whether or not that particular local authority at the moment gives a concession to pensioners.

**Mr. Tenni:** Don't you get too—

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I don't want to hear the honourable member now. He had his opportunity and has shown his ignorance. It does not matter from now on.

The thing that interested me greatly in the Minister's speech was his last statement, in which he said that he and the Minister for Local Government—

"are continuing to undertake a review of the present valuation and rating system, which I have previously referred to as the best of a bad lot."

Although I go along with most of his statement, I do not know that it is the best of a bad lot at all. I question the wisdom of continuing the system that was introduced back in the days when it was considered that landholders were the wealthy people in society. The Minister knows as well as I do that the idea of rating people on land valuation was based basically on ability to pay, just as are all other forms of taxation. Because of the change in ownership of land, instead of only the wealthy being owners of land, today people from the various income groups in our society are owners of land. Because of that, ability to pay has now lost a lot of its meaning.

I cannot agree with the honourable member for Brisbane, who says that he does not want to have any significant help from Canberra. I believe that we must have greater help from Canberra. I also believe that the present legislation relating to the valuation of land and its connection with rating has to be considered and amended. We have to find a system whereby pensioners and other people on low incomes are not penalised because of some development that has taken place in the area.

All of us who are concerned with old, established areas know of people who are quite content with their land valuation. They do not want any change and they are very happy there. They went to the outskirts of Brisbane because it was quiet and peaceful. They might even have had a quarter of an acre or more of land. Overnight some land developer comes in, buys up the land, cuts it into parcels of land—usually of 24 or 32 perches—and sells it. Because of the development of the land, it is now seen in its cleared form as quite acceptable for building blocks. Houses are built and land prices skyrocket. The poor devil who bought a large area some years ago because he wanted peace and quietness or to run a cow or a couple of hens finds himself with a very high land valuation and rates far in excess of his ability to pay. That is the type of person the honourable member for Barron River is not interested in at all. He is not interested in helping those who find themselves caught up in this type of valuation. But I am concerned and I have no doubt that the Minister, through his advisers, is also well aware of this problem.

Whether we like it or not, land valuation has a tremendous influence on the welfare and lives of the people in our community. Some shires have divisions. They can separate land valuations because of land use,

particularly between rural and home allotments. The Government does not have to do very much to achieve that situation elsewhere. All it needs is an amendment by this Government, which has been in power for 20 years. It should amend the Local Government Act to allow this to take place, without increasing the number of councillors or other persons. Divisions are there as a guide. When it comes to the welfare of our people, the Local Government Act or any other Act must be brought into line with the situations that prevail. Action has to be taken when rural values are out of step with home-lot values. The two can be divorced and one can be used to assist the other.

When succession duties were abandoned by the Government with the support of the Opposition, land valuations were not important as the basis of assessment for that form of taxation. However, they are still important to the Federal Government. No doubt the Federal authorities, when they are looking for their succession duties, take those values as being of great importance. It has been found by experience over the years that the Valuer-General's valuation of land has a fairly direct relationship to the sale value of the land, provided the time of valuation was not too long before.

I think it is true to say that the valuation of land by the Valuer-General's Department has three functions associated with it. It is associated with land tax, but it is gradually being reduced and eliminated. Even then it is only the higher valuation brackets that are involved. Another is rates. I completely agree with the Minister that it is this aspect that the average person comes in contact with. One of the problems with previous valuations in my electorate has been the change in relativity within an established area. This is the main reason for or background to objections to land valuations.

I suggest to the Minister that his officers find a better phrase than "unimproved value of land". We have all seen areas with gullies. They certainly would not present themselves as building sites. But land developers come in with bulldozers and turn them into areas for subdivision into acceptable building blocks with all modern amenities attached to them. If that land is to be valued at unimproved value, what do we go back to—the days when the land had gullies, or the day when it was first purchased as building blocks? I know that this is a ticklish problem. The householder with this type of land should not be disadvantaged compared with a householder whose land valuation has increased over the years because of the activities of local authorities. The use of unimproved value results in anomalies.

I have spoken to people associated with land valuation. They all agree that in reality it is impossible to go back to the completely unimproved state when the land

had trees, shrubs, water-holes and everything else on it. I suggest that the Minister look for a more realistic basis.

I do not think it will alter to any extent the relative value of lands owned by different land-owners. I do not think it will affect the relative value of town lots, pastoral lands and land used for primary and secondary industry. It will not alter the relative value of any lands, provided the base is common to the lot. The Federal Government, in its valuation for taxation purposes, will have to fall into line with our ideas and not worry about whether we make any alterations.

Another aspect of land valuation that has worried me for some considerable time is the use of land and the value that is put on that use. So far I have not had a ministerial explanation that satisfies me of the extent to which productivity capacity, and the financial return from that capacity, is taken into account when land, particularly that used for primary production, is valued. I know that experts can look at land and say how much it is capable of producing from either livestock or cereals. But do valuers then take into account the return from that production? If they do, a span of more than two or three years would have to be taken. It would have to be over a period of five or more years.

Unfortunately in built-up areas there are now secondary industries that are very close to household land. Another new problem for metropolitan land-owners is the development of freeways. I suggest to the Minister that when a freeway is built through an area it should not be necessary to wait the full period of time before that land is revalued. I suggest that if a freeway is built through an area, or there is a major change in road use as the result of a decision of a council or government, the effect should be the same as if the change was brought about by ordinances. I feel that if a property has a valuation that reflects its quietness and seclusion and the comfort of living in that area and a Government department or a council decides to change the traffic density in that area, the resulting affect on the land, and consequently its sale value, should be automatically reflected in its valuation.

My main purpose in speaking was to try to enlighten the honourable member for Barron Rivers on the need to be aware of the difference between—

**Mr. Tenni:** Barron River.

**Mr. HOUSTON:** The honourable member is getting very agitated. It is getting a little late so I will excuse his outbursts. He would serve his electorate and the State better if he devoted his time to attempting to improve the Act rather than simply condemning the whole legislation. He would do better to make constructive suggestions to help local authorities do what I know they want to do.

They have to get money but they do not want to overcharge any section of the community, nor do they want to make any section carry a burden that is unjust. If the honourable member does that, he will be a better member of this Assembly.

**Mr. FRAWLEY** (Murrumba) (9.14 p.m.): I think this is a genuine attempt by the Minister to amend an Act that has caused a great deal of hardship and has created many problems, especially in the shire of Caboolture, which is part of my electorate. Before I became the member for Murrumba, the shire of Caboolture was valued as at 31 December 1970 and notices of valuation were issued on 29 October 1971. The new valuations increased the rateable value from \$9,156,380 to \$22,174,780, which was an increase of 142.17 per cent.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** It was a bit steep.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** It was not unreasonable, but unfortunately some properties were valued far in excess of comparable properties either next door or in the same area. This caused me a lot of problems. As I said, these valuations came into effect before the State election of 29 May 1972. I inherited many of the valuation problems in the shire of Caboolture.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Under those circumstances you were fortunate to be elected.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Yes; I will agree with that. I was very fortunate to win the seat of Murrumba in 1972 by a mere 270 votes, but I would like to point out that in 1974 I won by 4,760 votes; and I can say in all modesty that that was not due entirely to the great swing against Labor.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Why did you run away from the electorate and stand for Caboolture?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I will have to digress slightly, Mr. Hewitt. Almost five-sevenths of the proposed new seat of Caboolture is one half of Murrumba at the present time. I know this is over the head of the honourable member for Archerfield, but I will try to explain it very simply. I am trying to represent that portion of the seat which I now represent.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You would agree, though, that Murrumba is a marginal seat and one that is likely to be won by the A.L.P.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! We are not discussing electoral boundaries.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** No, I do not think so. I think if my brother gets the nomination for the National Party he will win Murrumba in a lay-down misere. I was side-tracked, Mr. Hewitt, but getting back to this important Bill—the new valuation for the shire of Caboolture was scheduled to come into force on 30 June 1972, but, because at that

time under the Act if the undetermined objections for appeals exceeded 10 per cent, then that valuation could not be implemented and thus the valuation was postponed to June 1973, and again till June 1974. In the intervening years I copped a flogging from everybody in that area who felt he knew something about valuations and, funnily enough, not all from people who thought their valuations were incorrect. As I said before, this came about because the Act stated that if there were 10 per cent objections the valuation could not be implemented, and fortunately or unfortunately, whichever way we look at it, Australian Paper Mills own 11 per cent of the shire of Caboolture and their objections held up the implementation of the valuations. But in 1974 when this Parliament increased the figure from 10 per cent to 15 per cent, the new valuations came into force on 30 June 1974.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Did that affect your shares in Australian Paper Mills?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I do not own a single share in Australian Paper Mills—none at all. While I am on my feet I would like to put something straight. The "Sunday Sun" a few weeks ago published an article saying that a member of Parliament who owned a lot of land up at Morayfield would be rubbing his hands together because the S.G.I.O. was going to implement the new Act. I made some inquiries about this around the place. Naturally I suspected some members of the Labor Party of dealing in land, and I came up with a couple of names, but I am not quite certain it was them. All I own anywhere in the shire of Caboolture is 60 perches of land. I do not own any land in any other part of the world, so anyone who tries to lay it on me that I am dealing in land is not telling the truth.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Don't you think it could be a prominent member of the Liberal Party?

**A Government Member** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I am not going to be distracted any more by Opposition or Government members, because I have a very important submission to make here tonight. As I said, many people in the shire of Caboolture objected to their valuations. Unfortunately a lot of people did not object and those who did not object were genuinely under the impression that they did not have a leg to stand on and it was a waste of time objecting. Of course, since then they have found out otherwise.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** That is what I said in my speech. You are only pirating my speech.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I am not pirating the honourable member's speech at all. Eventually all the objections were heard and

nearly all the objections by Australian Paper Mills—I have got all the results but I do not have them with me—were upheld. Of course, that caused quite a few people to come in and have something done under section 13(2) of the Act. The then Minister for Survey and Valuation, Mr. Lickiss, listened to deputations from the Caboolture Shire Council, the fruit growers, the dairy farmers at Mt. Mee and a lot of other people, and to the best of his ability he corrected a lot of the anomalies that existed because of this valuation. I sincerely hope that something like this does not occur again.

I was interested to hear the Minister say that section 14 of the Act allows the Valuer-General to include in the one valuation several parcels of land which adjoin. This has happened. It cannot be done between revaluations, and the minimum period is five years and the maximum eight years. So it is quite possible that somebody could own adjoining blocks of land for up to eight years before he could get any benefit from amalgamation and a reduction in the valuation.

In my opinion, this is brought about by the minimum general rate that many councils are imposing. Honourable members who have good memories might remember that when an amendment of the Local Government Act allowing councils to charge a minimum general rate was brought down in this Chamber, I objected and said that it should be fixed at \$50. My objections have been proved valid, because the Gold Coast City Council has put its minimum general rate up to \$140; the Caboolture Shire Council has put its minimum general rate up to \$110, whilst I believe that the Redcliffe City Council, of which my brother is mayor, still has a minimum general rate of \$50.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** It shows that he is behind the times.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** He is not behind the times. He has a genuine concern for the people in that area, and the Redcliffe City Council does not poltice its ratepayers as do some other councils.

People who have bought one or two blocks of land in the various seaside resorts in my electorate are, of course, paying the minimum general rate of \$110 a block on adjoining blocks, whereas if those two blocks were amalgamated and valued as one block, it is definite that the total valuation would be less than double the minimum general rate. In other words, they would not be paying \$220; they would be paying more than \$110, but well under the \$220; in fact, they may be paying only \$110. So the amendment to this Act that the Minister now proposes to introduce is fairly valid. I think it is right that the Valuer-General should be given the power to carry out a fresh valuation when somebody buys an adjoining block of land

and wishes to amalgamate it with his block. If you sell part of your land now, Mr. Hewitt, a fresh valuation certainly is given out very quickly; in fact, the ink is hardly dry on the transfer papers before you get your new valuation. Therefore, I think it would be quite reasonable to work in the reverse manner.

The honourable member for Archerfield stated that not many people objected to their valuations; they could not put up with all the legal mumbo-jumbo and other procedures. Nevertheless, with conferences arranged with representatives of the Valuer-General's Department, the ratepayers can go and speak to these people without any difficulty, and many of them have done so.

It is interesting to note that the city of Redcliffe had its fifth area valuation recently. Notices have been issued and the new valuations are supposed to take effect from 30 June 1977. It is 6½ years since the last valuation took place, and there were 500 objections, give or take a few, in the city of Redcliffe. I think that showed that people who thought they had a genuine right to appeal did so.

The valuation of the particular block of land that I owned in Redcliffe was increased by an enormous amount.

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

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Just a minute. I sold my land in Redcliffe. I lived in Redcliffe until about 30 June. I shifted on 1 July this year, and I sold my house in Redcliffe three weeks after that to the fellow who plays on the right wing for Redcliffe and who might score the winning try next Saturday.

**Mr. Wright:** Did you make a small profit?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I sold it for a reasonable price. That is who I sold my house to—the bloke who plays on the right wing for Redcliffe—and I moved to Caboolture and I still own only the one block of land.

The valuation of the block of land that I owned at No. 3 Longland Street, Redcliffe, did increase. But if my house had been burnt down or destroyed, I would not have sold for that valuation.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** If it had been burnt down, you would have set it alight.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** It was a brick home; it would have been very difficult to burn it down. I firmly believe that most people would not sell their land for the valuation of the land. In fact, a person complained bitterly to me about his valuation round Burpengary.

**Mr. Simpson** interjected.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Answering the interjection by the honourable member for Cooroora—I know one or two, but most people would not. I am giving an example of a person

at Morayfield who owned a fair-sized parcel of land and who got permission to cut off a couple of 10-acre blocks. He came to me complaining bitterly about his valuation. Well, I found out that he had recently sold one of the 10-acre blocks for much more than the figure at which the remainder of his land was valued. Good heavens! In a case such as that, he could not be genuine in complaining about his valuation when only recently he had sold a portion of the land for a hell of a lot more money.

Many genuine people do have a right to appeal against their valuation; but certainly quite a number of people try to get in on the act and have their valuation reduced. Another person in Caboolture complained bitterly about his land being almost worthless and had his valuation reduced. By what I regard as poetic justice the council resumed his land. He was then in a quandary as to how he could claim fairly big compensation for the land. He had already told the Valuer-General's Department how crook that land was. In fact he couldn't do a thing about it, so he tried to stop the council resuming the land. Fortunately the council won the day. Those are examples of what happens with valuations.

The Minister has pointed out that this is the second amendment to the Valuation of Land Act he has introduced since he took over the portfolio. He is making a genuine attempt to do something. There are many anomalies in the Valuation of Land Act, particularly in respect of land held by primary producers. Land should never be valued for future use. Land that is presently being used for primary industry should not be revalued on its potential. I have always felt that the land held by a farmer who has a milk quota is certainly valued with an eye to the potential value that the milk quota gives to the land. I feel that a milk quota has a very definite effect on the valuation of a farmer's land. It is written into the Act that any sugar-cane land makes a difference. I am quite certain that the land held by a person who has a tobacco quota is valued in accordance with that quota. I have heard claims to the contrary, but I don't believe them. I believe all those people have their land valued on its potential for raising an income.

I am sure that the Minister will take a further look at the Act. I am confident that this will not be the last amendment to this Act that we will see the present Minister or other Ministers submitting.

**Mr. POWELL** (Isis) (9.27 p.m.): I congratulate the Minister on introducing this amendment to the Act, which causes a great deal of consternation and problems to people when a shire is revalued. I compliment the Minister on his attitude, and I compliment his officers for the way in which in the area I serve they have been able to assist people in a very friendly and courteous manner.

The Isis Shire was recently revalued, following which there were a tremendous number of objections, particularly from the Woodgate area. All I wish to raise tonight is the problem that occurs in a shire where a coastal area that has become very popular contains only a very small amount of land which is given an extremely high valuation. Some blocks of land in the Woodgate area are given valuations above those of large acreages. The problem is how to rate them so that people on small residential blocks on the sea side of the town of Woodgate do not have to pay astronomical rates.

We must acknowledge the fact that many people who live in coastal townships like Woodgate, Hervey Bay, Burrum Heads and Toogoom in my electorate and others adjacent to Bundaberg have gone there to retire on very limited, fixed incomes. There they wish to spend the rest of their lives in as much comfort as they can. Then along comes a revaluation, and because of the popularity of the area the valuation of the land they own rises astronomically. The council then strikes a rate, and the rate charged on the popular coastal areas seems to be out of proportion to that charged on other areas in other small towns in the local authority area. So those on fixed incomes are once again caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. They have found the place they wish to retire to, but because of land valuations they cannot afford to stay there.

I know that the Minister is looking at this, and I know that the local authorities recognise the problem that occurs in this area. I just hope that as the Minister looks to further amendments to the Act he will be able to find some way by which we can overcome this problem confronting people on fixed incomes who live in small coastal areas so that the rates they are charged will not be out of proportion to those in the rest of the local authority area in which they live.

A problem in rural communities arises if the person making the valuation values a piece of land on its potential for production in an industry which at the time of valuation is very buoyant. Within six or seven years—between two valuations—the buoyancy of the industry may change. The beef cattle industry provides a prime example of that. The valuation is then out of kilter with valuations in the rest of the shire. That is the problem facing us and the Minister. I compliment him and his officers once again on the excellent way in which they deal with people who have to face these problems.

**Mr. HALES** (Ipswich West) (9.31 p.m.): It is a pity that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is not in the Chamber. What he stated so very eloquently is close to what I would like to have said. It is not often that I agree whole-heartedly with a member of the Opposition, but on this occasion I certainly do. His references to pensioners and so on were absolutely true.

The crux of the problem relates to the funding of local government. Somehow or other the people in government, whether it be State, Federal or local government, have to come to a different arrangement to fund local government. I believe wholly and solely that either local government or the ratepayers will go bankrupt. It is beyond my comprehension how many people on fixed or low incomes can afford to pay the rates levied these days.

I sometimes think that many of us who own our own homes are really renting them from the councils. I have had numerous conversations with the honourable member for Surfers Paradise, who is quite eminent in the local authority field. We have formulated four or five ideas on how to overcome the problem. One concerns the imposition of a poll tax. This method should be investigated because it would be one way of funding local government. Another method would be to get more funds from Canberra.

Like the honourable member for Murrumbidgee, I wonder whether the minimum rate was a good idea. In many instances the minimum rate struck is not the right one. I am sure that when a minimum rate of, say, \$140 is struck, many landholders feel that they should let the council resume the land for arrears of rates.

My main reason for speaking tonight was to refer to the effect of the 1974 floods in Ipswich and surrounding areas, particularly the Moreton Shire Council area. Many of my friends had problems with the Valuer-General's valuations after the 1974 flood. The Ipswich City Council's decision not to adopt the 100-year flood level but the 20-year flood level was right and proper. Any land in Ipswich under the 100-year flood level is virtually worthless because people will not buy such vacant land at the moment. In 20 years' time they may have forgotten what happened. One very good friend of mine at one stage of the game was in the very fortunate position of owning three homes quite close to the river. They were rented and paying for themselves. He was making a little profit, which was paying the rates and so on, but when the floods came the three homes went down the river. This unfortunate gentleman and his wife now have three vacant blocks of land and three mortgages that he has to meet. Because his assets were above a certain figure, he received no assistance from the Government.

**Mr. Casey:** With this Government?

**Mr. HALES:** The State Government and the Federal Government, which was the Whitlam Government. It happened with both Governments, I will agree.

What happened there was that he could not get any monetary alleviation whatsoever; so he is still paying off the mortgage and

paying high rates. When a revaluation takes place, the high rate will be alleviated to some degree.

I had quite a deal of argument with the Moreton Shire Council over its attitude following the 1974 flood. It had an erroneous attitude for quite some time—probably 18 months or two years. It took the view that the 100-year flood level should be adopted, even though subdivision had been allowed years beforehand in that area. Developers had subdivided the property and sold it. Many young owners not only from here but also from overseas—more particularly those from New Guinea who wanted to settle around the Brisbane area—were stymied for 18 months or two years in their efforts to build on those properties because the Moreton Shire Council would not grant approval. For about two years those young property owners were seriously disadvantaged. And, incidentally, the cost of building homes escalated dramatically in that time.

In my view the Moreton Shire Council should have been taken to task more than it ever was. Fortunately, common sense prevailed and now those young owners can build on their properties. The Moreton Shire Council should have adopted the 20-year flood level, because its decision caused tremendous economic burdens for those young property owners. That should never have happened. I congratulate the Minister on that amendment to the Act.

A further amendment is the provision that will alleviate the rate burden on a person who buys a property next door to his own, for some reason best known to himself. We have a real and a tremendous problem with the rates that are levied by councils today. I pay \$400 rates a half year. I publicly say to the member for Mt. Isa, who complains about the rates in Mt. Isa, that I would like him to come and live in Ipswich. It is probably a well-managed city, but we have very high rates.

**Mr. Casey:** Surely you don't have to pay \$400 a year for a drink of water, like they do in Mt. Isa?

**Mr. HALES:** They have problems there. I am just illustrating the problem that we have in Ipswich. The honourable member for Mackay might have problems in his area. I am just saying that I wonder how people on fixed incomes in my area can afford the rates charged by the Ipswich City Council. I have no ready answer, but I hope that this Government, the Federal Government or anybody who is brought in on this committee of the Minister for Valuation and the Minister for Main Roads will come up with some better idea for funding local councils, because that is absolutely necessary. As far as I am concerned, it is vital that that happen very, very soon.

Once again, I thank the Minister for bringing in these amendments to the Act. They will be a great help to many people in the Ipswich and West Moreton areas.

**Mr. SIMPSON** (Cooroora) (9.40 p.m.): I commend the Minister on the introduction of another Bill to amend the Valuation of Land Act and on bringing it down at a more respectable hour than a quarter to 6 in the morning, as was the case with the previous Bill.

The amendments give the Minister more scope to overcome the existing valuation anomalies. The proposal in connection with by-laws and certain town-planning regulations that have disadvantaged properties is important. If people think that they are going to receive an overnight cure and a sudden change, they are in for a rude awakening because in actual fact valuations are arrived at from sales. Sales do not reflect changes made in town plans for some time; in some cases years. That is where many anomalies arise.

I cite the latest valuation in the Maroochy Shire where a new town plan has come into operation. It provides that land cannot now be subdivided into five-acre blocks. However, the valuers came along and said, "This parcel is 25 acres of land. Therefore it will be valued at five times the sale price of five acres." In some cases the valuer valued 30 or 40 acres of land at \$30,000 to \$40,000 whereas in actual fact it could not be sold for any more than half that amount. I am pleased that the Minister did look at some of these valuations and have them drastically slashed.

There are other by-laws and things that disadvantage the valuation of land. At Munna Point, flooding was caused in my opinion by the building of the new Noosa Sound. It altered the hydraulics and the level of water there. The result was that property was flooded. Many people say that flooding is a natural phenomenon. But when 30 and 40-year-old trees die, even the trees think it is a hard deal, too. There again, that can be disguised over a number of years if we go back to the criterion of the sale price of land. When a person is involved with rising values of land, it might depress them for a little while. In fact, in a situation like that, sales no longer take place so that the valuer does not have them as a basis. He has to wait until there are some sales or use sales that have occurred in the nearest location. So that we have a masking of the effect of what might be taking place, and when people forget, as was instanced by the honourable member for Ipswich West when he referred to what could happen following the flooding in Brisbane and Ipswich, sales will occur again.

The other amendments covering the valuation of more than one block and giving the Valuer-General scope to make valuations between the normal times are commendable, as are those relating to computers and to the time for applying the valuation for local government use. The amendment covering the period before which the valuations cannot be used if the amount of

undetermined objections exceeds 15 per cent of the valuation of the local authority area is a wise one because local authorities, in this high inflation period, could find themselves in an embarrassing financial position if they did not keep abreast of costs. They need this option and this ability to use the valuation or make an assessment of what they want to do.

Perhaps we should reduce it to 10 per cent and give the same option as local government had before. That might be more worth while, as some councils might prefer not to proceed. We could return to a stable situation where we do not have high inflation and it might be an option that would be more in line with the requirements of the local authority in those circumstances.

The other matter of concern is that people whose land is valued expect to be dealt with fairly by the Government in that valuation. I have found that the majority of people think that as the valuation was made by a Government department, and as it is not the Government's job to have a go at them, the valuation must be correct. But it does not always work out that way. When many objections are made to valuations, I believe it is incumbent on the Government to see that no mistakes have been made in the valuations. That is all very easy to say, of course, but the whole business of land valuation is an extremely difficult estimate and often valuers have to substantiate their values in court.

I think the whole timing of valuations, sales and by-law changes will have to be looked at closely by the Valuer-General.

**Mr. Greenwood:** I just hope that the Maroochy Shire Council does not change any of its by-laws or ordinances in the immediate future.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** There are many problems there now without any more changes to by-laws.

Many by-laws, like some of those of the Maroochy Shire Council, are brought in because councils see good rural land cut into small allotments. They say, "We can't have this 2-acre business. We'll make it a 5-acre minimum." Land then starts to go off in parcels of five acres. The council then says, "We must stop this. We'll make it a 10-acre minimum." Then land goes off in 10-acre blocks. The council then looks to the Valuer-General and says, "Will you blokes help us here by clobbering a few of these people with high valuations? That will bring them into gear." I am sure that most councils would not seriously think of doing that but at times it does make one wonder.

The ability to pay rates is behind much of the concern over land valuations. We find an easy way out of the situation by saying, "Let us finance local authorities by having a larger percentage of personal income tax returned to them." Although I have advocated this, I believe this is an

over-simplification of the problem. If we spread taxation over a number of areas, we can be fairer to the whole community. In other words, personal income tax, with some form of pay-as-you-go consumer tax and some form of property tax, places on the community a more average system of taxation.

But when taxation gets out of all reason and beyond ability to pay, to the point where a pensioner, for example, finds himself confronted with a situation that virtually worries him or her to death, it is quite wrong and we as a Government should look hard for ways of easing the problem. In some such situations we could lessen the worry of concerned people, because they have in their property probably sufficient equity to pay their rates for the rest of their days. But it is the thought of suddenly having to pay high rates that either forces them to sell or worries them so much that it affects their health. Unfortunately, when these old people ask a valuer, "What am I going to do? On a pension I can't pay the high rates that will come from this high valuation", the valuer often says, "You can always sell out and go somewhere else." I do not think remarks like that are in the best interests of those old people.

Then we have the case of people who provide an essential service. There is provision in the Act for farmers in rural areas to have their properties valued according to the sale of similar primary-producing land. In other words, we have some consideration of ability to pay, and I say "some" because even in that situation councils still need revenue to run their shires and if we continue with the same funding situation land-owners could well find themselves priced off their properties because of high rates.

I believe we as the Government must look at a new type of agreement whereby the land-owner and the local authority, with the Government as a validating partner in the agreement, arrive at a set amount that that property will contribute to that local authority. I believe in that way we could look to the future with some security for those primary producers who are, at the moment, fearful of being pushed off their properties or not being able to hand them down to their sons and daughters. If that happens expertise will be lost to the industry and productive properties will be lost. Then we will end up much worse off in the production of essential food and other primary products.

I might also bring to the attention of the Minister something which he might consider in future amendments to this Act, and that is a provision which allows a right of appeal to a court to people who, for reasons outside their control, have not had a valuation notice delivered to them. As I understand it, at the moment people have no such right under the Act and the Minister can in fact only ensure that a valuation is made, and

if that is not agreed to that is just bad luck. In other words, people do not have the normal right of appeal even if through no fault of their own they do not receive their valuation notice. Those are just a few of the problems people have to face in connection with the Valuation of Land Act.

Of course, another obvious problem crops up in land development. If a person develops, say, 20 urban blocks in a development, he is required by the local authority to install sewerage, power and water and build roads and so forth. The valuer then comes along and values within the property pegs. The blocks might sell for, say, \$10,000, but the cost to the developer might have been \$7,000 and therefore the unimproved value should be something more like \$3,000 a block. But instead it is \$10,000 less something, say, \$9,500, that then becomes the unimproved value on which that person pays rates for the services which are normally provided such as roads, kerbing and channelling. So in that situation they are being disproportionately rated. I know there are problems associated with this and some occur because the Valuer-General is trying to stick to a rigid formula that runs very close to sale prices.

In my opinion the present unimproved values operated far better when valuers took into account that sales in a very large number of cases are to blind purchasers and under special circumstances that are not an indication of the across-the-board value of properties. In the past they used to say, "Right, we will take three-quarters of the sale price and put that across the board", and most property owners were happy to accept that valuation. The valuers are usually quick to come back and say "Oh, but you wouldn't accept that if it were a case of resumption." In my opinion, I would say "Yes, I will accept that. That is fair enough. But you must also see that you pay for disturbance and, beyond doubt, give adequate compensation." So in fact the situation would be covered up to what might be the highest price that could be found for that land, and that is an argument which I think can be better met. We would end up with a valuation that was acceptable to more people.

I will give an example for the benefit of those who may think that the present system is perfect and that human error does not come into it. A person in the Noosa Shire received a valuation about which he was very concerned. He appealed against it, but because he did not lodge his appeal in time it was not allowed and he was told, "No, you have been properly valued." In the next shire he has a piece of land some of which was resumed for road purposes, and he has been offered half the price that the Valuer-General has in fact put on the remainder of the land. That shows that the system is not perfect and that people have some right to expect that they should be dealt with more fairly by Governments. If we adopted a more humane

attitude and looked at the situation more conservatively, we would in fact be dealing more fairly with land-owners.

I commend the Minister for bringing forward these very worthwhile amendments to the Act. They will give the Valuer-General far more scope to act fairly and overcome anomalies that arise between valuations.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (9.58 p.m.): I have listened very intently to speakers from both sides of the Chamber, and I begin to wonder what we are doing here, Mr. Hewitt. Regardless of the amendments that this Assembly makes to the Valuation of Land Act, there will always be the anomalies that the Minister is trying to overcome. Regardless of the efforts that he makes and the efforts that the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads makes, the problems of local authorities will not be resolved by revaluation of land in this State. It has been shown in every other Australian State and every other country that raising local authority revenue by simply basing a tax on the value of land is not the answer. Perhaps I should say "the unimproved value of land", or "land as Captain Cook saw it", which really is a joke.

Although the Minister is endeavouring to overcome difficulties that have arisen since the amendments were made in March this year, again it is quite obvious that further amendments will have to be made in a very short time unless the system is changed. I ask: why should local authority taxes be based in the main on land values assessed by a central authority? Surely the time has come for the Queensland Parliament to rethink its approach to revenue-raising for local authorities in this State. The anomalies are self-perpetuating, and they always will be while we use the present system of reassessing the value of land in particular areas. They will be self-perpetuating as long as local authorities have the right to review their by-laws and their town plans, and so it will go on and on and on.

I suggest to you, Mr. Hewitt—and I think all honourable members will agree—that a ridiculous and unfair situation arises when an aged couple suddenly find their rates increased, in many cases by 100 per cent or 150 per cent, because down the road a retail chain has bought out six or seven houses for a new complex. It is often inconvenient to have such a huge complex nearby with all the traffic and the noise. Yet the old people suddenly find that their rates have gone up. Surely this is wrong. It has been suggested by the Opposition spokesman that we ought to rethink the policies on the basis of capacity to pay. I heard other speakers tonight mention the same thing. I agree with those suggestions. I suggest that we need to come back to some kind of joint policy based on land usage and capacity to pay. I suggest to the Minister that the time has come for an in-depth inquiry—not that we get public

servants to investigate over and over again, but instead we ask all interested people in this State, from the academics to those involved in local authorities and the ordinary ratepayer—the consumer in this field—to put forward suggestions as to how this age-old problem might be overcome.

I believe that we ought to start with a system of taxing based on land usage. I would advocate that there should be a base rate for the residential block, with a right of challenge or a right of concession because of the multi-problem nature of an area or because of the incapacity of the land-owner to pay. This would be very simple. If a base rate were set and the person who owned the land or lived on the property were a pensioner, that person could apply for a concession. This happens at the moment in that a pensioner can apply for the 25 per cent or the 30 per cent concession, or in some cases up to the 50 per cent concession, and that concession can be granted by the local authority.

**An Honourable Member:** Some don't give any.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Some don't give any, and that is probably one of the greatest problems.

After all, it is not the unimproved value which is determined. The valuation is based on what the next block sold for last week or the year before. It is based on the going price of land, which breaks down the whole principle of the original Act. If we used this base rate for a residential block, and built from there, maybe we could get somewhere. We could follow on to a special accommodation-type classification so that all those houses that are used for rental, for flats or for multi-units could have a higher taxing system than that applied to people who live in their own homes. There ought to be a business and industry tax applied to those pieces of land that are used to earn income.

**Mr. Gygar:** Are you going to put up taxes again? You want to increase tax on industrial land?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** They call the honourable member Charlie Chaplin, and I can understand why. He is the type of fellow who ought to be in silent movies because he never says anything that is worth listening to. Let him get his walking-stick out and go hobbling up the passageway as he normally does.

There has to be a policy on capacity to pay. I am surprised that the honourable member who just interjected believes that pensioners should be ripped off in the way they are in so many local authorities. I am surprised that he is prepared to say, "As long as you can pull the dough out of the pensioner, let's do so." I would have thought

that most honourable members would have said, "Let's consider the inability of the pensioner to pay."

**Mr. GYGAR:** I rise to a point of order. I did not say what the honourable member suggested. I was drawing attention—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is no point of order, but I verify the fact that the honourable member did not say it.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I am not quite sure what he didn't say, but we all know what he implied.

I suggest there ought to be a system whereby land usage and also the capacity to pay are considered. I base this on the fact that a person who has a piece of land on which there are flats—

**Mr. Alison:** An academic theory.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** It is not an academic theory. We know how the honourable member has fiddled some books before today. It would be a sad day if he ever become the Treasurer; but that is by the way.

If this system were used, and we had a tax based on the residential nature of a piece of land, or on the productivity of a piece of land, then the land-usage question would certainly be considered. When it comes to units and flats more people would be using the facilities that the local authority supplies. If businesses are using a certain area they benefit by the services supplied by the local authority, and also they have a greater capacity to pay. This ought to be considered. We could go on and on amending the Valuation of Land Act; we could do it year in and year out without resolving the problem. This has been said not only by me but also by the Minister in charge of this legislation and by many Government and Opposition members. The time has come for a change and I suggest it will take a courageous person to effect the change.

At the moment the States are anxious about what Fraser federalism means—that is, they carry out their responsibilities and tax according to their responsibilities. If we were to make a similar suggestion to local authorities we would virtually be saying, "You will have to impose the taxes. If we give you a system of income based on residential blocks, or an accommodation tax on flats or units or a business and industry tax, you will have to consider some sort of tourist or vehicle registration tax." Let us at least consider these matters, because our present system is creating a self-perpetuating problem. Something must be done about it. I urge the Minister to seek advice from other people involved in this area, that is, those associated with local authorities and the ratepayers generally.

**Hon. J. W. GREENWOOD** (Ashgrove—Minister for Survey and Valuation) (10.7 p.m.), in reply: It is a widely accepted principle that the last shall be first. Mr. Hewitt, I beg to exercise that principle in dealing firstly with what the honourable member for Rockhampton said. He made some useful comments and asked why local authorities should base their revenue-raising on unimproved valuations. The only point on which I join the issue with him is the implied suggestion that there was something either novel or unusual in the thesis he proposed. I recall to his mind the fact that, in my opening remarks to the Committee tonight, I said that my colleague the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads and I were undertaking a fundamental review of problems associated with the financing of local authorities, particularly the use of land ownership when measured by the unimproved value of such holdings as a method of apportioning rate payments within the community.

**Mr. Wright:** I acknowledged what you are doing.

**Mr. GREENWOOD:** I assure the honourable member that this fundamental questioning to which he referred is very much under way. We do not hesitate to obtain as much advice and assistance as we can from other parts of Australia and other parts of the world. But at present I am totally unconvinced that the interests of the people of Queensland would be advanced one iota by the trouble, expense and delay of any sort of a royal commission, committee of inquiry or any other expensive and long-winded method of arriving at conclusions which are quite capable of being arrived at by the combined expertise of our Public Service and the members of this Assembly.

Ordinarily I would deal with the contributions made by the various honourable members tonight. Many of their contributions were very substantial. However, in view of the lateness of the hour I think there is some merit in the last not only being first but also last. I propose to deal with the contributions made by other honourable members in the course of my preliminary remarks at the second-reading stage.

Motion (Mr. Greenwood) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

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

The House adjourned at 10.11 p.m.