

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 1978**

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## TUESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 1978

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—

Queensland Film Corporation, for 1977-78.

Queensland Fisheries Service, for 1977-78.

Licensing Commission, for 1977-78.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

#### Orders in Council under—

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

Racing and Betting Act 1954-1978.

Police Act 1937-1978.

River Improvement Trust Act 1940-1977.

#### Regulations under—

Motor Vehicles Insurance Act 1936-1975.

Queensland Marine Act 1958-1975.

Rules under the Coal Mining Act 1925-1976.

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### DEATH OF SENIOR CONSTABLE JOHN CONNOR; OPPOSITION ATTACKS ON POLICE FORCE

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines, Energy and Police) (11.4 a.m.): I would like to make this ministerial statement to the House in order to circumvent any wild accusations or allegations that might be made regarding the death of a Queensland police officer in Mareeba, North Queensland, on 15 October this year. All that is known so far is that Senior Constable John Connor was found dead with a gunshot wound.

I am sure that all members will appreciate the grief of this police officer's family and friends at his death and it would be totally presumptuous of me or anyone else in this House to make any assumption at this time as to the cause of his death. However, I would suggest that, before the Opposition make any allegations on this matter, it examine the damage that has resulted from its recent attacks on the Queensland Police Force.

The latest attack, made by the member for Archerfield (Mr. K. J. Hooper), actually resulted in a Queensland police officer, acting as an undercover drug agent, having his investigations exposed and having to be transferred to other duties for the safety of himself and his family. The A.L.P. in this expose not only wrecked the drug investigation

efforts of Queensland police officers in this case but also defended a known drug dealer who subsequently failed to appear in court to answer the charges relating to his case.

As I have said on many occasions in this House, if any Opposition members have information on drugs and drug-dealing, then they should let the Queensland police know. They should not go behind their backs to defend drug dealers or give information to the House that could jeopardise the lives of police officers.

I could also mention the case of the so-called Watergate raid in Brisbane, brought up by the member for Rockhampton, which would be laughable if it were not so lamentable. The break-in at the Surveyor-General's Office was carried out by a small-time, petty criminal who certainly was far removed from any James Bond character.

Regarding the question of drug investigation by police officers in North Queensland and what evidence has been given to the Australian Royal Commission on Drugs—I would point out that this evidence has not been disclosed, as the commission is still sitting, and I am not aware of what its findings will be. I do know, however, that an investigation was conducted during 1977 and early this year into allegations that some police officers were involved in illegal dealing in drugs in North Queensland. On 16 May this year the file on the investigation, which was carried out by the then Superintendent of the C.I.B., Superintendent Dwyer, and Inspector Stephenson, was forwarded by the Commissioner of Police to the Solicitor-General for advice on any further action that could be taken. This action of forwarding the file was taken after Commissioner Lewis discussed the matter with Deputy Commissioner MacDonald, Assistant Commissioner McIntyre and other senior advisers.

On 1 June, the Solicitor-General personally advised that in his opinion there was insufficient evidence available to justify instituting any proceedings and, further, that he was unable to suggest any additional avenue of investigation. Upon receipt of this advice and after further discussions with his senior officers, the commissioner decided that, in the best interests of the Police Department and the police officers referred to in these allegations, they should be transferred to other duties, and this direction was issued on 10 June.

I am sure that all members of the House will appreciate that false allegations are frequently made against police officers in an endeavour to inhibit them in the performance of their duties. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that great care is exercised and careful investigation carried out before any disciplinary action is taken against police officers. However, I can assure all honourable members that the policy of this Government is to crack down hard and heavy on any drug-dealing whenever and wherever it may occur.

BOARD OF NURSING STUDIES; POLICY STATEMENT

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (11.8 a.m.): Honourable members will be aware of the major changes that this Government has made in the field of nursing and especially in the area of nurse education. This Parliament has led Australia in the establishment of a special statutory authority, the Board of Nursing Studies, which is charged with the responsibilities of approving nursing courses, accreditation, entry requirements and a continuous review of nursing education.

For the information of honourable members, I table a copy of the initial policy statement of that board, and I have arranged that all members receive a copy of the document. Further copies will be available from my office.

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

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. IWASAKI PROJECT, YEPPON

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

(1) In view of the disgraceful manner in which the Iwasaki franchise agreement was rushed through this House between midnight and dawn in mid-May, what is the reason for the delay in Mr. Iwasaki's signing the agreement?

(2) Are we to assume from reports that Iwasaki now proposes a monorail and international airport as part of the venture and that the agreement is being held up while he attempts to negotiate even more generous concessions from the Queensland Government?

(3) If so, what are the new concessions at present under secret negotiation?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Queensland International Tourist Centre Agreement Act 1978 requires that the agreement be signed by both parties before 31 December 1978. Arrangements have been made for the signing to take place before that date.

(2) The agreement clearly specifies permitted land uses in the proposed resort area.

(3) No new negotiations between the proponent and the Government have been initiated.

2. ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRIES FORCED TO RELOCATE

**Mr. Burns**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Industry and Administrative Services—

(1) What assistance does his Department of Commercial and Industrial Development provide to Queensland industries that are forced to move as a result of planning or zoning changes?

(2) As many such industries find in these difficult economic times that without some financial assistance, they would be unable to finance the cost of new premises and relocation expenses, will he give urgent consideration to assisting these established industries so that they do not have to close and sack their staff?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) Financial assistance under the Industrial Development Act is normally provided by way of a guarantee for the establishment or expansion of pioneer-type manufacturing industry. It is not usual to provide financial assistance merely for relocation purposes. However, provided a degree of expansion is involved and the application meets the other criteria of the aforementioned Act, it is possible to consider financial assistance for an industry that is relocating.

Furthermore, we would be happy to consider allocating a site on one of the Crown industrial estates administered by the department for an industry that has to relocate.

3 & 4. PUBLIC SERVICE CLASSIFIED POSITIONS

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

(1) What is the highest classification within the Public Service?

(2) What is the salary for this classification?

(3) How many officers are on this classification and in which departments are they serving?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) The highest salary in the Public Service is that paid to the Co-ordinator-General, namely, \$1,590.60 a fortnight.

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

(1) What is the total number of classified positions within the Public Service?

(2) Will he list, department by department, the number of classified positions in each department?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) There is no single listing of all classified positions within the Public Service. The classified positions of the Public Service (excluding teachers) are, however, listed in Part 3 of the schedule to the Public Service Award—State, the most recent reprint of which appeared in the Queensland Government Industrial Gazette of 25 September 1975.

As the honourable member will also be aware, the numbers of employees in each department (including classified public service positions) are shown in the "Estimates of the Probable Ways and Means", which was recently tabled in the House.

#### 5. AVOIDANCE OF CONTRIBUTION TO ROAD MAINTENANCE

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

In relation to the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act assented to on 8 June and, in particular, to Part II, what is the extent of the liability under section 8A (i) and (ii) as it would apply to any person or persons assisting other companies to arrange such corporate structures in South Australia, which would be used to avoid contribution to road maintenance?

*Answer:—*

The honourable member will appreciate that questions of liability for offences are dependent upon the facts in relation to a given case and the evidence available to support those facts. In these circumstances, it is not possible to give any worthwhile answer to the honourable member's question. If, however, the honourable member is aware of any specific instance indicating that a breach of the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act may have occurred, he might place these facts before the Commissioner for Transport for investigation and the obtaining of a legal opinion from the Solicitor-General.

#### 6. CONTROL OF HEMMANT LAND BY PORT OF BRISBANE AUTHORITY

**Mr. Burns** asked the Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to a circular letter forwarded to residents of Hemmant in the Lytton electorate by a group called Industrialise Hemmant Group, P.O. Box 49, Morningside, and, if so, is it true, as stated in the letter, that the Brisbane City Council has no control whatsoever over that area of Hemmant north of the railway line, that this is controlled by the Port of Brisbane Authority and that it has complete say as to what happens in the area and does not recognise the Brisbane City Council as relevant to the area?

(2) Is he aware of any legal precedents that indicate, as stated in the letter, that the Brisbane City Council is not even entitled to charge rates in the area?

(3) Is it also true, as stated in the letter, that for any sale to proceed in the area the Port of Brisbane Authority has to consent to it and that at all times it has the right to resume one's land?

(4) Do the Port of Brisbane Authority Act and the Harbours Act provide that property can be "resumed for a very low price before you know it", as stated in the letter?

(5) Will he investigate and report on other claims in the letter, which has frightened many elderly residents by portraying the port authority and the Brisbane City Council in a highly emotional way as bodies out to take the land and homes from local residents by force, if necessary?

*(Originally asked on 19 October 1978)*

*Answers:—*

(1) I have not previously seen the letter circularised by the Industrialise Hemmant Group. It is full of inaccuracies and unfounded allegations. For example, the statement that the Brisbane City Council has no control over Hemmant land north of the railway line is completely false.

(2) I am not aware of any impediment to the council's levying of rates on land in this area apart from the exclusions which have general application, for example, unoccupied Crown land and lands held for special purposes, such as church land.

(3) The consent of the port authority is not required for any sale to be made. Land required for the purposes of the port authority can be resumed only with the approval of the Governor in Council and compensation is payable under similar statutory provisions to those applying in respect of resumptions for other public purposes.

(4) See answer to (3).

(5) The Brisbane City Council, supported by the Port of Brisbane Authority, is pursuing the question of having the Hemmant lands rezoned for the benefit of established industries and existing residences. Such rezoning will be aimed at ensuring that future development in the area is controlled so as to meet the desires of the majority of property owners in the area to be rezoned. Obviously, each owner will not have the same plans for the future use of his property and the survey has been undertaken with a view to ascertaining the majority view. Such action can only be to the overall benefit of the people concerned.

NOTICE OF QUESTION

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all honourable members are concerned at the growth of drug-trafficking, and so that no-one can be falsely accused or embarrassed as a result of questions I place on notice, I seek permission to hand to the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police a sealed envelope containing a list of persons relevant to certain sections of my question.

(Leave granted.)

*The honourable gentleman then proceeded to give notice of his question.*

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CONFERENCE OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTERS

**Mr. GYGAR:** I ask the Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs: Was a conference of Aboriginal Affairs Ministers held in Brisbane last week, and did this conference reveal support of, or opposition to, Commonwealth policies?

**Mr. PORTER:** Yes, I had the honour of chairing a council of Ministers, including the Commonwealth Minister, which met in Brisbane last Friday. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that literally every State, including the Northern Territory, expressed strong opposition on virtually every item on the agenda to what the Commonwealth was doing in this area. This included land rights, channelling money through Aboriginal co-operative groups rather than through State agencies which could be properly audited, trying to impose self-management on Aboriginal people whether they wanted it or not, and so on. The danger of a growing white backlash, very especially in the Northern Territory, was quite forcefully expressed.

One would imagine that, when State administrations of every political colour are united in expressing opposition to what the Commonwealth Government is doing in the area, the Commonwealth Government would think twice as to whether it was pursuing the right course. One thing I can tell the House is that literally everything said at that council of Ministers strongly reinforced what this Government has achieved and is doing in this area in this State.

ELECTORAL SUPPORT FOR COALITION

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I ask the Premier: Has he seen the results of a recent opinion poll published in "The Bulletin", which shows that support for the National Party in Queensland has risen? Bearing this in mind, what credibility can be placed on statements by the Leader of the Opposition, which indicate that support for the coalition in Queensland is declining?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I thank the honourable member for his question and for the opportunity to inform the Leader of the Opposition of facts that he knows only too well, and to get on record why he squibbed on the street march with Senator Georges. He knows that at the polls it would put him down still further. The facts I give in answer to this question are taken from an article in "The Bulletin" of 24 October 1978. Under the heading "Queensland coalition well in front", it states—

"If a State election had been held in Queensland in mid-September, the present government would have easily been returned.

"In a special Morgan Gallup Poll on State voting intention, 837 electors were interviewed in Queensland before the Federal budget and 745 electors were interviewed after the budget.

"Electors were asked which party would receive their first preference if a State election were being held today.

"The vote for the L-NP in Queensland in September was 51 per cent, with 41 per cent for the ALP, 4 per cent for the Australian Democrats and 4 per cent for other parties.

Voting Intention in Queensland

|                   | Nov.<br>1977 | July/<br>Aug. 12<br>1978 | Aug. 19/<br>Sept. 16<br>1978 |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
|                   | %            | %                        | %                            |
| National Party    | 27           | 26                       | 28                           |
| Liberal ..        | 25           | 24                       | 23                           |
| L-NP ..           | 52           | 50                       | 51                           |
| DLP ..            | 2            | 1                        | *                            |
| ALP ..            | 43           | 41                       | 41                           |
| Aust Democrats .. | ..           | 4                        | 4                            |
| Workers Party     | 3            | 1                        | 2                            |
| Others ..         | ..           | 3                        | 2                            |
| Total ..          | 100          | 100                      | 100 "                        |

Those are the figures for those three specific periods. They indicate very strongly and clearly the strength of the coalition in this State, and they indicate just as clearly the very low ebb which the Labor Party has reached in this State; but that is quite understandable.

FINANCING OF OVERSEAS TRIP BY MR. MICK MILLER AND OTHERS

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I ask the Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs: As the group of radical trouble-makers amongst Aborigines, headed by Mick Miller, has denied that any part of the World Council of Churches' grant of \$15,000 will be spent on the trip overseas that Miller and two others are to make shortly, can he inform the House who is financing this overseas junket?

**Mr. PORTER:** Unfortunately, I cannot as yet. I did note the denial by Mr. Miller of the statement that I made in the House last week—a denial that throbbled with indignation but very carefully avoided giving any factual information. The facts are that the World Council of Churches did give \$15,000 to this unauthorised council that Mr. Miller represents, and almost immediately after that the plans for the world trip by the trio were announced. If there is no connection between the two sets of acts, it is difficult to understand why Mr. Miller should be so coy about revealing the names of his benefactors. As anybody will know, a round-the-world trip by three people extending over quite a number of weeks would soak up far more than the \$15,000 mentioned. It will be very interesting for the House to discover—if it can eventually do so—who is playing Father Christmas to this trio of engineers of discontent.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**Mr. TENNI** (Barron River) (11.34 a.m.), by leave: It has been brought to my attention that in the House this morning it was alleged in a notice of question that the late Senior Constable Jack Connor of Mareeba placed \$40,000 in my campaign funds prior to the last election. Such an allegation is completely untrue. I have now had an opportunity to check with my campaign directors and I have been informed by them that the only involvement of the late Senior Constable Connor in my campaign funds was the purchase of a \$10 ticket to a fund-raising barbecue. The allegation, therefore, is totally false. But it is typical of the conduct of the Leader of the Opposition.

I also refer to the statement by the member for Ipswich West in his notice of question to the effect that one of the tickets referred to in the Peel report was used for the transportation of the late Jack Connor. That is completely false, but typical of a person such as the member for Ipswich West.

#### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

##### BRISBANE BREWERIES STRIKE; MINISTER'S STATEMENT ABOUT UNION OFFICERS

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** I ask the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads: In connection with the current breweries strike, is the Minister's real concern not about the Englishmen involved in the strike, but the cut-off in the supply from the breweries of used hops for feeding pigs on his property?

**Mr. HINZE:** The honourable member is a ratbag. He is stupid. I have no pigs; I have not had any for years. I don't know what he's talking about. I suppose someone has dribbled him some more of the claptrap that he seems to delve in and serves up in the House at every opportunity. The short answer is, "No; I have no pigs."

##### ALLEGED TRAFFIC PROBLEM ON MILTON ROAD ARISING FROM CARTAGE OF HOPS

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** In directing a further question to the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads, I refer to my question about the feeding of used hops to the Minister's pigs on his property, and ask if he can confirm whether a nephew of his, when carting the hops from the brewery, caused a major traffic problem on Milton Road through the hops spraying onto the road and causing a serious traffic hazard for motorists and motor cyclists using the road? Did the police chase the Minister's nephew to apprehend him on this matter?

**Mr. HINZE:** I cannot recall any incident at all like the one the honourable member has mentioned concerning my nephew and his being chased by police. This is the sort of material we are becoming accustomed to hearing in the House—questions containing innuendo and inference. The answer again is "No".

##### STREET MARCH PROPOSED BY SENATOR GEORGES

**Mr. GYGAR:** I ask the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police: Has his attention been drawn to plans by the Labor Senator George Georges to conduct a street march in Brisbane on 30 October? Is he aware at this stage of any application made by Senator Georges for a permit for that proposed march? In view of Senator Georges' status as a senator of the Commonwealth of Australia, can he expect to be treated other than as an ordinary citizen if he engages in illegal activities in this State?

**Mr. CAMM:** My attention has been drawn to the fact that Senator Georges is contemplating leading a march some time in the near future. To my knowledge, he has not as yet applied for a permit for this march. He knows that he will be deliberately breaking the law if he leads the march, and those associated with him should also be aware of the fact that they will be breaking the law. If he desires to conduct a march, he should do as the A.L.P. did and apply for a permit to march. Of course, when members of the A.L.P. get permission to march, they do not march.

In my opinion, Senator Georges is a representative of a democratic society, under a free-enterprise Government. That society elected him to a position in the Senate to represent this State. From his actions and the utterances that he has made during the last few weeks, I wonder why the people of Queensland put such a person into the Senate to represent them.

##### DOMESTIC PRICE OF SUGAR

**Mr. CASEY:** I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: Did the committee of inquiry chaired by the Industries Assistance Commission chairman, Mr. McKinnon, which was

appointed by the Queensland and Australian Governments to inquire into the domestic price of sugar, complete its hearings during August of this year? What is the reason for the delay in the release of its findings? When will they be made public? When is it expected that an increase in the domestic price of sugar, if any, will be announced? As this is the first of about 64 inquiries with which the Industries Assistance Commission has been associated for which a draft report has not been issued, will he give the House the reasons for the change?

**Mr. SULLIVAN:** I could give the honourable member a short answer and tell him that the Industries Assistance Commission chairman, Mr. McKinnon, is responsible for presenting a report to the Minister for Primary Industry, Mr. Sinclair. In view of all the details the honourable member gave, I suggest that he put the question on notice.

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

STREET MARCH PROPOSED BY SENATOR  
GEORGES

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I ask the Premier: Is he aware that yesterday, when Senator Georges met the Q.C.E., he received permission to conduct a march next Monday only because he threatened to spill the beans regarding the money that disappeared from the Trade Union Building Society before it went on the rocks and was taken over by the S.G.I.O.?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I do not know the details of why Senator Georges insisted on conducting a march. As the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police said, he is a man who has been elected by a democratic society to represent a free system of living and to abide by law and order. I myself wonder why people have bothered to vote for, or even to trust such a man. People have only to see him on television to know what sort of a man he is. Why people vote for him, I would not have a clue.

To some extent, I can understand the attitude of honourable members opposite. They have chickened out. They have got the message at last; they do not want to be associated with Senator Georges. But I believe that they will be so weak-kneed that they will vote for him when it comes to the time for nomination of A.L.P. candidates. Members of the A.L.P. are at last waking up to the fact that the people are not supporting them, and are realising why their credibility is going down. Why Senator Georges insists on conducting a march against the wishes of honourable members opposite, I would not be quite sure. But, of course, he is right off course as far as the people of this State are concerned.

FORM OF QUESTION

**Mr. JONES** (Cairns) having given notice of a question—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that the allegations concerning contributions to funds have been denied. As I have said before in this Chamber, it is about time we put our house in order and accepted denials by Ministers and members of allegations that have been made under privilege. This type of incident does no good for anybody, even this Parliament itself. Surely honourable members, as responsible citizens and members of Parliament, should accept a denial made by another honourable member in the House. If any honourable member transgresses in any way in the future, the axe will fall heavily on him. I ask all honourable members on both sides of the House to accept the denials of other members. After all, members are supposed to be responsible people; if they are not, they should not be here.

At 12 noon,

*In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, the House went into Committee of Supply.*

SUPPLY

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—  
FOURTH AND FIFTH ALLOTTED DAYS  
(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. W. D. Hewitt, Greenslopes, in the chair)

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1978-79

RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT

RAILWAYS—GENERAL ESTABLISHMENT

Debate resumed from 19 October (see p. 2373) on Mr. Tomkins's motion—

“That \$53,499,000 be granted for ‘Railways—General Establishment’.”

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER** (Archerfield) (12.1 p.m.): In the few minutes left to me, Mr. Hewitt, I shall deal with the infamous right-to-march legislation in this State. It is common knowledge, and recognised over the length and breadth of the State, that this legislation is completely divisive. As a matter of fact, it has a strong neo-Fascist overtone.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Order! A ruling has been given on a number of occasions that during the Estimates debates reference will not be permitted to legislation. The Committee is considering Consolidated Revenue only.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** The right-to-march legislation does come under the ambit of the Transport Minister. It is typical of all oppressive regimes, both of the Left and of the Right. As a matter of fact, Mr. Hewitt, it is well known that when it comes to standing

up to the National Party in this State, the Liberal Party has about as much backbone as a filleted jelly-fish.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member will return to the Estimates or resume his seat.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** As I said earlier, Mr. Hewitt, the right to march does come under the auspices of the Minister for Transport and, therefore, would be covered by his Estimates.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Order! If the honourable member wishes to refer to the costs of administering the right-to-march legislation, he is in order; but if he wishes to speak about the legislation governing it, he is out of order.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I am referring to the exorbitant cost of administering the right-to-march legislation under the Minister's Estimates.

I had hoped that the change of leadership of the Parliamentary Liberal Party would have heralded further changes. However, many thousands of Liberal voters throughout the State must be appalled that the new leader, Dr. Edwards, is not prepared to implement the party's policy. With the 24 members of the Liberal Party in this Chamber, he can count on the support of some National Party back-benchers who are unhappy with the legislation. Combined with the votes of the 23 members of the Labor Party, this would give him an overwhelming majority to throw out this repressive legislation.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable gentleman is out of order. I warn him for the last time.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** The cost of implementing the right-to-march legislation comes under the Transport Estimates, and, as I said, it is repressive legislation. It would be interesting to know, Mr. Hewitt, how much it has cost the people of this State to implement the infamous Act.

**Mr. Davis:** \$1,400,000.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** \$1,400,000! That is atrocious! I only hope that the Minister refutes that in his reply.

Of course, the principal problem arising from the right-to-march legislation is that the Commissioner of Police will not stand up to the Premier on the matter. When a group has intimated that it will be applying for a permit to march, how many times have honourable members heard the Premier say, "Don't bother, it won't be granted."? That has happened even before those concerned have submitted their application to the Police Department. As I said, the Commissioner of Police will not stand up and

be counted although he has stated publicly—and I mentioned this in my speech in the Budget debate—that the legislation is bad, costly and counterproductive. When the Commissioner of Police was addressing a meeting of old boys of Villanova College, he said quite bluntly that the legislation served no useful purpose.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Order! Not only for the information of the honourable member but also for the information of all honourable members who may participate in this debate and subsequent Estimates debates, I read the exact ruling that has been given. It is—

"For the information of all honourable members, I point out that the administrative acts of the department are open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply."

I would point out to the Committee that that ruling has been given for as many years as I have been in this Parliament.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I accept your ruling, Mr. Hewitt. I conclude by saying that the Police Commissioner, Mr. Terry Lewis, speaks with forked tongue.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport) (12.6 p.m.): It is my intention to comment now on many of the matters that were raised during the first day of the discussions on these Estimates. At the outset, I thank all honourable members for their contributions. I was very interested to learn that there was little criticism of the Railway Department, the Transport Department and the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

**Mr. Houston:** How long are you going to talk for now?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I am replying to comments made on the first day of the debate on these Estimates and later today I shall be replying to further comments that will be made.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Well don't forget my mention of a rail link to Inala. You promised me that you would mention that today.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** It so happens that this morning I went out to see what effect the laying of the line to the industrial estate referred to by the honourable member has had.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Do you agree with my comment?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** No, I don't. It is doing a tremendous amount of good. A firm is carrying out a large contract for the Railway Department. I could not help thinking how fitting it was to have the line laid there.

A short time ago the honourable member for Archerfield mentioned the Traffic Act. He was about the first member to do so. Although the Act is administered by me, the actions of the Police Department have nothing to do with me.

The honourable member for Brisbane Central spoke on matters relating to the three departments. The honourable member and subsequently the honourable member for Ipswich West claimed that copies of the annual report of the Commissioner for Railways were not available for use in preparation for the debate. The report was tabled on Wednesday, 18 October, and I understand that copies were delivered to the House. It should have been possible for any member to gain access to a copy.

The honourable member advocated rationalisation of the carriage of freight between rail and road transport. Giving him the benefit of meaning that more traffic should be handled by rail, I would remind him that since 1969 the Railway Department has had a door-to-door transport arrangement under which the railways perform the line-haul task and road carriers convey to and from the respective railheads. The system is operating effectively to centres in all divisions of the State. In other words, it is a door-to-door delivery. Annual tonnage of this traffic is now approaching 250 000 tonnes.

The honourable member referred to the Wilbur Smith study. This study has indeed formed the basis of the Government's policy. What people often seem to forget is that the duration of the study period extended to the year 2000. This Government has made a good start on the plan, including the cross-river bridge, electrification, interchange facilities and the purchase of new buses. The other recommendation of the report, the formation of a Metropolitan Transit Authority, has also been implemented.

The underground railway was proposed for the years 1986 to 1995, not 1984 as stated by the honourable member. Implementation of this recommendation will depend on growth of the central business district. The Wilbur Smith report assumed a high rate of growth in working population, which has not been achieved in recent years, but I can assure members that the proposal has not been forgotten.

I would like to dispel the ideas of the honourable member about a "generous" Whitlam Government. The Whitlam Government started well in the first two years of the previous Act by distributing about \$138,000,000 of a promised \$500,000,000, but then because of the economic situation had to rein in and in the next year distributed nothing at all. Three sections of electrification have been approved—between Ferny Grove and Darra, Darra and Ipswich, and Northgate and Shorncliffe. There would have been a gap between Mayne and Northgate if the State Government had gone ahead with the

schemes approved by the Whitlam Government. Furthermore, there was no money approved for rolling-stock, so that the State Government was obliged to enter into expensive contracts for electric trains entirely out of its own resources, as, without trains, the whole scheme would have been a waste of money.

The honourable member referred to the 20 per cent reduction in fares introduced by the New South Wales Labor Government after coming to office. From figures recently published, the amount of travel in the urban area has increased only slightly, if at all, and the main result has been a massive increase in the deficit due to the lower fare revenue. The deficit of the Public Transport Commission increased in 1977-78 to nearly \$400,000,000. No wonder the New South Wales Transport Minister has instituted an inquiry! He must be a very worried man.

Year after year, members opposite bring up the hoary old chestnut of the electrification scheme of the late 1950s under the then Labor administration. They never seem to realise how they are playing into the hands of my colleagues on this side of the House. The truth of the matter is that the Labor administration spent millions, but did not achieve any electrification at all and this Government was obliged to tidy up the mess when it came to office.

The honourable member has suggested that all matters concerning transport should be under the one Transport Minister.

**Mr. Davis:** Yes, I did.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The honourable member still says that?

**Mr. Davis:** I do.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** At this stage, I shall read an extract from "The Australian".

**Mr. Davis:** I don't care what they say in New South Wales.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I shall quote from "The Australian" of Friday, 20 October, in which the pride and joy of the Labor Party, Mr. Wran, was reported in these terms—

"As part of the shake-up in portfolios Mr. Wran has given the Attorney-General, Mr. Walker, dual responsibility as Minister of Justice.

"The State Transport Minister, Mr. Cox, is to lose his responsibility for main roads administration, so that he can concentrate on cutting back the Public Transport Commission's multi-million-dollar deficit.

"Responsibility for main roads has now gone to the Minister for Local Government, Mr. Jensen."

That is exactly what the Queensland Government has done by making the Minister for Local Government responsible for Main Roads. New South Wales has to tidy up its mess in the transport set-up.

**Mr. Davis:** What about darling Peter Nixon?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I am referring to the New South Wales Government.

**Mr. Davis:** I am referring to the Federal Government, the Victorian Government and the South Australian Government.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I suggest that the Minister talk about the Queensland Estimates.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I thank the honourable member for his interjection.

I would like to say that so far as roads are concerned they are well looked after by my colleague the Honourable Russ Hinze, Minister for Local Government and Main Roads. I can assure the honourable member that we work closely together in all matters relating to transport and in the national area, particularly at meetings of the Australian Transport Advisory Council, of which he is also a member, he ably represents Queensland in this area of transport.

I am well aware of the inquiry that has been mounted in New South Wales, which will look at all areas of land transport including the rationalisation of the carriage of freight between rail and road transport. We will certainly be interested in the outcome of the inquiry, but I must remind the honourable member that Queensland has always been to the forefront in encouraging freight-forwarding, with road looking after the short-distance transport and rail looking after long-distance transport. All these matters are continually under review in Queensland, particularly as we are a most decentralised State with long distances between our major provincial centres.

Mention has been made of the contribution by heavy vehicles to road maintenance. The attitude of the Commonwealth Government in this area is well known, and as recently as 25 September the Honourable P. J. Nixon, M.P., Commonwealth Minister for Transport, at the opening of the Australian Road Transport Federation annual conference in Queenstown, New Zealand, had this to say—

“I can say to you today the fuel tax alternative has been rejected by the Commonwealth on clear policy grounds. Such a tax would run counter to our policy of hypothecation of tax revenues. In addition our federalist policy is designed to force Governments at all levels to decide their priorities and accept responsibility for the taxes they raise.

“In addition while it has been suggested that a fuel tax is desirable on grounds of equity—the user pays principle—it needs

to be recognised that if this principle is to apply in full, then charges paid by different classes of vehicles would need to reflect the relative amount of damage caused.

“It is doubtful if this could be correctly measured let alone used as a basis for charging. Even if it were possible, it would involve arrangements at least as administratively cumbersome as those currently applicable to road maintenance charges.”

I would remind the honourable member that at least five States have either enacted or are ready to enact reciprocal road maintenance legislation, and only South Australia, which has a Labor Government, has been reluctant to initiate this legislation, which has been agreed to by all the other States that levy charges for the maintenance of roads for damage substantially caused by the operation of heavy vehicles. The honourable member knows that recently we passed this legislation, and he was a good supporter of it.

**Mr. Davis:** I only touched on it, but will you answer this question: are you in favour of the National Party's policy on fuel tax?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I am quite happy with the Government's policy on fuel tax. I propose to battle out the issue as best I can.

A committee of the Australian Transport Advisory Council is currently looking at other measures that might be taken to overcome the problem of evasion. I can assure the honourable member, so far as Queensland is concerned, that we are actively pursuing those operators who are endeavouring to avoid payment. The position, of course, is no different from that with any other taxes or levies, even income tax, where there will always be someone who tries to avoid his liability.

So far as air transport is concerned, we are keeping a watching brief on the reports of the review of domestic air transport policy that was commissioned by the Commonwealth Minister for Transport, and we will certainly be looking at the question of fares for intrastate operations. Of course, the main problem is outside our jurisdiction, involving interstate passengers and freight, which concern the Commonwealth Government.

Turning now to the reference to the demerit points system—I feel I should remind the honourable member that any decision of a district superintendent of traffic to suspend, modify or cancel a drivers' licence is subject to review by a magistrate. Every driver who has had a show-cause notice is entitled to appear before the district superintendent and to give every reason why action should not be taken against his drivers' licence. As part of the system, of course, when a driver has accrued six points or more, he is sent a warning letter drawing his attention to his traffic record so that he can take steps to observe the law. As well, in the Brisbane area, the offenders are invited to attend a lecture by Queensland Road Safety

Council officers, which is designed to educate them on the traffic laws so that they may avoid having their licences cancelled.

I agree with the member for Cunningham about encouraging private bus operators to play a role in the transport system of the State. Unfortunately, the rapid inflation of the last few years, compounded by inability to increase fares in line with costs, has undermined the viability of private operators. This has led to the situation described by the member for Archerfield in the Acacia Ridge area, but at that point the honourable member and I part company. I do not believe that the way to run bus transport in the State of Queensland would be a giant octopus based in Brisbane. For this reason, the Government has agreed to improve the subsidy scheme for private bus operators so as to assist them in maintaining a viable industry. Reference was made to this by my colleague the Honourable the Treasurer in the Financial Statement. I am looking forward to receiving constructive proposals from the Metropolitan Transit Authority when its plan is completed next year, and I am asking the authority to look into the honourable member's comments regarding specific bus services in the Inala area.

The honourable member for Archerfield referred also to a possible rail link to Inala. I mentioned in my speech that studies were in progress into links to the Gold Coast, Redcliffe and Redlands. A whole list of additional rail links has been proposed and it was physically not possible to have all links studied at once. I can assure the honourable member that his proposal has not been overlooked and that it will be the subject of a detailed study as soon as the Metropolitan Transit Authority has the resources available.

The idea submitted by the honourable member for Cunningham of paying station-masters a commission to encourage business is not a new one but is deemed to be impracticable in the conduct of railway operations. As members are aware, goodwill officers (now known as commercial representatives) were introduced into the service in 1957. There was one in each division and this was subsequently increased to two per division. Because of the success achieved, the South-Eastern Division now has three such officers. In my opinion, these goodwill officers have done a tremendous job for the Railway Department. They are always available to tell people and firms what the railways can achieve for them.

I take the opportunity at this juncture to refer again to the good results that have flowed from the introduction of a training section within the Railway Department and I mention specially some grades of employees who come in close contact with the public during the course of their duties, that is, station-masters, conductors and dining-car staff. Evidence of the improved public relations that emerges when these

employees return to their respective work places can be gleaned from the many letters the commissioner and I receive from grateful customers. I feel that it is worthwhile recording the contents of two very recent letters. The first reads—

"I would like to recommend the station master at South Brisbane Railway Station for the 'courtesy award for the week'.

"Yesterday afternoon 10-10-78 when arriving at the station to see our friends off to Perth, we realised one case belonging to a very elderly lady had been left at our home at Windsor. After the train had left and we asked the station master for advice as to the best way of sending this on, as we had been informed of a pending strike, he offered to meet us at the Grange terminus on his way home from work, pick up the case and make it in with him in the morning when he had to take over again.

"As my husband and I have no idea of his name, I just felt I had to write and let you know of this gentleman's politeness, courtesy and thoughtfulness."

The second one, which is from a country passenger, reads—

"I wish to congratulate you on your efficient and courteous staff toward me when on the 'Sunlander' on the 8th September.

"I boarded the train at Landsborough, I was not well and a friend who drove me to the station spoke a few words to the station master before farewelling me. The stationmaster approached me and said 'The carriage will stop in front of you.' This was so and I had no difficulty in getting on the train, although I had only come out of Hospital the day before.

"I was travelling on a pensioner pass, in a first class siter. I had planned to have a cup of tea when the train was stationary at Nambour. When I approached the waitress, she said 'are you ill'. I replied, 'Oh, I only came out of hospital yesterday.' She told me to sit down and she would bring it to me. So I relaxed in the lovely new lounge. The waitress said to wait as she wanted to see the supervisor. Later she returned to tell me that the supervisor had instructed the conductors to wait upon me and that I could ask for anything I needed and they were to bring it to me.

"A conductor escorted me to my seat, put up a table, and reversed the seat in front for me to rest my feet, as it was not booked. I really was cared for. Never in my years of travelling have I received such kindness and I feel it should not pass unrecognised.

"Each year I travel to Cairns to see my family and no doubt it is a long journey, but not as long as when I travelled on the early transcontinental from Kalgoorlie to Sydney as a child.

"The new comforts on the 'Sunlander' are a great improvement. It eliminated the constant flow of people through the carriages."

When the department receives letters such as those, I think it is wise to read them into the record.

The honourable member shares my concern as to the carriage of dangerous goods by heavy vehicles. I have noted his suggestion that A.T.A.C. look at the new type of road tanker for carrying petroleum that is being tested in the United Kingdom, and I will certainly bring it under notice if it is not already being looked at by the appropriate advisory committee.

But, of course, while we can have safe vehicles, so much depends upon the driver, and I was pleased to hear the honourable member support driver-training. We are continually expanding the learner driver course throughout high schools in the Brisbane area and many dedicated teachers have taken an instructor-training course to enable them to conduct the learner driver course in their own schools.

But, apart from this, of course, in co-operation with the Education Department and with the support of the Commonwealth Government, road safety is being taught in the schools because, quite frankly, it is just as important to train our young people as pedestrians as it is to teach them how to drive. Road safety is not only for the driver. It is for all persons who use the roads, including the many children who are transported by bus or who ride their own bicycles to school.

Our road safety library has a range of films which are extensively borrowed by schools to bring the road safety message to children of different age levels. It supplies also a lot of resource material to all State and non-State primary schools and, in addition, field officers regularly visit pre-schools and kindergartens in the Brisbane region. This work is being expanded with the setting up of a regional office at Townsville. So it will be seen that at all levels every endeavour is being made to educate everyone in road safety.

The honourable members for Toowoomba North and Flinders both touched upon the need to consider alternative fuels and forms of propulsion for vehicles, both public and otherwise. Let me assure them that my officers are keeping in touch with the developments which are taking place. My colleague the Minister for Industry and Administrative Services and I have been having discussions about the development of battery-powered buses. Hydrogen-powered vehicles may well be an answer as they could take the form of current conventional vehicles with a revised propulsion unit, as is the case with at least one prototype motor car which has been operated in Sydney. We would all agree that transport

propulsion units which will help to conserve existing fuel sources and minimise pollution are both desirable and essential, and my officers will continue to keep abreast of developments.

The honourable member for Flinders has referred to the use of small vehicles as taxis in connection with the conservation of fuel. This is a matter which has been discussed at length with the Taxi Council of Queensland but, apart from fuel economics, there are other aspects such as the comfort of the passenger, the reliability of the vehicle and maintenance costs. Basically, in urban areas, taxis have standardised on two main six-cylinder vehicles which have the capacity to cater for the maximum number of passengers that can require transport at any point of time. With a smaller vehicle, on many occasions two vehicles would be needed instead of one as at present, so there is this further factor to be taken into account.

I do not think that the issue of special licences for small vehicles would conserve fuel to such an extent as would compensate for the loss of business by owners of the larger vehicles which have evolved from the experience of the requirements of the travelling public. The existing types of vehicles do provide a measure of comfort, particularly where passengers are a bit larger than the honourable member, so it is not an easy question to answer.

On the experiments that have been made to date in other States, neither the public nor the taxi operators are very favourably disposed towards the smaller car but, of course, this could change in the future. It is kept under review and, if there is a sufficient demand for the smaller car, this would be looked at in the light of all the other factors that I have mentioned.

The honourable member briefly mentioned rail freight rates and, to draw attention to the recent increase, selected the lowest-priced vegetable to be found in the average household and also the heaviest of the vegetables. For a heavy vegetable of low value, it is obvious that transport costs for the distance of nearly 2 000 km from Brisbane to Julia Creek must represent a significant percentage of landed costs.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North has drawn attention to the question of priorities for the use of liquid fuel. This, of course, is of particular interest to me, as at the last meeting of the Australian Transport Advisory Council a special committee was set up to look at this question. Electrification of rail transport is, of course, one area. At the same time, the greater use of battery-operated vehicles in city areas would do a lot towards conserving fuel and reducing air pollution.

I am aware that a lot of work has been done on the use of hydrogen as fuel, but unfortunately there are many problems to be

overcome before this type of fuel can be used with safety. A lot of research is going on at the present time in other areas, particularly the production of power alcohol which, when added to petrol, can assist in conserving our fuel supplies.

I turn now to another aspect raised by the honourable member. He drew attention to the loss of points by drivers for offences that might be regarded as technical breaches. All these matters are questions of fact. However, if motorists get into the habit of rolling through stop signs when the law requires them to come to a complete stop in the interest of safety because of a dangerous road situation, then inevitably they will become involved in an accident.

The stop sign is a traffic management measure designed to ensure the greatest safety for the motorist approaching the stop sign as well as the motorist who may be hidden by some obstruction on the road. This is very important because of speeds that may be involved in situations in which stopping distances are critical if an accident is to be avoided. The question of what is dangerous at a given point of time is a difficult one to answer, because it depends so much on factors of which a driver may not be aware at that point in time.

As I have already indicated, a motorist who acquires more than nine demerit points has an opportunity to "show cause" to a District Superintendent of Traffic and, if he is not satisfied with the decision, he can appeal to a magistrate who could review all the facts, including the nature of the offences for which points have been awarded.

The question concerning speeding is, of course, also a difficult one, because the roads are signed according to what traffic engineers have determined to be the maximum safe speeds at which a person should drive a vehicle having regard to road conditions. Where higher speeds can be driven safely, speed limits can be signed upwards just as they can be signed downwards.

I can, however, assure the honourable member that the severity of any accident is directly related to speed of impact and, even with the maximum speed limits that have been signed, other conditions such as slippery roads, bad visibility or rain must be taken into account by all drivers. This is particularly so when a driver does not know the road very well and when an approaching vehicle can be temporarily hidden from sight by a bend or a depression in the road.

Too many head-on collisions on straight roads are related to speed. If two vehicles are approaching, each travelling at the maximum speed of 100 km/h, there is not much margin of error when 200 km/h is the collision speed. I think the position is such that a motorist should err on the side of safety by reducing speed rather than always driving at the maximum speed permitted under ideal conditions.

I appreciate the honourable member's suggestion of "courtesy" instruction through a Road Safety Council course. If we had the resources to do it, this could be a practical way of educating drivers in road safety. Of course, there would have to be some compulsion. At present, the defensive driving course is available to all interested persons and I would recommend it to any driver who is in danger of losing his licence because of his demerit point record. I welcome his suggestion. It will be kept in mind as part of our future planning.

I have taken particular note of his reference to stop signs and give-way signs. I am currently examining the meaning of the stop sign, and any change would, of course, have to be accompanied by a lot of publicity.

I will pass on to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Police the point the honourable member has raised concerning the incorporation in radar guns of a camera device to record the identification of vehicles. In this as well as in other areas, technology is continuing to improve and we should take advantage of any changes that will help to overcome any doubts in the minds of drivers.

There seems to be a mistaken belief that every driver called upon to show cause automatically loses his licence. This is not so. For 1977-78, 6,569 show-cause actions were instituted. Of these drivers, 43 showed cause, 540 had their licences modified to allow them restricted driving, 3,802, or 58 per cent, had periods of suspension ranging from one to three days. For one week, there were 1,160 suspensions; for two weeks, 1,219; for three weeks, 628; for one month, 568; and for over one month, 219.

Only 2,184, or 33 per cent, had their licences cancelled, and generally these would be offenders who had previously had their licences suspended, modified or cancelled.

It will be seen, therefore, that the greatest number had their licences suspended for periods up to three weeks; so that a great deal of consideration was given to the history of the offender and the seriousness of the offences that attracted demerit points. According to the seriousness of the offence, the points range from one to four, with the four being for excessive speed, that is, exceeding the speed limit by 30 kilometres an hour or more, which is getting into the area of dangerous driving.

In all cases the points arise from court convictions or payments following traffic offence notices. When one considers the number of professional drivers who have received the Road Safety Council's safe driving award—some have been safe drivers, without a traffic breach, for over 20 years—one clearly sees that traffic breaches are not inevitable.

It is not asking too much of drivers to observe the traffic laws, which are really a code for safe driving, and to keep their

demerit points below nine over two years. As I have mentioned, the offending drivers are warned after getting six points, and they should heed the warning if they want to continue to use the roads with safety and consideration for other road users, including pedestrians. Traffic records clearly show that those who continue to build up points are inevitably involved in an accident, with serious or fatal injury either to themselves or to other road users.

As I have indicated to the honourable member, I propose to have discussions with Toowoomba bus proprietors concerning the findings of the survey conducted into urban transport in Toowoomba. When I have done this, I will be in a better position to consider what the next step should be in overcoming some of the problems that have been raised in the report.

I noted the assertion by the honourable member for Rockhampton that 6c or 10c per lb. had to be added to the cost of articles at places in the Central West to cover the cost of freight. However, I would point out that the Retailers' Association publishes the recommended amounts to cover freight on items such as groceries, and for towns in the area referred to it is about 9c per kg.

The honourable member spoke at length on the tourist industry and the Railway Department's need to provide facilities that would attract tourists. As I have already indicated, the department has reintroduced dining cars and established the concept of club car facilities, and those are proving very popular. Furthermore, I announced on 23 June a proposal to acquire 10 additional air-conditioned carriages, five of which will provide roomette accommodation.

Replacement of existing economy-class sitters with new carriages will enable the daylight rail tours to be worked with air-conditioned carriages. This will undoubtedly improve the popularity of those tours, already heavily booked during the months of May to September. The need to run non-air-conditioned trains at peak periods will also cease.

The running of trains along Denison Street was raised once again. Removal of the line and relocation will be a very expensive project, and it is necessary that the department accord a measure of priorities to the expenditure of the limited funds that are made available.

The honourable member for Rockhampton also drew attention to the dismissal of employees for theft. The rigidly applied policy in such matters was introduced by the previous Government and reaffirmed on a number of occasions by this Government. The Commissioner for Railways undertakes responsibility for the carriage of millions of tonnes of customers' goods each year, and such a policy is necessary. It is recognised

that it is also essential that all employees be made aware of the gravity of a conviction for theft or associated offences.

The cost of providing new houses is a matter of concern, and the department will continue to explore all avenues of reducing construction costs, including the use of modular homes.

The honourable member for Windsor spoke, as he usually does, on railway matters, with which he is so familiar, and I shall deal with a couple of them. It is true that wages staff receive passes for economy-class travel interstate, whereas in the case of salaried staff first-class travel is provided. However, this is a matter for determination by commissioners at conference level, and no doubt regard is had for other conditions of employment wages staff enjoy for which salaried staff do not qualify.

Reference was also made to housing for fettle staff. I assure him that accommodation for these personnel is accorded a high priority, along with the demands from other grades.

The honourable member shares my concern about the road toll, and I could not agree more with him that one of the main causes of road accidents is a combination of inattention and speed, carelessness and speed, or arrogance and speed. However, I would add that speed is relative to all other factors such as road conditions, competence of the driver and the behaviour of other motorists. In addition, of course, there is speed induced by over-consumption of alcohol.

What is of concern to me is that the effect of alcohol on driving is not ignored because, apart from the intoxicated drivers who are killed, many other persons die as a direct result of the action of the intoxicated driver. I agree with the honourable member that many persons who are killed are not intoxicated; but I assure him that many deaths are caused by the intoxicated driver. In a head-on collision, one intoxicated driver may be responsible for the death of as many as four or five occupants of vehicles, and unfortunately in many other cases, although the intoxicated driver may escape death or injury, the occupants of the other vehicle involved are not so fortunate.

There is no doubt that alcohol is a major factor in road accidents, and we should not slacken our efforts to try to keep the drink-driver off the road. There is sufficient evidence available to show that we could halve our accident statistics overnight if only we could overcome the drink-driving problem.

In his opening remarks, the honourable member for Toowoomba South drew a comparison between the use of Queensland trains and the use of trains by people in Japan. It is conceded that great use is made of the

services available in that country, but a little research has disclosed that they also are not without big operating losses. In the last year for which figures are available, the Japanese National Railways had an operating loss of A\$1,400 million. It will be seen from that that Queensland is not really doing badly.

I share the honourable member's enthusiasm for electrification of country main lines should the feasibility study at present in progress establish the advantages of such a system. Electrification of the line to Toowoomba and the haulage of large tonnages of coal from west of Toowoomba would undoubtedly require upgrading of the track, and the possibility of a tunnel as envisaged by the honourable member cannot be excluded from planning. As a matter of fact, I believe that there is a tremendous future for that line in the export-coal industry.

I appreciate the honourable member's thoughtful contribution on the question of long-distance road transport and the problems associated with the subcontracting road transport operator. Unfortunately, the subcontractors do not know all of the elements relating to transport and, as the honourable member said, they either go broke or go out of business. When you consider, Mr. Hewitt, that under present-day conditions the subcontractor is paying tremendous amounts for a lease or a hire-purchase, he has a substantial commitment to meet before he can even earn enough to support himself or his family. He is always looking for the good job around the corner and forgets that he has to spend money to maintain his vehicle and to meet his payments regularly.

Transport is a complex operation, and over long distances the problem of overloading is one that is associated with accidents and road damage. As I indicated to the honourable member for Toowoomba North, I propose to have discussions with bus proprietors in Toowoomba and I will be inviting him and the honourable member for Toowoomba South to discuss the problems that have been highlighted by the survey carried out.

I might say that over many years the Transport Department has continued to assist those operators who sought assistance, but it is very difficult to force help on people who feel they do not need it. Although every assistance can be given, the responsibility for the operation must rest upon the proprietor, as he is the one who must make the management decisions and take the responsibility for those decisions. The department will co-operate to the greatest extent possible, but it cannot accept the responsibility for managing an operation, which in our private-enterprise system must stay with the proprietor. Nevertheless, I appreciate the honourable member's interest in this problem of urban transport in our provincial cities, and I say to him that we are doing all we can by way of financial assistance to preserve the private operator.

The honourable member for Ipswich West joined with earlier speakers on the matter of coal freights and door-to-door services. It was completely erroneous of him to state that coal is being transported from Central Queensland fields to the coast for no charge. These coal operations are very profitable and contribute extensively to the buoyancy of the department's activities in the Central Division.

The use of contract carriers in the door-to-door operations ensures an efficient service to customers. It also ensures that the department's share of general goods traffic is not further eroded by the intrusion of road transport.

The honourable member expressed concern about the number of apprentices engaged. It is explained that these new employees are indentured at the rates that best present estimates indicate are the likely ones for tradesmen in the various categories four years hence.

I am afraid that I cannot see any merit in the honourable member's suggestion that Queensland should adopt the Public Transport Commission of New South Wales, where a Labor Government is in office, as a model to become more profitable. That system had an operating loss of \$400,000,000 last financial year, as I have already said.

The honourable member joined with other members in propounding the desirability of using railways rather than parallel roads for heavy freight transport over long distances, and again I heartily agree with him. I believe, however, that the private sector has a role to play and by working with the railways it will be given greater opportunity for innovation and progress than would otherwise occur. I agree that much of the long-distance transport could be undertaken by the railways, but certainly in the short-distance haul and in the freight-forwarding area the private sector has a very important role to play.

The honourable member referred to the S.G.I.O. facilities at Ipswich and the station car-parks provided on the rail link to Ipswich. At this point I am impelled to pay tribute to my colleague the honourable member for Ipswich for his strong representations to have a new railway station and associated facilities established at Ipswich. It gave me great pleasure to see his efforts brought to fruition when I recently performed the official opening.

I am afraid that the honourable member for Ipswich West showed that he was badly misinformed when he spoke of electrification of the Ipswich line. In the first place, the decision to split the electrification scheme into separate sections—in the case of the Ipswich line, from Ferny Grove to Darra and from Darra to Ipswich—was not an action of this Government. It was an artificial complication introduced by the Whitlam Government, which has caused this State untold difficulties.

I have referred elsewhere in my speech to the farcical situation that arose when the Northgate-Shorncliffe section was approved but the Mayne-Northgate section was not. Had this Government implemented the approved sections in accordance with the agreement between the State and Commonwealth Governments, there would have been isolated sections of electric wiring but no electric trains to run underneath them. For some unaccountable reason, the Whitlam Government did not include the electric trains in its approvals.

**Mr. Burns:** Why don't you name the new rail bridge over the river the Gough Whitlam Bridge? Without him, it would never have been started.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** As a matter of fact, we have had lengthy discussions on what to name the new bridge, and we have chosen a good old English name—Merivale.

This Government asked for the transfer of the Northgate-Shorncliffe money to more useful purposes, such as improvements to south-side platforms, and to electric trains. Some funds were also transferred from the Ipswich-Darra electrification approval, but in fact, as stated in my speech, up to 30 June 1978, a total of \$3,676,000 was spent on electrification between Ipswich and Darra. A further \$300,000 to \$400,000 will be spent. Electric wires have already been erected as far as Redbank, track improvements have been made and the substandard bridge at Bell Street, Ipswich, has been replaced. So I do not accept the honourable member's strictures of neglect so far as Ipswich is concerned.

Unfortunately, in 1978-79, there are heavy contractual commitments for completing the Ferny Grove-Darra section and for electric trains, and I cannot be sure at this moment that further funds for Ipswich-Darra will be available this financial year. However, in conjunction with the Honourable the Premier and the Treasurer, I am endeavouring to ensure that future funds for electrification and completion of the section from Ipswich to Darra are next on the list of priorities for electrification.

I am afraid that the honourable member has got it wrong in a number of other respects as well. In the first place, Bill Hayden was not Federal Treasurer in 1974. I presume that the figure of \$1,980,000 mentioned by the honourable member relates to the original approval by the Federal Government for expenditure on the electrification of the section from Ipswich to Darra in the financial years 1975-76 and 1976-77. In that case, the money was not some wonderful additional hand-out, as the honourable member has tried to represent, but part of the initial approval. Quite the opposite to keeping Queensland ahead of the five-year programme, by not allocating any funds at all in the third year of the Act the Federal Labor Government in fact let Queensland

drop behind. The honourable member quotes an article from "The Courier-Mail" of 28 August 1974 in support of his argument, but I am afraid that everything that he says underlines the failure of the Federal Labor Government to live up to its promises, thereby undermining the original plans of this Government for a five-year electrification programme.

The member for Merthyr made some complimentary remarks, for which I thank him. Improved facilities on the river are being planned by the Metropolitan Transit Authority. I hope to see an upgrading in a number of areas where conditions for passengers have fallen below standard, as well as improved car-parking facilities at those ferry terminals where they are warranted.

The honourable member for Nudgee referred to the design of the new electric cars. I should like him to note that this is an example of how open-minded this Government is to new ideas wherever they come from. These cars were designed under a contract let by the former Federal Transport Minister, Mr. Charlie Jones. A great deal of work was put into the new design by Federal and State Government officers and by consultants. In choosing a design for the new electric trains, the Government decided to adopt the Australian urban passenger train concept. The air-conditioning, carpets and upholstered seats were a part of that concept. I believe that we must look to improvements in public transport vehicles if we are to attract the private motorist out of his car, and I go along with the decision to adopt these improvements. However, we retain an open mind and if they prove to be not practical or too costly to maintain, those features can be reconsidered at some time in the future.

The honourable member quoted a mass of figures to justify reaching the conclusion that coal freight rates should be renegotiated. But I think the honourable member would have been nearer a solution to our deficit problems if he had acknowledged that the greatest contributing factor is the ever-spiralling cost of providing services. If we could return to some semblance of reality in that area, a period of stability in freight and fare charges would be possible. Increases inevitably have the result of loss of some business.

For the year ended 30 June 1973, 22,605 employees were paid \$104,222,559 in salaries and wages, or an average payment per employee of \$4,611. In 1977-78, an amount of \$257,575,196 was paid to 24,739 employees. The resultant average receipt of \$10,412 represents an increase of 126 per cent. In other words the 1977-78 figure is more than 2½ times the 1972-73 figure. This is the crux of the overall reason why the Railway Department is running at a loss.

Over the same period of five years, there has been an increase of only 85 per cent (from 128.6 points to 238.4 points) in the Consumer Price Index. The earlier figure has increased only 1.85 times.

In expressing the view that the feature of air-conditioning should be excluded from the new electric rail-cars, the honourable member, who incidentally is a qualified electrician, said that he sees a problem when there is a power failure. Firstly, he should use his best endeavours to ensure that power failures induced by industrial stoppages do not materialise. When there is a power failure, batteries on the trains will provide automatic emergency ventilation for an hour, in addition to which it will be possible for staff to open the hopper vent windows and, if absolutely necessary, the doors.

The honourable member's suggestion that the rail tracks at the Banyo level crossing be lowered would appear to be a very expensive if not impracticable one. However, the matter will be investigated. With regard to his suggestion for car-parks at Banyo and Nudgee, the Metropolitan Transit Authority has carried out a ranking of stations based on demand and other factors. I can assure the honourable member that those stations will be considered when priorities and finance permit.

The honourable member has indicated also the concern of all members about the necessity to conserve fuel in the future and the need to ensure that we use existing modes in the best way possible. I do know that the Commonwealth Government also is concerned about the problem of crude oil. I feel that I can do no better than quote from a recent speech by the Honourable P. J. Nixon, M.P., Commonwealth Minister for Transport, when he was opening the Australian Road Transport Federation annual conference in New Zealand, which I have previously referred to. He said—

"A further matter of concern to your federation is, I know, the fuel situation.

"As you are aware the increase in the crude oil production levy announced in the Budget is designed to bring refinery prices of Australian crude oil into line with world prices. This of course has been the objective of the Government's crude oil pricing policy for some time because the cold reality is that within a few short years Australia will run out of indigenous oil.

"And indeed one thing is certain, we must regard petroleum as a finite resource and a resource where known world reserves are dwindling. We hope, of course, that new reserves will be found, that new sources of energy for propulsion will be devised in time to meet the world's need.

"It is our view that the maintenance of an artificially low indigenous oil price would serve only to encourage wasteful and inefficient consumption of energy.

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"We must be prepared to pay for the real cost of that energy, also for exploration for new fields, and research for alternative fuels if we are to guarantee our future. We have agreed to the policy, therefore, that the price of petroleum products should in future reflect the true value of petroleum based on world prices.

"Quite obviously that policy has implications for transport, and in particular for road transport.

"And in this regard there is one point that needs to be made clear—the increases in prices of indigenous oil do not in any way affect the relative competitive position of road and rail transport. The increases are met by all users. The increase was by way of a well head levy and not by way of an increase in excise."

As I have already indicated, the Australian Transport Advisory Council is actively looking at the overall problem of fuel in relation to transport, and already a considerable amount of work has been done in this area. In Queensland we do not have a shortage of energy or energy-producing fuels, such as coal, as the honourable member has pointed out. The main problem is insufficient supplies of portable energy such as petroleum, where we are more and more relying on imports from overseas, which can be subject to dislocation from causes outside of our control.

I do not propose to comment on the member's contribution to the debate in relation to street marches, as this is in the capable hands of the Honourable the Premier, who has already indicated quite strongly the Government's view of street demonstrations.

**Mr. POWELL:** (Isis) (12.51 p.m.): In a State as widely diverse and as decentralised as Queensland, the portfolio of Transport is a very important one. The forms of communication in our State are extremely important also. The ramifications of this ministry are very important to Queensland.

The Minister has recently covered a number of significant points. I would like to touch on a few of them and to comment on the Estimates as they affect the department. As Minister for Transport, the Minister has under his control the Railway Department, which controls a web of railway lines throughout the State. I suppose he feels rather heavily the responsibility on his shoulders in administering a department that is losing well over \$1,000,000 a week. As is stated in the Railway Department's own report, it is losing two dollars 10.11c per train-kilometre run. When critics of the Railway Department look at that figure, no doubt they can voice some very serious criticism of the railways and of the competition of the railways with private road transport.

I do not believe that we should look at the Railway Department as a profit-making institution; but we should ensure that the

Railway Department runs as efficiently as possible so that its deficit is as low as possible. In these days of rising costs and increasing competition, it is fairly obvious that the Railway Department has to look very carefully at itself. I would certainly support the advocacy I heard earlier in this debate of giving individual station-masters or section controllers the responsibility of running their sections economically. I certainly believe that the Railway Department has to get into the market-place more than it has in the past.

A tribute should be paid to the department for the way in which it has accepted the need for change and has gone out looking for business. It makes complete sense to me that the Railway Department should be attempting to attract business. It should be going into the market-place to compete with other forms of transport. People who use the roads regularly—I am one and I know many other honourable members have to use road transport in their own electorates—are very concerned about deterioration of our main highways. We are very concerned about deterioration of road conditions, much of which is caused by large, heavy transports racing along our highways, in some cases with very little regard for other users of the highway. So I repeat that it is perfectly logical that the Railway Department, which transports goods across its own permanent way, which is away from other transport avenues, should go into the market-place to attract business. It must become more efficient.

Unfortunately, the Railway Department has a very bad reputation. In many cases it is deserved, but in many others it is not. It has a reputation for losing goods. Unfortunately, this occurs; but it occurs in other forms of transport, too. It has a reputation for being slow, but the people of the area in which I live have the highest regard for the Railway Department and the way in which goods can be transported overnight from the capital city to that area.

We have a few problems in our area as a result of the lack of a good railway service, but the people in the goods sections at Bundaberg and Maryborough Railway Stations bend over backwards to assist the business people in those areas. I believe that these railway officers should be given more autonomy. They should be given more incentive to act in the responsible manner of which they are capable in order to attract further freight business to the Railway Department so that we might be able to have a more efficient and faster service than we have at present.

The Minister has received correspondence from me and representations from people in the Childers district on the need for a co-ordinated goods service from Brisbane to Childers. It will be remembered that, I think, 14 years ago the railway line from Isis Junction to Childers was closed. The then

member for the area (the late Jack Pizzey) made a promise that the rail freight rate to Childers would not at any time increase to such an extent that it would be dearer to rail goods from Brisbane to Childers than from Brisbane to Bundaberg.

The present situation is deplorable. It must be admitted that it does not cost any more to rail goods from Brisbane to Isis Junction, but the goods have to be road freighted some miles from Isis Junction to Childers. In the two instances that I have been given, it costs three times as much to transport goods the eight miles from Isis Junction to Childers than the 200 miles from Brisbane to Isis Junction. That is deplorable and reacts very strongly against the small businessmen in Childers who, at the moment, are doing everything possible to compete with the very large enterprises virtually on their doorstep in Bundaberg and to the south at Maryborough.

I make an urgent plea to the Minister to look very carefully at this problem so that the small businessmen in Childers, which is a thriving town on the Bruce Highway, are not disadvantaged simply because the railway line from Isis Junction to Childers was removed 14 years ago. I know that the Minister is sympathetic and I am confident that he will come up with an answer that will satisfy the businessmen in Childers and will ensure that they do not continue to suffer this disadvantage.

Mention has been made of electrification. The rationale behind the introduction of electrification is the diminution of fuel resources that we constantly hear about. I have serious doubts about whether oil fuel supplies are diminishing or that reserves are as small as we are led to believe. I am cynical enough to believe that it would suit the Arabian oil countries if they could convince us that their resources were low so that they could jack up the price even more. I am cynical enough to believe that a cartel is operating, as has been suggested, and that the Arab countries are trying to convince the rest of the world that they are the only ones with oil and, therefore, the price should be much higher than it is. I fully support this Government's attitude on fuel prices and I fully support its attitude on the electrification of the railways.

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

**Mr. POWELL:** Before the luncheon recess I was speaking about the wastage of fuel and expressing doubt about whether this should be allowed to occur. If we are really determined to conserve our fuel resources, we should be doing something positive about it, and the electrification of our railway system is one of the most positive steps to be taken. The Government is therefore to be congratulated on the moves that it is taking towards the electrification of our railways. Quite obviously an electric train will use far less

diesel fuel than a diesel-electric train. If we can use for running trains the power generated from the giant powerhouses that are now being built, and which use coal as their power source, we will obviously be conserving our liquid fuel resources.

There is another way in which fuel can be conserved in a positive manner. I do not believe that at the moment the Australian motor industry is doing any more than paying lip service, firstly, to the anti-pollution laws that are in vogue in this nation and, secondly, to our attempts to conserve fuel. I do not know how many people in this Assembly have purchased new motor vehicles in the past couple of years, but if any of them have they will know that the new motor vehicles perform in a much less efficient manner than the older vehicles they had. This is totally attributable to the anti-pollution devices that have been fitted to the motors.

In my view, the Australian motor industry stands condemned for the attitude it has adopted. It has gone for what are sometimes called soft options and looked for the easiest and cheapest ways out. As a result, the engines in new motor vehicles overheat, run rich and therefore use a lot more fuel, and generally perform far less efficiently than they should. And we are told we are trying to conserve fuel! How can we conserve fuel when a six-cylinder engine returns only 15 miles to the gallon, whereas in past years it would return 25 miles to the gallon.

Recently a couple of friends and I performed a test on our vehicles. Mine is a fairly old model Volvo, and we compared it with a Holden without anti-pollution devices and a new Falcon, with all the anti-pollution gear on it. The old six-cylinder Volvo with fuel injection returned a figure of 26½ miles to the gallon, the Holden 21, and the Falcon 15. The three vehicles were driven over the same distance at the same speed. Even allowing for slight driver variations, such widely ranging figures should not have been the result.

The answer to the problem lies squarely in the hands of the Australian motor industry if it really and truly wants to do anything about finding it. Obviously a vehicle with fuel injection will burn fuel in a more efficient manner than will a model with a carburettor. One of the other solutions to the problem is transistorised ignition, and I wonder why the Australian motor industry will not adopt these technological innovations to try to solve the problem. Instead of going for the easiest way out and wasting fuel, which is exactly what the industry is doing now, it should be looking for and developing transistorised ignition and other technological developments.

In a recent edition of the magazine "Overlander", volume 3 No. 5, there is an article with the heading, "Transistorised Ignition

Systems A Flash in the Pan?" The author goes through the technical data which proves fairly conclusively that transistorised ignition would be a sensible and viable answer to ignition problems in ordinary systems where pollution is caused through lack of accurate adjustments. The article states that engines with high revs cannot produce enough amps through the normal coil system and, therefore, the fuel is not burnt properly.

There are three types of transistorised ignition systems. They are the transistor-assisted ignition system, the induction discharge ignition system, and the capacitor discharge ignition system. The magazine writers have gone to the trouble of going through the three types of system and assessing each of them. Their conclusions are fairly pertinent, I believe, to the debate. They say that these systems are not cheap, and, obviously, that is why the Australian industry has not gone into them. It has looked for a cheap answer, and has found one that obviously has not worked properly. They go on—

"These systems are not cheap, varying in price from \$100 to \$150 plus fitting, but the advantages are obvious.

"We have found they give only a marginal decrease in fuel consumption. Engine torque is noticeably better—places where one previously changed down for a particular hill or corner can be negotiated smoothly without shifting gears.

"Engine tune-ups have been virtually eliminated, with no points or condensers to worry about, and plug life has doubled. Engine timing has not altered at all during the test period, and it has been checked monthly."

Those tests were carried out over a 12-month period. Perhaps the reason that the Australian motor industry does not go for transistorised ignition systems is that they do not need engine tune-ups as frequently as the existing system, and they do not use as many plugs. There are no points; therefore, one does not have to worry about them. Perhaps that is why the Australian motor industry has not looked seriously at transistorised ignitions; instead, it has carried on with the conventional coil and contact-breaker system that we are used to.

Then there are the fuel injector systems that are to be found in some of the more sophisticated motor vehicles imported into this country. These vehicles operate far more efficiently, as I have explained in some of my earlier comments. I believe that our Minister in attending the Australian Transport Advisory Council meetings should put forward these points of view, which are perfectly obvious to anybody who travels a lot.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, communications in Queensland are very important to many of us who of necessity

travel in our motor vehicles. We know that we are using a lot more fuel than we ought to be using. It grieves me that the Australian motor industry has not done its homework correctly and looked for better and more sophisticated technological advances to stop this stupidity in pollution controls.

A further point about fuel is that power alcohol—a product that could be produced in my electorate—could quite easily be added to standard grade fuel to upgrade the octane rating to that of supergrade fuel, thus causing the petrol to burn more cleanly and more efficiently. This is another option that has not been taken up, because I believe it suits the fuel industry and the fuel companies in Australia not to do so. As I said previously, perhaps I am rather cynical in my attitude to the fuel companies, but who would not be cynical in his attitude towards them when they grizzle and complain about the price of fuel? They go to the Prices Justification Tribunal, which is only a tribunal giving a right to raise prices, anyhow, and seek an increase in fuel prices. Then we from the bush come down to Brisbane and find that the price of petrol here is only half the price that is paid in the country. Where is the sense in that? I have no sympathy for the fuel companies, which, in Brisbane, as I saw when I came in this morning, are able to sell fuel at 16.8c a litre. In some cases, the price for fuel in the country is nearly double that figure. There is no justification for any company adopting that type of attitude to grizzle and complain about diminishing fuel resources. I doubt whether fuel resources are diminishing, and I believe that the oil companies are working against the people of this nation and not playing the part that they should be playing in assisting to conserve fuel and in looking at the problem from a technological point of view.

In the last few moments at my disposal, I wish to mention road safety. As one who travels very often on the road and covers between 50 000 and 60 000 km every year in his electorate, I am firmly of the opinion that the Queensland Road Safety Council, although doing a good job, needs to do a better job. In my opinion, there should be far more stringent rules and regulations covering applications for drivers' licences. I think it should be made very clear indeed that a drivers' licence is not a right but a privilege and that people should have to work for it. Having obtained a drivers' licence, a person should have to prove to everybody that he or she is worthy of it. Far too many road accidents occur as a result of carelessness and driver mistake. Roads may be the worst in the world but a good driver will negotiate them safely, and I think that far more emphasis must be placed on driving

skill and road safety in this State. In the Queensland Road Safety Council, the Minister has at his disposal an excellent organisation that he can use to get that message across.

It annoys me, too, that people point the finger of scorn at young drivers when road accidents occur, because quite often they are not the ones who cause accidents; rather are they caused by older drivers who have become careless, complacent and haphazard in their attitudes. All the signs in the world will not prevent road accidents.

(Time expired.)

Mr. AUSTIN (Wavell) (2.37 p.m.): It is with much pleasure that I rise to speak on the Estimates for the departments under the control of the Minister for Transport. One of these departments in particular, the Railway Department, comes under a great deal of criticism for the losses that it incurs, and I should like to say a few words in support of that department.

All Government departments should provide a public service. However, each year when the annual departmental reports and financial statements come out, one department is singled out for criticism in relation to its budget and its losses. If the Main Roads Department or the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission show increased losses, one does not see criticism of them in the newspapers, but almost invariably one sees criticism of the increasing losses of the Railway Department. I am not sure why that department is singled out, but I make a couple of suggestions that may assist in overcoming some of its problems.

First, I suggest that a transport authority be set up in Queensland, to operate initially in Brisbane. That authority would control bus and rail transport. Because, like other departments, it would receive subsidies and grants, it would not incur any losses. The Metropolitan Transit Authority is already in existence. If it were given a bit more muscle and a bit more strength, perhaps it could lease the buses from the Brisbane City Council as a going concern. There would be no change-over of control of the staffing of the buses, only in the scheduling. The Queensland Government Railways usually show a fairly substantial loss on passenger operations, and no doubt they would be pleased to get rid of their passenger facilities. There would then be one transport authority controlling public transport in Queensland; in other words, there would be a totally integrated system, the control of which would be the responsibility of one body. There should then be no question of whether the department operates at a loss or a profit. It could be made very clear that it operates to provide a service to the public. I have no doubt that, if that happened to the Railway

Department, each year its annual report would show a profit, and probably quite a substantial profit.

There is no doubt that the residents of a city create their own demand for mobility. At the present time, in Brisbane this demand is catered for by public transport and private motor vehicles. This demand can be gauged by assuming that each person allocates a fixed amount of time to travel. The mode of transport that he chooses will depend on the distance to be travelled and the amount of time that he allocates himself for travel.

The standard of mobility of the person who relies on public transport is about one-third that of the person who relies on his own private transport. It would appear, therefore, that one of the major constraints on the operation of an effective public transport system is the standard of mobility that it is able to provide compared with the standards that are acceptable to the travelling public.

As the Minister has remarked during the past year, the patronage of passenger rail services in both the metropolitan and country areas has fallen. The number of metropolitan passengers fell in that period by 1,750,000. We must look at the reasons for that drop. I suggest they are: (1) the level of service that is provided; (2) the speed of the service that is provided; and (3) the advertising and public relations campaigns carried out by each of the departments.

There is no doubt that a reasonable level of service would attract patronage. For example, anyone who wishes to travel by train to the city should be able to do so every 15, 20 or 30 minutes. In other words, the service must be constant. This does not mean to say that trains should run every five minutes. People should, however, be able to plan their day to suit themselves. If they know that, say, every half hour a train or a bus will pass through the nearest station or bus stop, they will use public transport.

**Mr. Moore:** You are 20 years ahead of your time.

**Mr. AUSTIN:** I do not think I am 20 years ahead of my time. The departments under the control of the Minister have the capability to provide such a service now.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** They are 20 years behind the times.

**Mr. AUSTIN:** No they're not. I believe that they are working towards the introduction of such a system already. I hope they are.

Quite clearly the Railway Department has set out to improve its image. It has already embarked upon the electrification programme, which is one of the primary and vital elements in the metropolitan railway system. In 1974-75, the Commonwealth Government

provided funds for electrification of the Ferny Grove-Darra corridor. That was followed by the allocation of further funds for electrification of a fixed-system design and electrification of sections of the Darra-Ipswich and Northgate-Shorncliffe lines. This was a clear indication of Commonwealth support for our electrification programme. Unfortunately, there appears to be a shortening or a lack of Federal funds. The Federal Government promised to provide a non-repayable grant to two-thirds of the cost of approved projects for improvements in our public transport system. I would hope that, with the funds that have already been promised, the Ferny Grove-Darra line will become operational in the near future.

I was also under the impression that the Commonwealth would continue to provide funds, but this appears not to be the case. In neither 1975-76 nor 1976-77 were further approvals forthcoming. Therefore, there is a lack of continuity of funds. I can recall that at one stage the Minister suggested that a further \$20,000,000 would come from the Federal Government and would be distributed to the States. However, this \$20,000,000 has not been forthcoming.

**Mr. Mackenroth:** Is that a broken promise?

**Mr. AUSTIN:** It probably is. The Federal Government, of course, has its problems. Obviously it is concerned about Government expenditure, and some areas of expenditure have to be cut. I believe that the Government has taken the lead in trying to get the electrification programme well under way. However, we are stifled at present by lack of funds.

I congratulate the Minister and his Department on the construction of the cross-river link which is to be called, I understand, the Merivale Bridge.

**Mr. Tomkins:** That is so.

**Mr. AUSTIN:** On a couple of occasions I have said in this Chamber that it is probably 100 years too late, and I think everyone is well aware of that. I am sure that the Minister knows it.

**A Government Member:** It should have been called the Tomkins Bridge.

**Mr. AUSTIN:** I am sure that it should have been. The changes made in the Transport portfolio since the Minister took over have been quite outstanding.

I have a few points to make about the railway system in my electorate. Initially, the Mayne-Northgate line was on the electrification programme. I am not too sure when electrification will be extended to that line but I know that a third track has been constructed. I believe it will provide for a better level of service in my electorate, and it

should facilitate the free and easy movement of goods and express trains. I hope that that is so.

I am concerned about the parking facilities provided at railway stations in my electorate. As I said, one of the answers to our transport problems is a co-ordinated or integrated system, with free access to parking facilities at railway stations. For some time the Metropolitan Transit Authority has been constructing parking facilities at railway stations throughout Brisbane. Some of them are good, but I must bring to the attention of the Committee the facilities at the Eagle Junction Railway Station.

I presume that the parking lot was constructed under the auspices of the Metropolitan Transit Authority. If one of the M.T.A. officers were to go out there one day, he would see that the area provides about half the number of parking spaces required. I go there quite frequently to have a look at it and I have often seen the parking area and the neighbouring streets full of vehicles. In these days, when public transport is trying to compete with the private motor vehicle, that is not good enough. Virginia Railway Station has no parking facilities. I believe that the patronage at that station warrants the spending of some money on upgrading the station. I hope that within the next financial year provision will be made in the Estimates for effecting improvements at those stations in my electorate.

I have some comments to make on drink-driving and the Transport Department. In 1975, 60,000 people throughout Australia were convicted for drink-driving. In my opinion, the fines under our present system are no deterrent to drink-drivers. In recent Press statements it was implied that the Government may grant provisional licences to people who have lost them for drink-driving offences. I am totally opposed to that suggestion. The community seems to have a general apathy to drink-driving, and generally considers drink-driving not to be criminal behaviour. Perhaps it is not; but if someone is killed, perhaps it is. The likelihood of detection would be one thing that would deter people from drink-driving. Generally, drink-drivers are detected only when they drive cars with inoperative stop lights, broken headlights, or indicators that are out of order, or when they drive erratically. Honourable members know that when they are driving along a road, they can have a speed gun levelled at them and be pulled up for speeding. That is random testing.

The drink-driving problem is so bad in this day and age that we should be trying to combat it in the same way as we combat tuberculosis with compulsory X-rays. Compulsory X-rays were introduced by this Government because of a particular health problem. Quite obviously, drink-driving is a health problem, and I believe that something must be done about it; so I shall make a couple of suggestions. I believe

that we should lower the level of allowable blood alcohol to below 0.06 per cent. The police should be allowed to pull up vehicles at random and make on-the-spot checks. The on-the-spot check revealing a level between 0.06 and 0.08 per cent should only result in a fine—in other words, a warning. The present limit is 0.08. Persons prosecuted within those limits would incur demerit points, just as they do for speeding and other offences. It would also give a warning of some sort that the person is on the list. I suggest also that a heavy fine be imposed, with no loss of licence, for a level between 0.08 and 0.1.

Because alcoholism is a health problem—a drug problem—we should institute through our Road Safety Council a driver education programme the lectures of which would be compulsory for those people found to have alcohol in their systems to those limits. They would perhaps be encouraged to take an education programme if they did not lose their licences but were informed that, the next time, they would. In other words, there should be no second chance. After a driver has been stopped once with a level up to 0.1, even if he was pulled up at 0.06, he should perhaps lose his licence for a short time. Of course, for those above 0.1 there is no excuse and the present system of loss of licence should apply.

Research in Australia and overseas has shown that the only deterrent to drink-driving is loss of licence. Therefore, drivers need to be warned—perhaps a little bit more easily and readily; perhaps the publicity is not enough—that they are going to lose their licences. I suggest that we change the present system and change it very rapidly.

In conclusion, I compliment the Minister and the members of the department for the excellent work they performed last year. I look forward to ready co-operation with them this year.

**Mr. PREST** (Port Curtis) (2.43 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to speak in this debate on the Estimates of the Transport Department. Having served 29 faithful years with the Railway Department, naturally I am concerned about railway operations today and the losses that have been incurred in the past. We see that in the last three years losses in the railway system have increased by 100 per cent. However, I am one who believes that a loss by the railways is not a loss to the State. I believe that the Railway Department is providing a service not only to the State but also to its people. I believe in giving assistance to those who have suffered through drought or some other misfortune. I also look at it in another light; that is, that those with the capacity to pay should make a full contribution for their freight carried by the Queensland railways.

I am not working the parish pump, but I believe that some of the concessions handed out are too great in some spheres. It has been shown that those receiving concessions are making very great profits by the end of each year. I have heard those honourable members who are men of the land admit that, at times, they have enjoyed benefits under the railway system, such as freight rebates. I do not say that they should not receive those benefits simply because they have two or three incomes, but the little fellow should be getting more on a needs basis than he gets on an across-the-board basis.

Because of the losses that have accrued over the years, the railway workers have been penalised in lack of good living conditions. They have not improved in the past 30 years. When I was in the shearing industry, we lived under pretty poor conditions. In the majority of cases, fettlers are housed in Bondwood huts and other forms of low-standard accommodation not only in the North-west but right throughout the State.

The Budget allocates money to improve the standard of railway accommodation. I hope that, when homes are being built for railway employees, particularly in the West, they are erected on high stumps. I have lived in that area and I know the hot conditions that prevail there. It is a great benefit for shift workers and their families to be able to get under their houses and cool off.

My experience is that accommodation for the trainmen is being considerably upgraded. This is a great thing because they occupy that accommodation for at least eight hours at a time. In my days in Moura it was not unusual for them to stay for 18 or 20 hours. Moura was one of the places with better accommodation for trainmen.

I do not wish to cast any reflection on the honourable member for Gregory, but the accommodation in Longreach leaves much to be desired. I was a young man in Longreach 32 years ago. In those days the trainmen's quarters were located in a very outdated building. That building is still used in 1978, although I must confess that there has been some remodelling, for example, the use of masonite on the floor. The trainmen's quarters in Longreach should be looked at. When I was out in that area not very long ago, the railwaymen approached me on this matter.

It is pleasing to see the good work being done by the railway unions and their members. At present there are 24,583 people in the department's work-force, so it is a very big employer. A few years ago it had a few thousand more employees than that. It is good that so little disputation occurs in this service. I think it was in 1948 that we had the last major confrontation in the railways. This has been due, in part, to our having a Commissioner for Railways who is willing to listen. When I was a union representative in Gladstone, he would always listen to me.

He was always a person with whom one could sit down and talk over any problems and he would always give one a good hearing. I read in the "Railway Advocate" today that some progress has been made in relation to the log of claims submitted by the Combined Railways Unions. If granted, it will be for the betterment not only of the workers themselves but also of the Queensland Government and the railways system.

There are many old stations throughout the State that need replacing or upgrading, and one in particular is the main station at Gladstone. It is a very important part of our railway system between Brisbane and Cairns. It is the destination for the millions of tonnes of minerals carried by the railways from the western fields, particularly the Moura field. I know that the Civic Beautification Committee in Gladstone has approached the Central Queensland manager about getting work started on a new station for Gladstone.

I turn now to the revenue that is earned by the railways today. In the past year there has been a drop in cartage of 81 000 tonnes. Although this is a very large drop, the Government is supporting a road transport system that is running in opposition to the Government's own railway system. While the road transport system is doing a good job in its own field, it is running in opposition to our railway system and is taking revenue from it. I find the Government's attitude very hard to understand. There should be some form of co-ordination between the two systems whereby the railway transports the goods up to a certain point and then a road transport system controlled by the Government delivers the goods from there.

I can remember when the bulk system was first introduced. We found at that time that the company responsible for transporting goods from Brisbane to Cairns through the rail system was overloading and not paying the full freight rate that it should have been paying.

**Mr. Jones** interjected.

**Mr. PREST:** That was Mr. Holland, yes.

At that time, the department said that what we missed in freight rates we saved in wages. I did not believe that at the time. There were other reasons, and those reasons still pertain today. The wagons are still being overloaded and so the train is overloaded, and an overloaded train, once it gets on a bank, loses time or it stalls, and then either it is late in getting to its destination or it holds up all the other traffic wanting to use the line at that time. I am certain that the Railway Department knows about this problem, but the public does not. If an overloaded train is stuck on a bank and is delaying a mail train, people have some very adverse words to say about the driver, but

it happens not through the fault of the driver, but because wagons are overloaded and thus the train is overloaded.

To return to passenger traffic—I read in the report of the Commissioner for Railways that passenger traffic in the metropolitan area and in the country has fallen. This has happened because, after all, passenger traffic is not being catered for as it should be. With all due respect to the Minister, only a fortnight ago when we were talking about the closure of the Gloucester Street station on the south side, he said that adequate bus transport will be available to take people to the city. I do not think that the Minister for Transport should be trying to take members of the travelling public away from trains and put them onto buses. We believe that there would not be the present congestion on the roads if we could run adequate co-ordinated services throughout the metropolitan area. Many areas throughout the city that are not served by rail today could be so served if there was a co-ordinated service from bus to train. Also, it would not be necessary to go ahead, at full pace, with building freeways and bridges in the city.

The authorities in every other city try to keep road transport out of the main part of the city. The goods carried by road transport could be handled by the electric rail system that is being introduced some 21 years later than it should have been introduced.

We find also that the Railway Department is spending, and has spent for quite some time, great sums of money on the upgrading of rolling-stock. This is good. After all, we have to get away from the old wooden wagons. However, once we look at 60-tonne capacity wagons, we find that we have to spend huge sums of money on tracks. This also contributes to the betterment of the system.

Large sums of money are being spent on centralised traffic control between Caboolture and Gladstone. This is provided for in the Estimates and that is all to the good, because it speeds up the service and also makes life a lot better for the worker. That is, of course, when the system is working effectively.

When centralised traffic control was first introduced between Gladstone and Moura some years ago, we found that it was good in dry weather. When we were being tutored for the introduction of centralised traffic control, I remember that we were told that the pink form would be used once in a lifetime. Our life span in those days must have been very short, because whenever there was a wet period, a shower of rain, or even a heavy fog, the centralised traffic control went out. We would get authority from the controllers, and in those early days the controllers had to get authority from another appointed officer. We sat on those big sections for some hours because the section had to be cleared. Even if it was an hour

or a 50-minute section, the officer had to report in; he had to say that the train had arrived at a station. We might sit at a siding for anything up to a couple of hours. Nevertheless, centralised traffic control is a wonderful thing. I am very pleased with it. Provided the bugs are taken out of it, it will work very effectively when it is completely introduced.

We heard also in this debate that trains should be running to Redcliffe. I quite agree with that proposition. However, I think that we have been a little short-sighted. We are at present building the Houghton Highway from Brighton to the Redcliffe Peninsula, but I do not think that any provision has been made on that bridge for a railway line. If the establishment of a rail service to Redcliffe was being considered, it should have been considered before the Houghton Highway was started.

The Treasurer, who is again overseas, has announced that Queensland is likely to obtain a loan of \$8,000,000 to finance the electrification of rail services in Brisbane. It shows how bankrupt the State must be when the Government has to borrow \$8,000,000 overseas. However, I suppose that is not really surprising if one takes into account the type of Government that we have had in this State for the last 21 years.

In my opinion, there has been a great improvement in the State's railway system. I travel quite frequently on the "Sunlander" from Gladstone to Brisbane. There is a club car on that train and I understand that, unfortunately, accommodation has been cut back somewhat because of the introduction of that car. I ask the Minister to consider making additional passenger accommodation available. Only by making more seats and sleeping accommodation available can passenger services be improved. People will use the trains if they know that there is no shortage of accommodation.

The train service from Rockhampton to Brisbane is very good. I board the train at Gladstone at 6.30 p.m., have a night's sleep, and wake up in Brisbane at about 7 a.m. No-one could complain about a service such as that.

The railway employees who work the trains and the conductors who serve on them do a wonderful job. After working for 29 years in the Railway Department, I appreciate the work that railwaymen do. They work under all sorts of conditions and at all hours. Because of deferments, the running men can be woken on the hour every hour, or at least quite frequently, throughout the night, yet at times people wonder why their tolerance or temper becomes a little frayed. Railwaymen have to put up with that, and it is to the advantage of the State that 24,000 people are doing such a worthwhile job.

The fettlers, too, work under all sorts of conditions.

**Mr. Jones:** Shocking conditions.

**Mr. PREST:** As the honourable member for Cairns says, shocking conditions. When the weather is at its worst, when there are cyclones or floods, fettlers work for very long hours. When they come home to their camp, what do they find? A bondwood hut, bare walls and a bare floor.

**Mr. Jones:** And wet wood.

**Mr. PREST:** Yes, and wet wood, if they have to make a fire.

(Time expired).

**Mr. BOURKE (Lockyer) (3.3 p.m.):** First, I wish to say a good word for both commissioners and their staff. I think it is recognised that the staff of the Commissioner for Railways, perhaps more so than the staff of any other Government department, work under very hard conditions in distant parts of the State.

It is said that a country can run only if it has an efficient and honest Public Service. That makes up for all the shortcomings of the Government on the political side. The opposite is certainly not true. However good politicians are, they cannot maintain and administer the State in the absence of an honest and efficient Public Service.

The need for an energy policy has become a catchcry in modern times. This makes a good deal of sense in view of the much-talked-about shortage of oil and fluid sources of energy. An essential part of any energy policy, of course, is a national transport policy. To my mind, there has never been developed in this country a rational, comprehensive transport policy that covers either this State or the nation as a whole. The car-manufacturing industry in Australia is entirely foreign-owned, and a great deal of consideration seems to be shown to these companies—in fact, consideration far in excess of what they deserve. Every time a Federal Budget is brought down, the question is asked, "What can be done to assist the car-manufacturing industry, and what can be done to stimulate employment in it?"

It is a feature of this industry that most of the employment in it is in southern States. I am looking at this not from a parochial point of view but from a national one. Resources devoted to the manufacture of private cars are quite often wasted resources. Cars are a luxury item. Many luxury imported cars are being driven around and this places a drain on our foreign exchange. Certain citizens pamper themselves.

One aspect of our transport policies, or the lack of them, is the way in which they work against decentralisation. A feature of

the recent furore over bread manufacturers was the way in which Brisbane bakers were able to have bread trucked out to country centres. It is a sad feature of our transport policies that they were able to do this and put people in smaller towns out of business. I am not suggesting anything against the efficiency of businesses, but the transport system is often used unfairly to the detriment of small towns. This has contributed in no small way to the decline in rural population.

In talking of a rational transport policy, one must deal with shipping. I was encouraged to see a recent Bill that permitted Australian National Line ships to carry cargo between Queensland ports. In the last century and in the early part of this century Australia had its own foreign-going services. These days, however, Australia is perhaps unique in that it does not own a substantial foreign-going fleet.

Foreign ownership is predominant among the ships that enter our ports. Each year huge losses are incurred in our import/export balances. They are an ulcer on our national accounts. The losses can be balanced by borrowing, but Governments have been very short-sighted and have acted irresponsibly. It is time that something was done about it.

It is interesting to look at the number of ships that entered Australian ports in previous years. In 1975-76, for example, the number of ships entering Australian ports either with cargo or in ballast totalled 5,772. Of that number, only 67 were Australian-registered. That is a scandal. In contrast, 1,270 of those ships were registered in Japan. In other words, the number of Japanese ships was 20 times that of Australian-registered vessels. The Netherlands had 113 vessels, New Zealand had 126, Norway had 295 and Sweden had 86. The wage structure in those countries is comparable to ours in a general sense, so it makes me wonder what it is about our policies that has permitted this situation to arise.

Something that has contributed to it is the neglect of past Federal Governments. However, the predominant feature is the power and strength as well as the policies of the Seamen's Union. It has managed to dominate the shipping industry to its own narrow advantage. It has certainly secured for its members conditions that are far superior to those enjoyed by seamen on ships of other nations. The Seamen's Union is a Communist-dominated one, and it has succeeded in making its members well and truly the plutocrats of the working world. They enjoy excellent working conditions and have generous leave entitlements.

Another factor that has contributed to the sorry state of our shipping industry is the poor record of the Waterside Workers' Federation and the Storemen and Packers' Union. They

have a history of militancy. In the past, their workers suffered from very arduous conditions, but those days are well and truly in the past. Some of their industrial attitudes, particularly those of the Storemen and Packers' Union, verge on extortion. These policies have added tremendously to the cost of goods and transport.

The basic element in transport in Australia is rail transport. All the railways in Australia, with the exception of the Commonwealth Railways, are State-owned. They are big business and they employ a large number of workers. For example, in 1976 Queensland railways employed 24,000 workers and in 1977 the number increased by 500 to 24,520. As I say, the railways are big business and have a big staff—and incur big losses. In 1977-78, the Queensland Railways incurred a loss of \$82,000,000; in 1976-77, a loss of \$63,000,000; and the estimated loss for 1978-79 is \$80,000,000. These losses compare with a total Education budget of \$472,000,000 and an income from pay-roll tax amounting to \$223,000,000.

We cannot continue to accept the losses that are incurred year after year by the Railway Department. We must strive to convert these losses into profits. No State can afford to accept increasing losses as a yearly feature. I do not blame the employees; they do their best. The operations of the Railway Department are manacled in many ways by tradition. Inbuilt in their structure and method of operation are costs that may well prove to be impossible to avoid.

Putting it bluntly, I often think that staff numbers are excessive. Perhaps I am looking at the service from the outside, and there are good reasons for having everyone there. It is easy for an outsider to criticise, but as members of this State Assembly we should criticise when we feel it necessary. Perhaps it is time to again suggest a rationalisation of services. It is a very sore political point to suggest the closure of lines and stations, but we must look at the losses, identify the cause and source, acquaint the public with the information and let them make a choice.

As the Railway Department makes a profit in carting minerals, the problem with losses is worse than it appears. In 1977, \$98,000,000 was earned in carting coke and coal; in 1978 the revenue was \$109,000,000. In 1978, minerals, I understand, contributed 53 per cent of the total State railway revenue.

Other questions have arisen through our involvement in mineral discoveries. For instance, the Phosphate Hill mine closed recently, and through its railway connection the State guaranteed the company for \$20,000,000. Similarly, the State was involved in guaranteeing the proprietors of Greenvale Nickel for \$70,000,000—again, mainly because of the State's railway involvement. From the phosphate mine we will gain the rolling-stock if the mine should close, but

my point is that, if the State had not been involved through its railways, it would not have guaranteed the loans and would not now be faced with prospective heavy losses.

It has been said that Queensland coal royalties are low, and indeed they are. However, it has been argued that Queensland makes its profit on coal cartage. It was estimated in 1976 that the railways made a profit of \$1.25 a ton on coal carted. Utah, of course, contributed 80 per cent of that. If that is correct, the losses are far more serious than the figures reveal. Profits would come to the State in the form of royalties if the State were not involved in mineral cartage. But the profits are being lost to the State; they are being soaked up by continuing losses in other railway sections. Why did the State become involved in this mineral cartage? Why didn't it let the companies construct private lines? I see no reason for the State's constructing the lines. We are not committed to socialism, which would account for a compulsion to own these transport systems. I cannot see why originally we did not let the mineral companies construct their own railway lines and run them as private shows. The State could have got its just return from royalties on the minerals. However, that is now history. We are involved, and we may suffer heavy losses.

In the matter of the phosphate deposits at Duchess, I am prompted to ask just what steps have been taken to run down the line, what losses in profits will the railway suffer compared with last year, and what continuing operating costs and losses will result from maintaining the line? We should be aware that profits that would have come to us in the form of mineral royalties are being lost to the State because of the way that they are fed into the railway system and soaked up by continuing losses. This is no criticism of the staff; the staff must do what the Government decides, according to its policy. But the fact that we are making profits on coal and losing them in the general accounting system has covered up a continuing sore, that is, the loss on the commuter service in Brisbane. As I said, any loss on any service should be isolated and publicised so that the people can make their choice. No hidden subsidies should be paid, but obviously there is a hidden subsidy on transporting commuters in the Brisbane area.

I am concerned about the fact that we charge people for travelling on public transport, which means that we are involved in high costs in collecting fares. Is it worth while collecting the fares? Would we better off saying that people could travel for nothing? We talk about encouraging people to use the service on the ground that it is more efficient to transport them on community services, but perhaps by abolishing fares—and this may be in conflict with what I have said, but the public must know what we are trying to do—we would save the expense of having people sell tickets and

check them. The whole system might be the better for it if we were practical and followed it through by reducing staff costs. However, in the context of Government that may not be practicable; it is not very easy to cut staff.

We have a great hope for the future of the railways in Brisbane with electrification, which will result in an efficient service. Much of the loss will be reduced. One feature that always occurs to me is that on the suburban lines there is a train of seven or eight carriages every hour. One wonders whether it would be possible to run more frequently smaller trains of two or three carriages, based on the rail-motor concept, rather than bigger trains with a three-man crew. This would reduce costs and give a better service. I have memories, as a child, of that seemingly never-ending wait on a platform for a train. The hour gap between services is rather long and does not encourage people to use the railways.

I also wish to speak about the prospects of the benefits of electrification on the Toowoomba line. The previous Budget adverted to a study of electrification of that line, mainly with a view to freight haulage. This is a turn of the circle. We had coal-powered trains—steam engines—and by returning to electricity we are reverting to coal as the main source of power, which makes sense in view of the shortage of petroleum. One would hope to see Millmerran come into its own with this.

**Mr. Bishop:** Are you aware that there has been an 11-year gap between services to the Gold Coast?

**Mr. BOURKE:** I was not aware that the honourable member was still waiting for that Southport train.

I would like to see the prospect of a commuter service to Toowoomba. It would lead to a far more efficient service than we have now. In England, people travel from Kent up to London. Having a home in the country and travelling up to London is accepted as a high standard of living. It may be a fanciful exercise to put forward these suggestions, considering the finance required; but one is forced to ask whether it would be possible to have a station at Withcott, at the bottom of the Toowoomba Range, where trains could terminate so that people could drive there and have a fast, efficient service to Brisbane.

One also thinks about the new system of crossing the range. There are continuing problems with the right of way. One wonders whether there are more modern ways of getting goods and traffic up over the range—perhaps a steeper final section with a different method of power. There have been suggestions about a tunnel. Some people in Toowoomba have made this exercise a hobby.

I imagine there are vast problems. However, it may be well worth the commissioner's time, from the viewpoint of public relations, to make a statement on this or have someone else make a statement, pointing out the difficulties that are obviously involved in such a project. People in Toowoomba take up these projects and kick them around. It may be just as well every now and again to put a bit of sense into it.

I would like to see Toowoomba included in an up-to-date transport system in South-east Queensland by integrating transport between Toowoomba and Nambour, Brisbane and the Gold Coast, so that it becomes an efficient, modern service.

I cannot leave the subject of the Railway Department without referring to housing. I have railway constituents in Gatton and between Gatton and Toowoomba. One can only say that their houses are very old. I realise that it is all a matter of finance. The department does its best to fit in with the needs of the people, but one must sympathise with the people who have to live in the houses, particularly the women. The employees are subject to transfers and there are problems with floor coverings, curtains and so on. We are talking about very old houses. A recent development, for instance, has been the provision of hot-water systems. Although it is good to see them, it is perhaps a bit late in the day. Conditions get worse out West. I would question the Railway Department's spending of large funds on new stations such as Whinstanes at Doomben. Quite a vast investment was involved in that. One is forced to wonder what return that will yield to the Railway Department. The union, I feel, is quite right in its campaign on housing. I cannot argue against that, although it is a matter of considering the continuing losses of the railways and determining just how much money can be directed to improvement of housing.

While I am on the subject of the unions, I am forced to question the mentality of the railway unions. We have seen a number of capricious strikes. They have forfeited a lot of public sympathy in the attitude they take towards the people they serve, especially when we bear in mind that the railways is run annually at a very great loss. The unions pull on a strike in Brisbane at the drop of a hat. They just dump the commuters and let them make their own way home. That convinces one that they are not deserving of much sympathy on some aspects. We have seen a strike over the fact that the secretary of one of the unions could not appear before the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. This is not a matter that should have been inflicted upon the people of Queensland. Some officials have taken a strong stand on the matter of uranium.

One aspect I would bring to the notice of the commissioner is the prospect of altering the system of railway level crossings.

There was a recent tragedy when a young man was run over by a train in Herries Street. Flashing lights are installed at the crossing but a boom cannot adequately cover it. The city's medical officer has suggested the provision of bells such as those used in other States to attract the attention of pedestrians, as obviously the lights do not fulfil the warning role.

**Mr. Turner:** That does not always work because the flashing lights and clanging bells were working at Clayfield and I saw a cyclist ride through.

**Mr. BOURKE:** In the case I was discussing, the lad did not know that the train was coming.

I turn now to railway refreshment rooms. Recently I was surprised to learn of a proposal to drop the licensed refreshment facilities at Helidon and a number of other centres. I would have thought that the rent paid on them would have been very acceptable to the department. The argument might be good at centres where the rooms are being abused and possibly an argument could be put up for closure in selected places. I would regret it very much if the Helidon rooms were closed down, as they are a facility in the town and have a long historical tradition there. They provide a very good service and I would be sorry if they were closed. As I said, they contribute a reasonable amount in rent annually to the department's revenue.

We should have a State policy on road transport. It should be tied in with our policy on energy. Its only aim should be efficiency—not protection, feather-bedding or tradition. I hope to see a continuation of freeway construction in Brisbane. One has only to drive over the freeways to be convinced of the need for them. We have heard a good deal of argument from some Labor members about people travelling by trains and buses. Indeed, they have gone as far as to say that the people should be forced to use public transport. People elect to drive cars, and on that basis we should provide an adequate highway system. Freeways have been a great advance.

The Government has put a good deal of effort into road safety measures. I congratulate it on its efforts to encourage people to drive more carefully. I pay a tribute to the late Keith Hooper, who took a special interest in this aspect of the department's work. It is obvious from driving on the North Coast Highway that many people steer a car rather than drive it. I agree with the honourable member for Isis that a licence is a privilege, not a right. We should be much harder on those who are involved in accidents. It is more than a matter of their being detected for committing an offence. Any person involved in an accident, particularly if people are injured, should have his licence examined to

see if he should be allowed to keep it. That is one aspect at which the Government should be looking. Because of the road carnage, particularly as a result of drink-driving, we cannot afford to go easy on our policy.

We should look at what is done, I understand, in some European countries. Anyone involved in an accident, particularly one resulting in a fatality, has his licence suspended on the spot. We should be looking at this rather than the detection of speeding offences. We should investigate people involved in accidents and examine their records. A person who has a history of involvement in accidents should have his licence suspended.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. FRAWLEY (Caboolture) (3.24 p.m.):** The Minister for Transport has a fairly difficult portfolio and it is obvious that he cannot satisfy everybody. I am one of those whom he cannot satisfy. Although this debate started last Thursday, it was only this morning that the department's annual report was put on my desk. I think that we should receive better service than that.

Since my election in 1972 I have requested improved parking facilities for the rail commuters of Caboolture. I understand that the Metropolitan Transit Authority has provided off-street parking at 37 stations for 3,300 cars to encourage people to leave their cars at those stations and use the railways. That is a most commendable idea and I am on side with it. However, the railway area at Caboolture is dusty and the wind blows dirt and dust all over the industrial area of Caboolture. When I see the excellent parking facilities at Petrie, which I drive past occasionally, I wonder if the Railway Department considers that the North Coast Line terminates at Petrie. Caboolture has been forgotten or is not considered to be important enough.

The rail commuters from Caboolture and the stations between Caboolture and Petrie, such as Morayfield, Narangba and Burpengary, are entitled to decent facilities. At the present time, the opening into the Caboolture yards opposite the hotel in Matthew Terrace is used as both an entrance and an exit and great congestion occurs every evening by reason of the number of cars parked adjacent to the entrance and exit. Many owners of the cars parked there are patrons of the hotel. I have made a count and found that there is an average of 69 cars a day parked inside the station yard and an average of 25 parked just outside the entrance.

The station buildings are in need of replacement. Lighting facilities have been improved, and I thank the Minister for that. The yard was top-dressed in 1977 and the bondwood huts at the northern end of the

railway yards, which have been the subject of many complaints, have been repaired and repainted as a result of my representations to both the previous and the present Minister.

In the Tidy Towns Competition in 1977 Caboolture lost a lot of points because of the condition of the railway yards. I will read out part of the report of the judge in that competition so that honourable members will know what I am talking about. This is the part—

“The whole town looked exceptionally clean and free from litter which impressed me a great deal. The main street was quite immaculate . . .”

Incidentally, my office is in the main street. The report goes on—

“. . . with hardly a piece of paper to be seen. I was even more impressed with this knowing that the community had no prior warning of my judging time. Perhaps the worst area would be the railway and it is a shame to see this happen. Perhaps the Council could try for co-operation in asking the railway people to clean it up because of points lost in the Tidy Towns Contest.”

In all fairness to the Railway Department, the yards at Caboolture have been cleaned up. The report goes on—

“If this is unsuccessful then my Council would most certainly be prepared to back you in an approach to the Commissioner for Railways or perhaps the Caboolture council could do what the Belyando Shire have done—obtained permission to clean the railway area themselves and bill the Department for the costs.”

Caboolture is one of the fastest-growing shires in Queensland and, with the planned S.G.I.O. development at Morayfield and the overpass to Bribie Island almost finished, the growth rate will increase in this area.

Recently I wrote to the Minister regarding an improved service to and from Caboolture. This is to commence on about 20 November, and I thank him for that consideration. However, that still does not alter the fact that I believe that Caboolture has been neglected. I request that consideration be given to the electrification of the railway to Caboolture as soon as possible. Let us not worry about taking it to Rockhampton straight away; let us first get it to Caboolture.

During the many years that I have been a member I have spoken about the railway to Redcliffe. I know that the Minister is going to make some statement on it, but I am going to make mine first. There have been various surveys suggested for the railway to Redcliffe. This has gone on for years, right back to the 1920s. I even saw a map that some land developers had—I cannot think of their names but, if I can, I will let honourable members know—when they were selling land, and that showed a railway line to

Redcliffe. In fact, my father had a copy of this map and he lent it to a Redcliffe town councillor. It was never returned and that councillor has since died. As I said, that map showed a railway line going to Redcliffe, and it showed railway stations in Redcliffe. It was only a put-up job by the developers to sell land there.

They went out West and sold land to people in Toowoomba, Roma and all the other places where people are pretty gullible. They bought it at a fairly low price but, of course, a railway line was never intended for Redcliffe. The plans showed a line from Dakabin on the North Coast line to Redcliffe, which is a distance of 15.6 km; from Petrie to Redcliffe via Woody Point, which is 16.4 km; from Petrie to Redcliffe, which is 15.6 km; from Petrie via the State school to Redcliffe, which is 17.6 km; and also from Sandgate to Redcliffe, which is 16 km, right to the Redcliffe pier. This would be a most expensive line and I would be against putting a line from Sandgate to Redcliffe.

There has been correspondence over the years, but no detailed investigation has been made since 1921. In view of the development that has taken place in the area in the intervening period, it has been necessary for a fresh detailed survey to be made, and one has just been completed. A proposal was put forward by the Redcliffe Town Council in July 1957 to extend the rail system from Sandgate as an electrified line to Redcliffe. However, that would involve very heavy costs in crossing the Houghton Highway. Land resumptions all through Sandgate and along the foreshores would cost a great deal and would prevent it from being a feasible proposition.

In April 1957, Mr. F. Andrews forwarded a copy of a report dealing with public transport to Redcliffe, which he had compiled for the Redcliffe Town Council. The report proposed the joint use of the existing rail track between Brisbane and Sandgate in the event of a rapid-transit system being established between Sandgate and Redcliffe, but such a scheme could not be entertained by the Railway Department; it would have had to be done by the Redcliffe Town Council. Anyway, it was decided not to go ahead with it.

On 29 January 1958, the then Minister for Transport (Sir Gordon Chalk) replied to representations by the then member for Murrumba (Sir David Nicholson) stating—

“In all the circumstances and particularly in view of the likelihood of all available finance for a number of years being absorbed by schemes which the Department has undertaken or is planning, it is considered that the matter of extension of this Department’s rail system to Redcliffe should remain in abeyance for the present.”

In March 1959, the Railway Department wrote to the council saying that it would not require any land in the area of the town of Redcliffe, because it was not envisaged

that a railway line would be constructed to the Redcliffe peninsula. The department sent a similar letter in 1959 to the Redcliffe Peninsula Council of Progress Associations.

This went on and on, and in September 1959 Sir Gordon Chalk said—

“I am sorry that I am unable to hold out hope of a decision being made in favour of the provision of a rail link in the foreseeable future.”

The Redcliffe Chamber of Commerce got into the act in 1970. As I have said, this went on and on. Promises were made; this was promised and that was promised. As far back as 1972 there were some indications that a railway line to Redcliffe might be considered, because on 4 October 1972 Alan J. Fox, authorised surveyor from Brisbane, wrote on behalf of Colin Richards, a land developer, to the Queensland Railway Department, and the answer from the department on 19 October 1972 reads—

“Reference is made to your letter of 4 October concerning a proposed water main under Portion 500, Parish of Redcliffe, at Narangba.

“Portion 500 is now owned by this Department but was resumed by the Department of Lands in connection with a proposal to provide siding accommodation to an area on the eastern side of the Old Gympie Road.”

That is in the Narangba Industrial Estate. Alan Fox then wrote to the Land Administration Commission on 7 November 1972, and he received an answer on 4 July 1973. That is not a bad effort. He wrote concerning the laying of the 4-inch water main across portion 500. He was advised that the land was to be used for a rail link to service the Narangba Industrial Estate, and that the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development had no objection to the pipeline provided the railways approved of the proposal. He was told to refer back to the railways. He went to the Railway Department first, and was told to go to the Land Administration Commission. Then he went back to the railways.

As far back as 1972 there was talk of a rail link to the Narangba Industrial Estate. In my opinion, there is only one way in which to bring the railway line to Redcliffe, and that is through the Narangba Industrial Estate to give a bit of service to the people of Deception Bay, who have a rotten transport system at present. That is, I might say, through no fault of the Minister or his officers. There are private bus lines to that area, but Deception Bay is an isolated little place between Redcliffe and Caboolture. It is closer to Redcliffe than Caboolture. It seems to have been neglected by everybody over the years. It is a fast-growing area. Many old people live there.

Mr. Jones interjected.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I do not mind being described as old and living in an isolated area; it never worries me. Anyhow, the people of Deception Bay deserve a bit of a service, and I hope that any rail link that comes to Redcliffe goes through the Narangba Industrial Estate and services the people of Deception Bay.

Some years ago I took out a few figures on the number of passengers using the co-ordinated service between Brisbane and Redcliffe. Unlike the Auditor-General, I went back to 1969; I did not stop at 1974. The Railway Department sold 74,000 single tickets in 1969-70, and at that time Redcliffe had a population of 31,000 people. I was a member of the Redcliffe Council at the time, so I know that these figures are fairly accurate. The sale of single tickets, return tickets, workers' weekly tickets—the whole lot—slowly diminished. In 1973-74, when the population of Redcliffe was 38,400—an increase of 7,400 over 1969-70—the number of single tickets sold dropped to 74,000.

**Mr. Milliner:** Had any of those been converted?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Not these rail tickets. Over the years the Redcliffe people have preferred private transport to trains, only because, although the co-ordinated service is a good one, they still have to get out of a bus and into a train at Sandgate. It is not so bad in the morning, but coming home at night—and I have travelled that way once or twice—one gets out of the train at Sandgate and usually there is a mad stampede for the Redcliffe buses. Anyone who does not move quickly has to stand all the way home.

As I said earlier, as far back as 1920 many people were defrauded by salesmen selling land in Redcliffe on the assumption that a railway line would go to Redcliffe, but nothing has happened since then.

People living on the Redcliffe Peninsula show a marked preference for private transport. Some time ago I pointed out to a former Minister for Transport that many cars travelled daily from Redcliffe to the city with only the driver in them. I do not know what the number of cars was, but I did take the figures out some years ago. For about 18 years I drove to Brisbane every day from Redcliffe, and I noticed that most cars had only one or two people in them. I asked the Minister whether, to alleviate the congestion on the Hornibrook Highway, he could allow Redcliffe drivers to take paying passengers in their cars. I was aware that that would upset third-party-insurance provisions, but I thought that the only people who would have been affected adversely were the bus proprietors, who would have screamed their heads off. I think that was back in about 1976. The Minister gave me an answer that was reasonably satisfactory as far as he was concerned, and I accepted that.

Later, while talk of a railway line to Redcliffe was still going on, the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads proposed that a railway be built from Brisbane to the Gold Coast at a cost of \$60,000,000. Both the honourable member for Redcliffe and I opposed that, and we will continue to oppose it. Any railway line to the Gold Coast must be built after the line to Redcliffe has been built. There was a railway line to the Gold Coast years ago and the Government pulled it up. Now there is a proposal by the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads to build another railway line to the Gold Coast. The people of Redcliffe are not going to cop that; the line to Redcliffe must be built first.

**Mr. Mackenroth:** Do you agree with Mike Evans that people convicted of drink-driving should have provisional licences?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I was going to speak about that later, but I will take the honourable member's interjection. I think that the statement by Mr. Evans was just like all his ridiculous statements. The fact that he made a botch of the Clayfield by-election proves that. He is only flying kites. Fancy giving provisional licences to people convicted of drunken driving! It is absolute rubbish. Anybody's wife or child could be killed by a drunken driver. I do not care about blokes going to a hotel and having a drink; they can do what they like.

**Mr. Mackenroth:** Do you say Mike Evans doesn't know what he is talking about?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Of course he doesn't know what he is talking about.

**Mr. Mackenroth:** Is that normal?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I believe so. I think I have answered the honourable member's interjection.

Getting back to the important part of the debate—any attempt to build a new railway line to service anywhere but the Redcliffe Peninsula will meet with a great deal of opposition from the people of Redcliffe. The population of Redcliffe has now increased to 42,000, and the road to Redcliffe will be improved with the completion of the Houghton Highway in about 1980. Eventually the Hornibrook Highway will provide two lanes in one direction and the Houghton Highway will provide two lanes in the other direction, which seems a good proposal. I understand that the Hornibrook Highway will be closed and repaired. Of course, it is only an old plank structure that was built in about 1933.

**Mr. Kruger:** You would agree that the longer they leave it, the more difficult it is going to be to get a rail link? The sooner they do it, the better.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I cannot follow the honourable member's interjection. I suggest that he make a sensible interjection.

I know that I seem to be harping on the need for a railway to Redcliffe, but I suggest that it could be provided quite cheaply through the western part of Redcliffe. There is a lot of farmland in the western areas of Redcliffe; in fact, right from the Narangba Industrial Estate to the Rothwell Monument, which is at the junction of Anzac Avenue and the Redcliffe connecting road, land would be cheap to resume. There would be no trouble in resuming land for a right of way for a railway through there. That would be the cheapest way of bringing a railway to Redcliffe. It could be brought right in to Kippa-Ring. It is only about 2 miles from the main part of Redcliffe to Kippa-Ring, and people would have no trouble getting there in the morning. It would not be necessary to take a rail link right through to the Redcliffe pier, as was suggested years ago. I know that some people on the Rail for Redcliffe Committee have drawn up a plan showing stations at Woody Point and all over the place. They are unnecessary. What is needed is a rail service to the western section of Redcliffe, and the sooner it is done, the better.

In conclusion, Mr. Row,—

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I often wondered what happened to the ventriloquist's dummy called Charlie McCarthy that was used by Edgar Bergen. Now I know. He came back in the form of the honourable member for Brisbane Central.

As I was saying, I urge the Minister to give consideration to the town of Caboolture. I want him to come up there and look at it. I am sure that on the previous occasion when he came through Caboolture by train, having given me notice of his visit, he merely looked out the window as the train went through the town and said, "Oh yes, that's Caboolture."

I want an inspection made of the Caboolture railways yards. I live close to them and I know what I am talking about. It is time that they were bituminised. The Minister should get onto the Metropolitan Transit Authority and tell it to have the yards bituminised. If he does that, he will earn the undying gratitude of the people of Caboolture. If the yards are covered with bitumen, the dust problem in the shopping centre will be greatly reduced, and my office will not have to be swept out as often as it is now.

**Mr. MACKENROTH** (Chatsworth) (3.42 p.m.): I agree with the Labor Party's spokesman on transport, who said that the portfolios of Transport and Main Roads should be embodied in one portfolio. In speaking

to these Estimates, members are somewhat restricted because the Main Roads Department, for example, does not come within the ambit of this Minister's portfolio. However, such a situation is quite common in relation to Government departments. They have been separated from one another under different Ministers, and this has the effect of preventing members from fully covering matters that should be dealt with in debates such as this. To illustrate—in this debate on the Transport Estimates, members are not permitted to talk about main roads.

**A Government Member** interjected.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** When the member cleans up his own electorate and the people he has in his party, I might accept an interjection from him.

In introducing these Estimates, the Minister, like other members of the Cabinet, criticised the Whitlam Government. Look at what has been done to us by the Fraser Government. This year, it cut back the funds promised to the State by \$20,000,000. The Minister tried to imply that Queensland would have got that \$20,000,000. However, if we look at the Act under which that money was allocated, we will see that it was allocated to the whole of Australia. This means that the Fraser Government can do what it likes with it. There is no need for it to give any of that money to Queensland. The only money we can be sure of getting is that which has already been allocated to us.

As to railways—my electorate is very well serviced by a railway! It was ripped up in 1925. It was probably the first railway line torn up in Queensland. It was the track over which the old "Belmont flyer" used to travel.

The Minister and his colleagues boast about the cross-river rail link. I suggest that it is located in the wrong place. It should have been built alongside the Victoria Bridge so that rail traffic could have been brought closer to Queen Street. Eventually an underground rail system could link up with a crossing at that location.

It is not much good having a rail system unless it can carry passengers between the commercial centre of the city and the thickly populated areas. This morning I made a point of driving past the Morningside Station. The parking area provided by the Railway Department near the station has space for 80 vehicles. This morning, however, only 16 of those spaces were occupied. The reason for that is obvious; trains from Morningside do not go to destinations that the public want to go to. It is not much good creating car-parks unless the railway services are well patronised. The Metropolitan Transit Authority should be looking

at the railway system. I realise that an underground railway system cannot be constructed within a couple of years, but the Government should now be planning for the future.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority should be examining the possibility of constructing a railway along a route adjacent to the South East Freeway. Such a line could connect with the line at Buranda, extend to Springwood and ultimately to the Gold Coast. I know that the honourable member for Caboolture does not want to see a rail link to the Gold Coast; the people who live on the Coast, however, certainly want such a link. By constructing a rail system to the Coast, the Government would provide a rail service for the people of Mt. Gravatt, Springwood and elsewhere along the line. It would not cost the Government anything for resumptions; the land has been resumed already. The Metropolitan Transit Authority should surely investigate the possibility of building a railway line alongside the freeway.

The Minister said that Cabinet had approved a survey on the transport of dangerous goods such as L.P. gas. I hope that the survey is carried out very quickly and that the recommendations are made known to Parliament. It scares me to know that L.P. gas and other dangerous fuels and substances are carried through Brisbane, especially when I drive along Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley, and see the number of heavy transports on the road. One has only to recall what happened in Spain to imagine what could happen if a truck overturned in Wickham Street. The Government should do something quickly to overcome the danger. I should like all heavy transports banned from Wickham Street and diverted through the next street. That could be done. Trucks are driven over the Story Bridge only because the Government has not provided a cross-river link further down. It would be easy for the Government to divert the traffic so that the transports used the other road. It would not be any harder for them to use it than to use Wickham Street.

While talking about the transport of dangerous liquids, I suggest that the Government should look closely at rail tankers owned by petrol companies. Some of them are 60 to 70 years old, but they keep coming in for service. I sometimes wonder if they are too old and whether we should say to the petrol companies, "They are too old; they should be scrapped." If the petrol companies built new containers which would be safe for transporting dangerous liquids, that would provide work for Queenslanders.

I should like the Department of Transport to look into the licensing of truck drivers and the way that truck drivers secure loads to trucks. When I was about 18 years of age I rode a small motor bike to work. One day, in a distance of two miles, I came across three loads that had slipped off the

back of trucks. If a motor cyclist was riding behind a truck when the load slipped, he could easily be killed. On my way to Parliament House this morning, I saw a truck at Woolloongabba that had lost its load. Many drivers do not secure loads properly. They should be made to do so. Too often truck drivers think that, because they are only travelling a mile, they do not need to secure loads, but a load must be as secure for driving around the corner as it would be for driving to Sydney. The Department of Transport should look into ways of ensuring that truck drivers secure loads properly. That would help to overcome this problem.

The State Transport Department is failing the people of Brisbane by not subsidising properly the Brisbane City Council bus service. Every State metropolitan transport undertaking, and the suburban passenger service in Queensland, derives funds from the respective State Consolidated Revenue Account. If the State Government is not prepared to fully fund the Brisbane City Council buses it should help the Brisbane City Council by abolishing council bus registration fees, pay-roll tax and stamp duty. That would relieve the Brisbane City Council's burden of bus operations; the bus operations would be much more viable for the Brisbane City Council. At the same time, it would take a heavy load from Brisbane City Council ratepayers. For too long Brisbane ratepayers have been subsidising transport. All Queenslanders should subsidise transport, not merely the ratepayers of Brisbane.

**A Government Member** interjected.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Certainly it is.

The last point I wish to raise relates to the Road Safety Council. Last June, the Minister answered a question in this Chamber by saying that the Road Safety Council had not met for over a year. What's the sense in having a Road Safety Council if it is not going to meet? The Minister in his speech told us about all the good work the Road Safety Council is doing. How can it do this good work unless it meets, makes regular reports and discusses the things that need to be discussed. Therefore, I urge the Minister to make sure that the Road Safety Council does meet on a regular basis and looks into the very important aspect of road safety in Queensland.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport) (3.51 p.m.): I thank all honourable members for participating in this long debate. I replied this morning at some length to the speeches made last Thursday. In the time I have available, I propose now to reply to as many as possible of the matters raised today.

**Mr. Jones:** You were an hour this morning.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** That is right. I replied this morning. A few more points have been raised and, if the honourable member does not mind, I will reply to them, too.

Before I do, I feel I should pay a tribute to the Commissioner for Railways, Mr. Goldston, who has been a tremendous help to me; to Mr. Seenev, Commissioner for Transport; and to Mr. Welding, who is in charge of the Metropolitan Transit Authority. All of those officers have been extremely helpful in carrying out what is expected of them. They have done a first-class job. They are, of course, well supported by officers down the line, if I might use that phraseology. They have been a tremendous help. At all times they have co-operated. Generally speaking, although there might have been a few complaints such as that from the honourable member for Caboolture about his railway station, there have not been any real complaints by honourable members on either side of the Chamber.

I will now deal with some of the matters raised in the time I have available. The honourable member for Isis spoke about improvements in car engine technology. It is a long-term and more satisfactory solution to emission control than the present device and is a measure actively being explored by A.T.A.C. as an alternative to emission control. The Right Honourable the Prime Minister has indicated to the motor vehicle industry that it has to do better in designing engines to meet improved standards of operation. It can be done and it should be done—but, unfortunately, it is a slow process. I am informed, for example, that the fuel injection engines available now, because of their nature, really do not require emission controls. Perhaps this is one of the ways in which we should be heading.

The honourable member for Isis also mentioned freight rates to Childers, which is one of the main towns in his electorate. The figures given indicate that the rail freight from Brisbane to Isis is \$20 and from Isis to Childers, \$60. This is unreal. Other comparisons given are rail from Brisbane to Isis, \$4.20, and \$10 by road to Childers. The same operator has operated since the line closed in 1964 and there have been complaints about the charges. A goodwill officer recently met the local chamber of commerce. Currently there are representations from the member for Isis about these charges. I do not know what we can do about it, because there is a road component in it. The member for Isis also mentioned the promise of the late Mr. Pizzey. I do not know about that. I would sooner not comment on what he may or may not have said. Let us say that we will have a good look at it to see if we can help in some way.

The member for Wavell proposed a single transport authority. I do not know whether he meant for the whole State or just in the

Brisbane area. I could argue both ways. Certainly, I could argue in favour of it, in that a single transport authority would take charge of all buses, all trains and all road transport. Obviously, one body doing a job like that can achieve better co-ordination than the system we presently have. On the other hand, New South Wales has this sort of set-up and the losses in that State are huge. Whether it is because of this, I do not know.

The Government desires to press ahead with electrification of the Mayne-Northgate section but as was mentioned by the honourable member progress is limited by availability of funds. It is well known—and it has been referred to by Opposition members—that we are having difficulty in financing the electrification scheme. This is the reason why the programme has been curtailed. I hope that eventually we will get over the problem.

The honourable member mentioned the car-parks at Eagle Junction and Virginia Railway Stations. I can inform him that plans are being drawn up to extend both car-parks when funds become available. He also mentioned the potential for extension of Eagle Junction Railway Station. It is also limited by the availability of funds. I hope that we can do some good in this regard.

The honourable member for Port Curtis mentioned the desirability of having bus feeder services to railway stations. Naturally, I agree entirely with him. I believe in co-ordinated services. If he has any influence with the Brisbane City Council, it might be possible for us to get along with it a bit better in this field. It is very difficult to achieve co-ordination of two bodies such as the council and the Government.

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** That is very unfair. He is very unkind and is not right.

The honourable member for Port Curtis in speaking about feeder buses on the Houghton Highway to Redcliffe, might have overlooked the major bus-rail facility recently completed by the Metropolitan Transit Authority at Sandgate. The private buses from Redcliffe co-ordinate with the trains at Sandgate Railway Station. Shortly, in the company of the Speaker, I will be seeing the Rail to Redcliffe Committee. The honourable member for Caboolture is invited to come along if he desires to do so.

The honourable member for Port Curtis referred to the rail quarters at Longreach. I have had long discussions with the honourable member for Gregory, who is now in the Chamber, in which he has taken the matter up with me. We are planning new quarters in the 1980-81 financial year. We have entered into this commitment. It is our job

to maintain the quarters in reasonable condition until then. However, I appreciate the problem.

In relation to the study on the Brisbane-Rockhampton line, the C.T.C. problems in wet weather conditions have been largely overcome. I am quite sure that eventually we will have the C.T.C. well installed.

The honourable member also referred to the announcement by the Treasurer that \$8,000,000 has been obtained overseas. My view is the reverse of the honourable member's. That money will be a great help in our electrification programme.

The honourable member suggested that railway houses be built on high blocks. After much research into this matter, the department has decided in future to call tenders for houses on high blocks west of a line joining Roma, Emerald and Hughenden and for houses on either high or low blocks east of that line and along the coast. The result will depend on how the contractors react to the specifications.

Unfortunately, time does not permit of my replying to any more matters. I thank members for their contributions. Some of the comments were very good. In fact, there were very few without some merit.

Finally, I thank all officers in the Railway Department and the Transport Department, from the Commissioners down, for doing so much to assist me in discharging the duties of this portfolio. They have done a first-class job.

At 4 p.m.,

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Row): Order! Under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 11 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Railways and Transport.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

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|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Railways—  |             |
| General Establishment ..   | 53,499,000  |
| Railways and Transport—  |             |
| Balance of Votes, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account .. | 451,663,885 |

#### LABOUR RELATIONS

##### CHIEF OFFICE

**Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL** (Aspley—Minister for Labour Relations) (4.2 p.m.): I move—

“That \$2,949,635 be granted for ‘Labour Relations—Chief Office.’”

It is with considerable pride that I canvass the operations of what I consider to be the most important department in the Government and endeavour to chart a course for

the current financial year. Industrial relations, as honourable members well know, is a highly volatile area requiring skill, patience, trust and, above all, communication. I believe that, through the Industrial Affairs Advisory Committee, our highly responsible and expert Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and through the personal rapport with employer and employee organisations generated through my Under Secretary, Mr. J. E. McDonnell, we have won trust and respect unequalled in any other State.

The same applies throughout branches and divisions concerned with industrial inspections, weights and measures, machinery, occupational safety, motor vehicle inspection, building construction, metric conversion, standards, apprenticeship, consumer affairs and, more recently, workers' compensation.

Many officers have difficult tasks requiring extremely high levels of skill and responsibility; others have sometimes unpopular and unpleasant tasks to carry out. All have complete dedication and loyalty, and I thank them most sincerely.

Then there are the back-up teams such as the research section, which is becoming increasingly concerned in the preparation of submissions to national wage hearings, accounts, administration and Ministerial staff, the Government Statistician, the Anzac Day Trust and admirable citizens who give freely of their time and knowledge on tripartite bodies concerned with industry safety and apprenticeship.

In other words, there are many teams integrated into a Labour Relations Department whole. I should like honourable members to become better acquainted with them as I recount their performances and their hopes. But before I do, I should like to give three unrelated instances which, to me, confirm my belief that our policies are working.

The first comes from the annual report of the president of the United Graziers Association, Mr. Heussler. Mr. Heussler was quoted in "The Grazier" of June this year as saying—

"I would like to thank the Queensland Government for their firm and, I believe, fair industrial policies and to acknowledge their support on issues which they believed were just."

The second was simple, direct and appreciative. It came from well-known hairdresser Stefan, who said—

"On behalf of all the young people of Queensland who wish to become hairdressers, I would like to congratulate your department for the concern it has shown for something which has been overlooked for so long."

The third is in the area of communication. Guides on metric trading practices prepared by the Weights and Measures branch have drawn high praise from the Metric Conversion Board for clarity of information and have been deemed the best produced in any State.

We get our share of brickbats, of course, but I believe that when we measure these against the background of success and effort throughout the whole spectrum of endeavour, the Department of Labour Relations can hold its head high. So let me look in some detail at what we are doing, not in any order of importance, but as I went through the file of material contributed as a basis for this debate.

#### Workers' Compensation.

The year just past has been an historic one for the Workers' Compensation Board of Queensland. After 62 years of operations under the administration of the Treasurer through the S.G.I.O. (Queensland), all workers' compensation business from 1 July 1978 came under the control of the Minister for Labour Relations, and is now a board established by legislation as a completely separate organisation.

During 1977-78 the Workers' Compensation Department of the S.G.I.O. (Queensland) continued to give excellent service to the public, and this was reflected in the maintenance of benefits comparable with those available in any other State of Australia, and a further 10 per cent reduction in premium rates, which were already, generally, the lowest in Australia.

Furthermore, employers continued to benefit from the generous merit bonus scheme, which is, in itself, unique in Australia, and rebates of premium of up to 60 per cent were allowed where the claims safety record of the employer was satisfactory. In addition to the merit bonus allowed, a general bonus of 5 per cent was also allowed, and employers were eligible to receive a further discount of 5 per cent if they provided an accepted ambulance service on their premises.

This meant that a safety-conscious employer, and one who was conscious of the need to provide immediate and adequate ambulance treatment for his staff, could earn up to 70 per cent rebate of his premium. Notwithstanding the provision of these benefits, at a reasonable cost to industry, the Workers' Compensation Department succeeded again in showing a surplus for the 1977-78 year.

Whilst the number of new claims fell again by 1.9 per cent, the total payout for claims rose by approximately 16 per cent. This can be attributed to the increase in award payments, higher awards under common law payments and increased payments to doctors.

The past year has also seen increased activity in the all-important area of rehabilitation of injured workers. Amounts spent on rehabilitation over the past three years have been steadily increasing, as the following figures indicate:—year ended 30 June 1976, \$46,929; year ended 30 June 1977, \$54,314; year ended 30 June 1978, \$119,990.

The payment of an adequate weekly compensation rate, important as it is, is secondary only to the rehabilitation of workers to full employment. The primary object of every workers' compensation system should be to restore every seriously and permanently injured worker to full working capacity in the community.

The Workers' Compensation Board of Queensland is very conscious of the need to ensure that every seriously injured worker, who is unable because of his injuries to return to his former employment, should be given every opportunity to learn other skills to enable him to be placed in alternate employment. To this end, the board plans to widen its involvement in the rehabilitation field in the coming years to enable a greater number of seriously incapacitated workers to receive rehabilitation treatment or new job education.

It is also planned to extend the rehabilitation section of the board to enable board officers to extend counselling facilities to injured workers and their families in their homes or hospital.

As far as employers are concerned, it is the aim of the board to maintain its excellent record in the premium rating field and to provide employers with maximum indemnity at minimum cost.

Generally speaking Queensland workers' compensation premium rates are already only approximately one-third of those charged in other States. Two classic examples will suffice. In timber-getting, one of the most dangerous of occupations, the Queensland rate is \$13.77 per \$100 wages, compared with \$25.15 in New South Wales and a massive \$47.71 in Victoria. In sawmilling, the picture is the same—Queensland \$7.21, New South Wales \$18.18, and Victoria \$27.62.

In accordance with Workers' Compensation Board policy, the full-scale triennial review of premium rates will take place in 1978-79 to ensure that rates are kept at the lowest possible economic level. Benefits to injured workers are constantly kept under review and workers under awards now receive their full award wage for the first 26 weeks of any claim. As the greater majority of claims are for periods of less than 26 weeks, most workers now receive their full award wage if unfortunate enough to be forced to cease work because of an employment injury.

Benefits to widows with dependent children in a fatal claim were increased in amendments to the Act that passed through Parliament in the last session. These now provide

for a maximum payment of \$2,000 per child, in addition to the sum of \$27,100. Also included in the amendments to the Act were the inclusion of members of an employer's family as "workers" under the Act and entitled to claim benefits if injured in employment, and abolition of the maximum limit on medical expenses payable under the Act.

The new Workers' Compensation Board looks forward to the future, confident that it can maintain its superior service to injured workers and employers at a minimum cost to industry.

#### Research Section

The involvement of the department in national wage cases, where it has taken the carriage of the Queensland Government intervention, has involved submissions in quarterly wage cases, the inquiry into wage fixation and attendance at conferences leading up to this inquiry.

The department made available to the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education \$3,000 to assist in the completion of a work-force survey in the Toowoomba area. The results of this are not yet to hand, but indications are that the data to be produced will be of value to the Government when considering policy in the manpower area.

Also in the area of manpower planning, the Research Section has been involved in the Commonwealth/State working party that considered the possibility of undertaking a major exercise in the manpower field. This committee has reported to the conference of Ministers for Labour and the report is currently under consideration.

A major submission was made to the Williams committee of inquiry into education and training and it is hoped that when this report is available it will serve as a valuable document to assist all Governments in their responsibility in the labour field.

The Research Section has co-operated with the Commonwealth Employment Service in an endeavour to stimulate youth employment in the State. To assist in this respect, contact was made at ministerial level with Rotary Club branches in Queensland with an offer to make speakers available and to provide information for members with the aim of encouraging greater employment of unemployed youth and school leavers.

There has been considerable liaison and co-operation at the Commonwealth/State level and between States to ensure that all possible steps are taken to achieve, where appropriate, uniformity of legislation and procedures into study developments in all areas coming within the ambit of the department's responsibilities.

### Industrial Registrar

It is intended that an investigation be made to introduce a system that would substantially reduce the delay in the gazettal of wage increases as a result of basic wage decisions. This system will probably involve the use of computers, and Mr. K. S. Pope, Director, State Government Computer Centre, will establish a steering committee to co-ordinate the development of this project during the first half of 1979.

Commissioner E. J. L. Clarke will retire from the commission at the expiration of his current term on 9 November 1978. Mr. Clarke was appointed to the commission on 15 August 1967 and has given meritorious service to the State in this field. His successor, Mr. Alec Marshall, who is now assistant under-secretary of the department, will be sworn in on 6 November.

### Consumer Affairs Bureau

During the year ended 30 June 1978, the Consumer Affairs Bureau received 4,910 formal written complaints and dealt with in excess of 26,000 telephone inquiries and personal calls by consumers who visited the bureau seeking advice or assistance. These figures are approximately the same as last year's and indicate the continued need for the bureau to assist consumers who seek redress in relation to problems experienced in the market-place.

However, an equally if not more important aspect of the bureau's function is the dissemination of educational material with the object of making every consumer an informed consumer. This, of course, is a continuing process as children leave school and find themselves in the position, probably for the first time, of having to make decisions in relation to the purchase of goods or services.

With this in mind, the bureau printed and distributed hundreds of thousands of pamphlets during the year. In addition, with the co-operation of the Commonwealth Department of Social Security, a leaflet advising the bureau's willingness to assist consumers was distributed to over a quarter of a million recipients of social security benefit cheques.

In relation to the school area, a United Kingdom kit entitled "Thinking about Shopping" was amended to adapt it to the situation in Australia and tens of thousands of the worksheets, teachers' guides, etc., were printed and made available to schools throughout Queensland. As an indication that Queensland leads the field in these innovative ideas, the bureau was inundated with interstate requests for copies of this kit.

A consumer education brochure dealing with C.B. radio was produced to coincide with the licensing of C.B. radios in Australia. This brochure, of course, has only limited

appeal but, from the number of requests received, appears to have served a very useful purpose.

Another first for Queensland was the organisation of Australia's first State Government-sponsored consumer conference, the aim of which was to give consumer organisations an overview of what was available to them in the way of protection and information from Government and business. Representatives of Queensland and interstate consumer and community organisations, as well as representatives of business organisations from as far afield as Fiji, Melbourne and Sydney, attended the conference, the theme of which was "Consumerism—A Two-Way Street".

Displays associated with the distribution of the bureau's pamphlets were held at the R.N.A. Exhibition in Brisbane and the Campbell Miles Festival in Mt. Isa.

### Apprenticeship

During the year, 5,117 apprentices were allotted to employers, compared with 5,626 during the previous year. The allotments represented a decrease of slightly more than 9 per cent. This decrease is of the gravest concern. The Apprenticeship Executive feels that some employers could employ more apprentices and that failure to do so will have serious social, economic and industrial repercussions.

At 30 June 1978, there were 18,780 apprentices in training in Queensland. This figure represents only those apprentices indentured through the State's apprenticeship authority. It does not include apprentices indentured to Telecom Australia and the Commonwealth Department of Transport or apprentices indentured under the Federal Meat Industry Award and the Federal Graphic Arts Award.

Although the intake was very disturbing, the decrease may possibly have been greater but for the assistance given by the Commonwealth Government by way of such subsidies as the special assistance programme, which provides for financial assistance to employers, and the Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentices Full-time Training (C.R.A.F.T.) scheme, which provides for the payment of subsidies to employers for days when apprentices are required to attend colleges of technical and further education.

Another assistance scheme which has been promoted by the Commonwealth Government is the group partial training scheme whereby apprentices, although indentured to private employers, are employed and trained by a State Government department or instrumentality for the first year of their apprenticeship, with the Commonwealth Government paying all wages, travel and tool allowances, etc. It is the hope of the executive that during the coming year more employers will be encouraged by subsidies such as these to employ additional apprentices.

To enable as many apprentices as possible to be employed, all group committees empowered by apprenticeship legislation to allot apprentices in excess of the normal proportion of apprentices to tradesmen in their respective trades have in fact allotted excess apprentices whenever training facilities provided by employers have permitted. During the year, 711 apprentices (or approximately 13.9 per cent of the total for new apprentices) were allotted in excess of the prescribed proportion.

Pre-apprenticeship courses designed to give experience in trades appealing to them were made available during 1977 to intending apprentices, but this type of training was temporarily discontinued in 1978. In future this course will be made available when it is shown that there is a need and a demand for it. Those persons who successfully undertook the pre-apprenticeship course in 1977 were granted exemption from college training for all stages except the final stage of their course and were granted 12 months' credit towards an apprenticeship in carpentry, bricklaying and cabinet-making. In sign-writing, credit to the extent of six months was allowed.

Pre-vocational training, which provides a broad basis of instruction for young persons wishing to enter apprenticeship trades, was conducted in the colleges of technical and further education at Eagle Farm, Bundaberg and Cairns during 1977, and these classes were again mounted in 1978.

Although it is not a primary function of the apprenticeship authority in Queensland to locate employers for intending apprentices, offices have been inundated with appeals for assistance in this area.

#### Industrial Inspectorate—Factories and Shops

Last financial year, 2,173 plans for new buildings and additions to existing buildings were approved. Registrations for the State totalled 26,242 shops and 13,843 factories.

#### Industrial

During the year, wages adjusted on behalf of employees amounted to \$504,588.72. There was a total of 644 prosecutions, representing 535 actions under awards and breaches of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act and 109 other matters.

Appreciation courses for industrial personnel are held in Townsville, Cairns and Rockhampton approximately twice each year. In Brisbane, the courses are conducted each month except December and January, and are well attended. The inspectorial section has now 31 cadets—22 in Brisbane and nine in country centres.

#### Occupational Safety, Weights and Measures

While there were no amendments to the Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1974, the Governor in Council approved the Machinery Inspection and Safety Regulations, 1977.

The new regulations are in metric, the major changes in addition to metrication being reference to the latest issue of relevant publications of the Standards Association of Australia and increase of fees in the first schedule.

The Department of Education, in conjunction with the Division of Occupational Safety and Weights and Measures, has developed a course to assist candidates to gain welding certificates of competency, and this course, together with others provided by the Department of Education, is orientated towards certificates of competency issued under the Inspection of Machinery Act. It is being well received.

Amendments to the Rural Machinery Safety Act, which came into effect on 1 January 1978, required the fitting of guards on power take-off units on tractors and the fitting of protective cab or frames for certain types of wheeled tractors.

Following the installation of new equipment at sugar-mills and expansion programmes at both Brisbane oil refineries, considerable inspectorial time was required.

Twelve fatal accidents associated with prescribed machinery occurred during the year. Other fatal accidents investigated which were not notifiable under the Inspection of Machinery Act totalled five, with 232 non-fatal accidents occurring. The main contributing factor in these instances was related to unsafe practice rather than the failure of machinery. In addition to these accidents under the Inspection of Machinery Act, eight fatal accidents were investigated under the Rural Machinery Safety Act.

Engineering design submissions for the checking of machinery continue to increase, and during the year the total of designs submitted was 1,932. This increase can be attributed to the continued expansion in industry throughout Queensland. Designs finalised during the year totalled 2,389 as a result of a carry-over number from the previous year.

The division continues to give assistance to other Government departments, local authorities, approved industries and persons, on technical matters relating to lifts, escalators, conveyor systems and hoists.

The Clock and Watch Repair Section, which is a segment of this Division and staffed by three tradesmen and two apprentices, continues to service and repair all types of clocks and watches, interval timers, time switches, chart-drive clocks and recording instruments and vaccination guns, the latter type being serviced on behalf of the Department of Health.

The Motor Vehicle Inspection Branch again experienced a very active year with regard to the inspection of privately and commercially operated motor vehicles, together with the enforcement of legislation

governing the requirements for certificates of roadworthiness and the control of motor vehicle modifications. In regard to the inspection of both privately and commercially operated vehicles, these inspections increased from 90,766 last year to 104,116 vehicles during the year ending 30 June 1978.

Snap inspections of the premises of used-car dealers resulted in 1,858 vehicles being examined on 182 premises. It was found that 53.3 per cent required repairs. Eight vehicles were de-registered.

At the request of the Police Department a total of 2,194 vehicles was inspected. This was an increase of 51.3 per cent on the previous year. 82 per cent of the vehicles inspected required some form of repair. Of the 4,403 private sector vehicles inspected, 69.5 per cent were found to be in need of repairs and the registration of 90 vehicles was cancelled. These percentages represent an increase of 9.5 per cent in regard to vehicles found to be in need of repairs and 12.5 per cent of the vehicles de-registered when compared with the previous year.

The foregoing results are brought about through increased activities by this division to the limits of the resources available and as a result of the Police Department's paying particular attention to vehicles in a suspect condition on the roads. Twenty-four prosecutions were successful and a further 61 alleged breaches are receiving attention. There are now 1,300 approved inspection stations issuing certificates of roadworthiness for second-hand motor vehicles. They employ 4,271 licensed examiners.

Since the introduction in October 1972 of certificates of roadworthiness, 1,307,037 vehicles have been inspected and 34,352 have been refused certificates. Many more received certificates only after repairs had been effected. In the six years, 2,169 complaints have been received concerning the issue of certificates. So far, 1,940 have been investigated. No further action was considered necessary in regard to 1,447.

Sixty-four successful prosecutions for breaches of the Act relating to the issue of certificates included 18 used-car dealers, nine approved inspection station proprietors, 20 licensed examiners, and two other persons. Four inspection stations and 16 examiners' licenses were cancelled, suspended or surrendered as a result of breaches of the Act, and a further 79 alleged breaches are receiving attention.

Much work is involved in the study of plans and specifications relating to motor vehicle modifications and alterations and in the advising of other Government departments as well as the public of standards required.

#### Anzac Day Trust

Finally, I would urge honourable members to draw to the attention of clubs and organisations in their electorates the praiseworthy

activities of the Anzac Day Trust. The trust chairman, Mr. Justice Hoare, in his annual report, referred to the Government's contribution and to the small amounts received from clubs which held functions on Anzac Day. As the trust is dedicated to helping ex-servicemen and their dependants, I hope that honourable members will do all in their power to encourage its support.

I have much pleasure in submitting for discussion the Estimates of the Department of Labour Relations.

**Mr. YEWDALE** (Rockhampton North) (4.31 p.m.): One thing that I feel certain of is that the Minister and his department do not assert themselves nearly enough in the vital area of industrial relations. Obviously the Minister's responsibilities include industrial relations. To my mind, that term means communication, consultation and discussion among the relevant parties, who are the employers, the employees and the Government. That atmosphere should be established and continued in the best interests of all concerned. The system, of course, is not infallible, but it is so much better and more productive than provocation, confrontation and the inevitable open warfare.

I raise this vital subject because I believe that the Minister for Labour Relations agrees with the sentiments that I have just expressed; but, unfortunately, in my opinion, he has allowed the industrial area to become the province of the Premier, the Minister for Local Government and other anti-working-class and anti-union front-benchers and back-benchers. Those union-bashers continue to achieve political mileage to the detriment of the responsible Minister, the trade unions and the community.

I should now like to refer to proposed changes in the industrial law, including the foreshadowed right-to-work legislation. I do not intend to go into much detail or elaborate on the right-to-work legislation, but I suggest, because I believe that the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development should be spending more time and money in this area, that the Premier and the Minister for Labour Relations embark in a much more responsible manner on a course to obtain the views and feelings of all parties in the industrial arena. It is my firm belief that the employers, the employees and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission would not be in favour of the introduction of measures that would weaken the traditional rights of the workers in this State to defend their conditions in the work-place and share in the benefits of our State and nation alongside their fellow-citizens.

The proposal envisaged by the Government will, to my mind, strike at the very core of both the white-collar and blue-collar unions. They are the unions that are least

able to resist the intent of the Government in regard to their living and working standards.

The unions that I feel would be drastically affected by the right-to-work legislation, which is really a misnomer, cover the people engaged in service industries such as the ambulance brigades, the fire brigades, education, "Eventide" homes and hospitals, who are catering to the needs of the community to a large extent day by day. They will find that the legislation that has been bandied around the State by the Premier and that it is proposed to introduce will affect their unions much more than the well-organised industrial unions. I feel that those unions will be able to counteract that type of legislation through the strength of their organisations. In many other areas I believe that both white-collar and blue-collar workers will be affected.

In one respect I am pleased that the Premier has publicly indicated that he has circumsised all the Trades Hall unions and, according to the information I have received, other unions within the State. To my satisfaction, copies of the letter have been returned to the Premier not only by Trades Hall unions but also by other unions throughout the State, particularly in the white-collar area. It would seem that, without exception, the response of those unions has been against the Premier's suggested legislation.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** (Mr. Gunn): Order! I advise the honourable member that he is not actually debating the Vote, as he should be doing. He was informed earlier by the Chairman that he must confine his remarks to the Vote of this particular department.

**Mr. YEWDAL:** I bow to your ruling, Mr. Gunn. However, I suggest that the Minister and his department would be much better off pursuing a line of communication and consultation with the trade-union movement.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member has made his point on that particular subject. I now ask him to return to the Vote under discussion.

**Mr. YEWDAL:** I bow to your ruling, Mr. Gunn.

I would now like to raise a matter that I feel is of vital importance to the community as well as to the Minister and his department. I refer to apprentices in trades in this State. In introducing this subject, I would like to quote this passage from the September issue of "Training Talkback"—

"The Secondary Industry Training Committees' Conference held in Sydney in July ended with a call for more Commonwealth funding and staff support for training in industry and commerce and greater influence by Industry Training Committees on how those funds are spent.

"In 1977-78 the \$1 million allocated to industry and commerce training programmes was less than 1 per cent of Commonwealth expenditure on training."

If one looks at the number of apprentices indentured in 1978, one finds that some 5,117 apprenticeships were allocated. This represents, as the Minister himself conceded in his Estimates, a fall of 509 apprentices, or a decrease of 9 per cent on the previous intake of apprentices in Queensland. To my mind, that is a serious situation, and a similar comment has also been made by the Minister and his department. The Minister has rightly indicated his concern at such a decline in new recruits for industry. It can only point to future shortages of vital tradesmen in this State.

Figures contained in the annual report of the Apprenticeship Executive showing the number of cancellations of apprenticeships should also raise concern, as they are much too high. I would like to quote some of those figures. There were many reasons for the cancellation of apprentices' indentures, but the four main reasons were misconduct, change of address, loss of interest and training problems. In the last 12 months in the carpentry and joinery trade, which I feel is a most vital area in any future development of the building industry, 139 apprentices' indentures were cancelled.

I would be the last person to suggest that some of those cancellations were not justified. The reason could have been the attitude or the behaviour of the apprentices concerned. However, I cannot believe that in all those 139 cases the indentures were cancelled because the apprentices were at fault. I can accept the case of a change of address, in which a lad's family moved to another State or left the country and he could not continue in his apprenticeship. If it was a transfer from one part of Queensland to another, he should have been able to continue. It is the training problem that causes me most concern because it covers such a wide spectrum.

Training problems can be the fault of the employers, the fault of the technical colleges where the lads do their training, or the fault of the system of training apprentices for nine weeks at a time in the metropolitan area, away from their homes. I believe that young people do have problems when they leave home for the first time. They may not be training problems, but problems caused by being away from home and family.

I shall refer now to some of the major areas in which cancellation of indentures has taken place. The indentures of 139 carpentry or joinery apprentices, 42 boilermaker apprentices and 63 electrical mechanic apprentices have been cancelled. In the female section of the hairdressing industry, we find that 103 indentures have been cancelled—a rather alarming figure. In the plumbing industry, another 45 indentures

have been cancelled. To me those are large figures, and I believe that the Minister and his department should look closely at the reasons for these cancellations.

I have cited five areas in which the cancellation of apprenticeship indentures has taken place. Whilst one appreciates that there is a host of problems in the training of young people, surely these figures relating to the cancellation of indentures of young people must cause concern. I believe that the closest attention needs to be given to figures which show that some 863 apprenticeship indentures have been cancelled in this State in one year. I have worked out the very simple sum that shows that between 16 and 17 per cent of apprenticeship indentures have been cancelled. This, I believe, is a serious matter.

If one remembers that the Government has reduced its intake of apprentices by 28 this year, one sees that the position is obviously continuing to worsen. It would seem that the Government is not employing the maximum number of apprentices in the various Government departments in Queensland. I have asked the Minister to tell me the areas in Government departments where apprentices can be employed or indentured, and whether the departments have employed the maximum number of apprentices in proportion to the number of tradesmen. I have not been able to get a clear answer to those questions.

It would seem to me from my experience, particularly in the very important Works Department, that for a number of years that department has adopted the policy of dispensing with day-labour carpenters, plumbers and other tradesmen right throughout the State. We have figures to prove that. There was a confrontation, through the Trades Hall, with the previous Minister concerning the building industry. It seems to me that, by adopting its present policy, the Government is reducing the ability of young people to take up apprenticeships within the Works Department. This is a most important department that is concerned with the building of schools, homes, and other public facilities and amenities.

I believe that the Government itself is responsible, to a large degree, for the breakdown in the training of apprentices. Only the other day the Minister was asked a question in this Parliament by my colleague the honourable member for Bundaberg. He was concerned that some 13 indentures had been cancelled in Bundaberg and he asked the Minister to tell him why those apprentices had their indentures cancelled. The Minister made some effort to reply to the question, stating that he could not give a specific breakdown regarding redundant apprentices in the Bundaberg area.

I refute the Minister's reply that he could not supply that information. My knowledge of the apprenticeship system in Queensland,

which is probably limited, is that in most major areas there are area committees that deal with the problems of apprentices. In fact, they look at the question of the cancellation or transfer of indentures. Applications for the cancellation or transfer of indentures have to go to the Apprenticeship Committee in Brisbane for approval. I cannot for the life of me understand why the Minister could not provide a specific breakdown regarding the cancellation of apprenticeships in Bundaberg.

**Mr. Warburton:** A file will show it.

**Mr. YEWDAL:** Yes. The honourable member for Sandgate, who has had extensive experience as both a tradesman and a member of the State Apprenticeship Committee, confirms what I am saying. The file on any apprentice is available through the department, and surely the Minister should have been able to give that information to the honourable member for Bundaberg.

I move now from apprentices and complete my remarks on the Estimates by referring to a subject that is probably much closer to my own personal activity in the community. I refer to consumer affairs. In the Minister's contribution today, he referred to the volumes of propaganda published by the department; the leaflets and brochures that are sent throughout the community to advise the consumer on what he should do in certain circumstances in regard to his everyday needs. I commend the department for publishing and distributing the brochures.

My colleague the honourable member for Rockhampton and I go out of our way to obtain and distribute great numbers of these brochures to all sorts of people for all sorts of reasons, because we believe that they are important. However, when I look at the figures that the Minister placed before honourable members today, I get the impression that they are not performing their function as well as they should.

In speaking about consumer affairs, the Minister mentioned that the Consumer Affairs Bureau had received 4,910 written complaints and 26,000 phone calls. He said that those figures were the same as the figures for the preceding year, and I do not intend to argue about that. But, as I said earlier, I do not believe that the propaganda is working if in successive years an equal number of complaints is received by the bureau.

Probably there are only one or two reasons for that. More people in the community are becoming consumers; consequently, the number of people who are not experienced in the consumer area is higher. Alternatively, the propaganda is not getting across to them as it should and people are still making mistakes and being taken down by unscrupulous traders or salesmen. Therefore, I suggest quite constructively that the

Minister should use his influence and talk to the Minister for Education. I agree wholeheartedly with the Minister's reference to the need to educate young people in this subject in schools, particularly secondary schools. I know that a move has been made in that direction, but I believe much more should be done. Certain schools have already introduced a formal consumer subject, but the Government, through the Department of Industrial Relations and the Department of Education, should adopt a much more positive approach and introduce much more extensively a consumer subject in high schools.

Figures generally bore people and they are rather hard to follow in a situation such as this, but the Minister indicated that snap inspections of car dealers had been carried out by inspectors of his department. He said that 1,858 vehicles had been examined on 182 premises in Queensland, and that, of those, 53 per cent required repairs and eight vehicles were deregistered. I suggest that the situation is serious when inspectors find that 53 per cent of second-hand motor vehicles—I presume that they are on second-hand car lots—need repairs. If the inspectors did not ferret out those cars and insist that the repairs be carried out or move to have the vehicles deregistered, it would seem that they would become another problem for consumers and a noose around the neck of some unsuspecting second-hand car buyer.

The Minister indicated also that the Police Department had requested his department to carry out inspections on 2,194 vehicles. That was a 51 per cent increase on the previous year. Although the content of the propaganda in the brochures and the leaflets indicating to members of the community that they should be on the watch for rust heaps when buying second-hand cars is fairly good, the problem in the field of second-hand motor vehicle sales is not being reduced when there is a 51 per cent increase in requests by the Police Department and 82 per cent of the vehicles inspected required some form of repair. As to private vehicles—4,403 were inspected, 65 per cent were in need of repair and 90 registrations were cancelled, Again that illustrates the problem to which I have referred.

The Minister should look very closely at the sale of second-hand motor vehicles and the effect it is having on purchasers. It seems to me that other States—and I cannot be specific and go into detail here—have much tighter control over second-hand motor vehicles. In many States, second-hand car dealers have the responsibility of providing warranties with vehicles sold by them. The day-to-day consumer complaints that I handle are predominantly complaints about second-hand-car dealers.

If the Minister's figures are factual—and I have no reason to believe that they are not—and if we add to them the number of complaints handled in Rockhampton by the honourable member for Rockhampton and

me, we will see that the total number of complaints handled in Queensland each year is very large indeed. I doubt whether the number of complaints handled by the honourable member for Rockhampton and me would be accepted by the department as representing official figures; nevertheless, I suggest that a large number of consumer complaints are handled by bodies and persons other than the Consumer Affairs Bureau. I certainly do not object to handling such complaints; I am pleased to be able to give this community service to my constituents. I know that it is deeply appreciated.

Finally, I urge the Minister to consider my comments, particularly those concerning consumer education and second-hand motor vehicles.

(Time expired.)

Mr. LANE (Merthyr) (4.51 p.m.): I am very pleased to be able to participate in this debate, because I have a deep admiration for both the Minister and his senior officers. They have brought enlightenment and a progressive outlook into the field of labour relations. I have had the opportunity to travel to both State and interstate conferences on labour relations with the Minister and his senior officers, particularly Mr. Jim McDonnell. I know that they are regarded very highly by the practitioners in the field of labour relations, by people throughout the industrial spectrum and on both sides of politics.

I am very proud to be a member of the Minister's committee and to attend industrial relations conferences. I have been able to enlighten myself on modern trends in this area of human relations. That is, after all, what industrial relations is all about; it is the practice of human relations, human beings living one with the other.

The matter of industrial relations is something that is honed to a very fine point when a person's employment and income and a company's profitability are at stake. A couple of months ago I travelled with the Minister to the Central Queensland coalfields. He and other members of his committee and I had discussions with executive officers on those coalfields, where there is enormous development of our natural resources. This development has made Queensland the foremost State in the Commonwealth. In those discussions I discovered that the technical problems that arise in connection with the removal of millions of tonnes of coal from deep within the ground are problems that those officers can step over without having to lengthen their stride. They have the professional expertise and ability to handle these problems. They take them well within their stride. On the other hand, the matter that causes them the greatest concern and the one with which they are most preoccupied is the matter of industrial relations on the site.

When a simple matter like that can interfere with such vast development, something is going wrong in our country.

Probably many of the troubles are caused by the twin registrations that some of the unions have and the fact that their activities, even on the one field, are split between Federal and State registration. The decisions to work or not to work, which are of vital interest and concern to industrial relations in Central Queensland, are sometimes made in Newcastle, Wollongong, or some southern union boardroom by men with little experience in major open-cut mining and with a bias towards underground coal-mining, men bound to the traditions and prejudices of their forefathers. Their prejudices are carried into their attitude to industrial relations on our coalfields in Queensland.

**Mr. Hartwig:** They are biased to the southern industry.

**Mr. LANE:** As the honourable member pointed out they are biased to their own industry in the South and will work towards anything to take away international trade from Queensland so that coal contracts can be picked up by the southern mines. That is unfortunate.

I was impressed with a statement made by the Prime Minister of Singapore in his last May Day address. He placed emphasis on what he referred to as nation-building. He said that great things had been achieved in that small country by trade-unionists and workers with a sense of nation-building—a sense of dedication to making their developing nation great. That is just what we lack in this country. I am sorry to say that it certainly was not evident at Blackwater, Goonyella or any of the other large coal-mining sites that I visited recently with the Minister. That is regrettable. In spite of our modern, sophisticated manner, and the fact that we are all well fed and well dressed we should all be conscious of the future of our nation and realise that Australia is still a developing nation.

We should see Australia in that context in relation to what we do in our everyday life. We should be trying to build our nation so that it may expand, be well populated and grow good, healthy Australians for centuries to come. Australia is a great prize in this part of the world; it is a country that people must be looking at with envy. If people do not develop a sense of nation-building, they will continue in their parochial way, striking for a dollar here or an extra five minutes in a tea-break there, or seeking something that is not really relevant in the major context.

I urge honourable members opposite to use their influence in the Labor movement to dedicate the Labor movement to building Australia into a great nation, rather than inhibiting it, as many sections of the Labor movement do today. That is

very relevant in this day and age when so many Opposition members come here directly from the trade union movement. Indeed, it is suggested that some of them are spokesmen here for sections of the trade union movement, competing voices in the Parliament, putting one union faction against another in this place. It is unfortunate that much of the Labor philosophy is based on a reactionary class-war concept. It comes through in everything they do and everything they put forward—even in their advocacy on industrial issues.

It is fortunate that here and there in the trade union movement we find good, sensible, practical trade-unionists. I have a good relationship with many of these gentlemen. We understand each other. It is unfortunate however, that the ones who are politically oriented, the ones who have a political motive based on outmoded concepts, hold responsible positions in the trade union movement. The average person just cannot get on with them, and I think it is a great shame for Australia.

The trade union courses that are presently run by the Federal Government are a great thing, I think, but I would like to think that they included encouragement of young people undergoing trade union training to adopt a sense of responsibility for Queensland and to Australia, a sense of responsibility for the future of this country for their own sake and for the sake of their children. I would also like the courses to have a component on individual initiative whereby young men would be encouraged to better themselves in their particular job so that they might achieve promotion and perhaps go to administrative positions in their places of employment, or perhaps even go into business on their own.

This sort of initiative should be encouraged; it should not be suppressed as, indeed, it is by some of the one-eyed, blind trade union officials and people that one finds on that side of the political spectrum. When I talk about going on to greater things, I do not mean some of the new and so-called progressive philosophies that are being espoused by academics in this country and, indeed throughout the world today.

As the Government delegate, I was fortunate enough to attend the Industrial Democracy Conference held in South Australia between 29 May and 2 June this year. It was a very enlightening and interesting experience. I have since been sent the documents, speeches and papers of that conference and they have afforded me some extremely interesting reading.

The conference was opened by His Excellency the Governor of South Australia, Mr. K. D. Seaman, who made some comments on the subject of industrial democracy, as it is called in South Australia. I must confess that I was intrigued by some of the para-political comments of the Governor on

that occasion. In commenting on communication between unions and employees, he said in his opening address—

“We still see the emergence of demarcation disputes. I have often wondered whether, in the case of demarcation disputes in this country for example, they could not be more effectively dealt with if unions agreed for a standing tribunal of the A.C.T.U. or the relevant States Trades and Labour Council to arbitrate on such disputes in the first instance and to have a strong advisory role, where applicable, to management and/or arbitration courts.”

If that statement had been made by a Queensland Governor, it would have been branded as being a political statement; it is certainly a statement of semi-political industrial policy.

I was intrigued to find that that sort of thing is countenanced in South Australia, but apparently is not countenanced here. We had the instance of a previous Governor's speaking out on behalf of private enterprise about development and about getting on with the job here in Queensland, and his statement was condemned by honourable members opposite as showing political bias.

This conference, of course, was something that arose from the setting up in South Australia of an Institute for Industrial Democracy. In 1972, the South Australian Government looked at ways and means by which industrial turmoil could be remedied. Based on its approach to this sort of problem, it adopted a policy and directed its energies towards what is known as worker participation. The policy put forward by the South Australian Government was formally adopted back about 1972 and the Tripartite Committee on Industrial Democracy was set up in that State. This resulted in the establishment of the Institute of Industrial Democracy. It is staffed by a number of very highly qualified academics, a number of brilliant theorists, a number of highly paid people and a very big back-up staff. It was this institute that staged the conference in Adelaide.

I found the conference interesting because, far from persuading me to accept the philosophy, practice or proposal for workers' participation in industry—that is, workers' being imposed on the boards of directors of companies—it showed me the complete fallacy of that policy.

It is part of the policy of the Queensland Labor Party, if ever it is returned to office, to move towards the implementation of worker participation in industry. Its policy document, which I think I have read in this place more than once, sets out quite clearly that the aim is to work towards the eventual collective control and ownership of industry. That is one of the planks of the Queensland Labor Party. I do not think that we can say

often enough that industry and private enterprise understand where honourable members opposite stand on this matter.

The seminar that I attended in Adelaide was addressed by speakers from throughout the world. They outlined how worker participation applies in Yugoslavia, Denmark, Sweden and other countries. We even had one so-called trade union official from Yugoslavia talking about free trade unions in that country. Even the honourable member for Wolston would not have the hide and gall to suggest that there are free trade unions in Yugoslavia, yet this man stood up in Adelaide and propounded that proposal.

In addition, there were speakers from the other side of industry—the employers' side or the business side. Probably one of the most entertaining and indeed enlightening debates I have ever heard was that between Mr. Clive Jenkins, the general secretary of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs of the United Kingdom, a union fat-cat of the first order in that country, and Sir Leonard Neal, a director of Pilkington Brothers in England, an adviser on industrial relations for British Rail and a man of considerable substance and standing in that community.

Probably Sir Leonard Neal summed up my attitude and perhaps that of the Minister in the clearest of terms when he spoke critically of industrial democracy and branded it as a Marxist-based concept. He said—

“In terms of some of the arguments described in the first part of this paper, the Marxist answer (as opposed to that to be found if we follow Maslow) leads us towards workers on the Board and a diminution of the Board's responsibility (and, indeed, its ability) to represent and protect the rights of the shareholders.”

That statement pretty well sums up what workers' participation does. As I understand it, it removes something of the right to private ownership of industry. Some sneers were heaped upon us and indeed upon Sir Leonard Neal when he spoke in South Australia of profit being a respectable thing.

I was intrigued by the statement by this gentleman that prior to coming to South Australia he understood that “profit was a dirty word” but that, on entering the halls of the Adelaide University and the Institute of Industrial Democracy, he discovered that “profit was there regarded as an outmoded concept”. When we have people with that sort of reactionary approach to life, as enunciated by some of the theorists and academics at this institute in South Australia, we have no need to wonder why that State is on the way down.

**Mr. Bishop:** They are all coming to the Gold Coast.

**Mr. LANE:** They are coming to the Gold Coast to live in retirement and to flee the socialist State of South Australia, but, of course, some are bringing industry to Queensland. The Minister and I were able to solicit quite an amount of business for the Queensland Department of Commercial and Industrial Development whilst we were at that conference. We moved around at the social gatherings taking names and collecting business cards and, indeed, soliciting business for this great State of ours. We informed these business leaders in South Australia, who in fact are terrified of the socialist policies of the South Australian Government, of the great advantages in developing their interests in Queensland.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** Is that why they are all staying there?

**Mr. LANE:** Quite the contrary. We have received many inquiries here in Queensland as a result of our activities in Adelaide on that occasion. I hope that Mr. Dunstan and his institute go on to greater things down there. I think we ought to send the honourable member for Wolston down there and install him as the Director of the Institute of Industrial Democracy. All industry would close down in South Australia and come to Queensland, not just the 50 per cent of it that will come to Queensland as a result of the activities of the Minister and me down there. I suppose it is a form of industrial espionage to go into a foreign State like South Australia in an endeavour to draw industry from that State to this great State of Queensland. I personally make no apology for my actions; nor, I am sure, do the Minister and the members of his staff who were down there.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. SIMPSON (Cooroora) (5.13 p.m.):** It gives me pleasure to support the Minister for Labour Relations in his moving that a sum in excess of \$10,000,000 be granted to carry on the various departments under his portfolio. I address myself initially to the tourist industry and the problems created for it by penalty rates for workers in that industry, and to what that is costing this State in the way of jobs, productivity and revenue.

When people are on holidays, they are in a situation in which every day of the week is to them a holiday. They are not concerned about week-ends or public holidays. Every day of the week is a holiday, including the five recognised working days between Monday and Friday. However, tourists are not being catered for as they should be because penalty rates in the various awards prevent restaurants from operating economically at the times that meet the convenience of tourists.

This situation also applies to other services so essential to meet the needs of tourists, such as shopping and transport, and to make their holiday a happy one. It is absurd that during a holiday period a restaurant has to pay in excess of \$10 an hour for waitresses to serve at tables when, outside the door of

that restaurant, there are so many young people seeking jobs and cannot get them. On the Sunshine Coast, part of which is in my electorate, there is about the third highest unemployment rate in the State. Many of these young people should be quite capable of doing many of the tasks connected with the tourist industry. If not, they could be very readily trained in them.

Perhaps the Government is lacking in this respect and should be mounting a campaign for a greater say in the conduct of arbitration tribunals in order to bring about a far more acceptable rate for labour. Because of these very high labour charges, we cannot compete with other tourist areas of the world. People can go on package tours to other parts of the world and get far greater value than they get in Australia because of this absurd state of affairs.

Another section of the Minister's portfolio to which I wish to refer concerns safety in tractors and vehicles. It is very alarming to find that people are still being killed by tractors rolling over onto them. Even though it has been provided that roll bars should be installed on certain tractors, they are a waste of time unless those driving the tractors wear safety belts, and there is a reluctance to do that. So people still roll out through the bars and are killed when tractors turn over.

**Mr. Moore:** They have had something to drink when they roll out from behind the bar.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** Drink is another factor that accounts for 50 per cent of the fatalities on our roads.

In his report the Minister gave an interesting set of figures relating to spot checks of vehicles. More than half of the vehicles that have been spot-checked have been found to have faults. However, an analysis of accidents has found that vehicle faults were a contributing factor in some 2 per cent of accidents, or even fewer. Although vehicles must be maintained at a high standard, other factors contribute, to a greater degree, to accidents. Obviously when one has the task of looking after the safety of people driving vehicles, one has to look at those areas where one can do something. They must include the question of mechanical faults.

Another technical matter causes a problem. I find that some primary producers in my electorate fit special equipment to their vehicles to enable them to negotiate the steep and gravelly terrain on their properties. The tyres that they fit are quite suitable for vehicles purchased today, but they are not suitable for vehicles that they bought for their properties some time ago.

By making the vehicle track, say, one inch wider than it was before, they are perhaps no longer covered by the policies of most insurance companies. People do not realise that, first of all, they have to go to their insurance company and make a particular deal in relation to some special equipment

that they have fitted to their vehicles. I think a lot of people on the road today do not realise that they are not adequately covered by insurance because they have fitted some special equipment to their vehicles.

I turn now to the area of apprenticeship, and to the problems associated with the falloff in the number of apprentices and the obvious situation that will arise in the future when there will be a lack of artisans in the workforce. This is a very alarming problem, and its solution is probably being considered by the Minister in relation to pre-vocational and pre-apprenticeship courses. Which of those will be the most helpful, or whether there will need to be a combination of the two, only time will tell. I believe that we have to give a lot of thought to this question so that we are able to increase the number of trained personnel in the community.

We are now seeing the result of pushing a lot of people through universities. Today the most highly qualified academics are among our unemployed. Some people have said that if we educate more people in the technical field, as a result of the technological changes in industry brought about by the electronic age, we could have highly trained technical people out of work. No doubt there will be certain areas where that might happen; but I have found from experience that people who were trained in a technical, creative course are more likely to invent new industries and new forms of production that will employ far more people in the future than are academics who have been trained purely in theory and who can create new processes only out of fundamental research. Apprenticeship poses problems, and the Government must ensure that people with the necessary expertise are available to make Queensland a better State and Australia a better nation in the future.

In the field of workers' compensation, Queensland compares very favourably with other Australian States. Premium rates are much lower in Queensland because of the scale of workers' compensation operations, which formerly were under the control of the State Government Insurance Office. The system encourages thrift by granting no-claim rebates to those who are fully aware of the importance of safety in employment. Safety in employment should be encouraged, and there should be communication between employer and employee on that aspect.

On the debit side, my experience has made me aware of some of the problems that arise. A man who worked for me dropped a stone on his foot. A doctor X-rayed the foot and said, "You have broken your big toe. I could put it in plaster, but you would not be able to work for ever so long, or we could take a risk and just bandage it up, put it in an oversized boot, and hope that it will mend." The man was not a lazy lad and he said, "I couldn't stand having plaster on all the time. I will just have it bandaged up and put an oversized boot on it and try to

keep it out of the way." He went back to work in a couple of days because he chose to do that. However, I saw the slip that the doctor filled out, and shown on it were plaster and bandages and everything else needed to put the foot in plaster.

**Dr. Lockwood:** A simple case of fraud.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** As the honourable member suggests, a simple case of fraud. Obviously, all systems can be abused if people choose to do so. All honourable members have heard about frauds on Medibank, of course, Mr. Gunn.

By having a workers' compensation system in which thrift is encouraged by the granting of rebates and every little pinpricking claim is not considered, everyone concerned, particularly the employer who has to pay the premiums, is likely to receive better value.

The consumer affairs section of the Minister's department is very important. In my electorate, the greatest number of complaints that come through my office relate to consumer affairs. Mainly through ignorance, people find themselves at the mercy of those who are less scrupulous than themselves or who mislead them in order to make a bit more money. People do not show sufficient curiosity about contracts or business arrangements that they enter into, and at times I am appalled that people can be so gullible. In my opinion, a programme of education could be introduced most effectively through the schools, where young people could be taught to query contracts that they sign and by which they are legally bound. If that is not done, many more people will find that a crafty person gets them to sign a contract on the understanding that they will be very well off under it and then, because of the small print, be left at a great disadvantage. People should query the small print.

Schools should conduct fundamental courses in law so that children could become aware of the questions that they should be asking in relation to agreements and contracts that they enter into later in life. If Queensland offered the fundamental law courses that are conducted in other States people would be aware of their obligations when they sign documents.

The pamphlets that are published and circulated by the Minister are excellent. Unfortunately, they are not being circulated to as many people as I would like to see them circulated. If they could be sent out to all young people, thereby making them aware of the pitfalls in contracts and agreements, they would serve an even more useful purpose than they serve now. I realise, of course, that their circulation is governed by the Minister's budget.

The Minister referred to C.B. radios. This is an area in which he could be given free publicity in the Press to get his message across. When any new product is brought onto the market, the Minister should circulate fundamental information to the public.

The public, after all, are seeking an unbiased opinion on products and guarantees that go with them.

One matter that I overlooked when I referred to apprenticeships was the introduction in other States of farm apprenticeships. Unfortunately they do not exist in Queensland. I asked the Minister to examine the prospect of introducing them, and I know that he is not in favour of them. However, they would fit a young person for farm work in remote areas. Furthermore, they would give a young farmer more knowledge and experience than he would gain, say, on his father's farm. A young person who received technical training as well as practical training would be better fitted to take his place in the farming community.

The agricultural colleges are very much class-room orientated. I suggest that farm-orientated apprenticeships would be worthwhile ones, so I urge the Minister to give consideration to their introduction by way of a pilot scheme.

Finally, I commend the Minister and his departmental officers for the excellent manner in which they perform a task that is vital to the sound management of this State.

**Mr. WILSON** (Townsville South) (5.28 p.m.): One would think that this Government would set about trying to achieve harmony in industry by encouraging the employers' representatives and the employees' representatives to sit down around the conference table to discuss problems that arise now and others that are likely to arise in the future. Each side should know the other side's point of view and each side should have a better understanding of the other's activities. That is the sort of labour relations exercise that one would expect in a true democracy.

But what do we find in Queensland? The Premier, in his usual dictatorial manner, intends to introduce legislation that will do nothing to encourage good industrial relations. Under the guise of upholding law and order, he intends by that legislation to belt the workers into submission and to use the Police Force to do it. The so-called right-to-work legislation that the Premier refers to is misnamed. In no way will it create work for the unemployed. Rather, it will bring down real wages, lower standards of living, worsen conditions on the job—

**Mr. SIMPSON:** I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is obviously reading his speech—a prepared brief.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Gunn): Order! There is no point of order.

**Mr. WILSON:** The proposed legislation will deny workers the right to take positive action to fight against worsening conditions and for improved conditions.

Various Government departments are not subject to Government Acts. In the health and safety areas Government inspectors have no power or jurisdiction over Government

departments or property. Machinery inspectors and safety officers have no jurisdiction in other Government departments. A machinery inspector can go into a Government department to test an employee's capacity to pass necessary exams to get a ticket to operate machines such as overhead cranes, but he has no authority to inspect a crane or any other machinery, or to order any repairs that may be necessary to make it safe.

One incident in the South Yard Railway Workshop in Townsville comes to mind. An inspector put an employee through the test for working an overhead crane. I spoke to him about the crane and told him that I had not seen any maintenance work other than oiling and greasing done on it. He told me that if he had the authority he would order that the crane stop working. He believed that certain work should be done on it because he considered it to be unsafe. However, because it was a Government job he did not have the authority that he would have in the private industry sector. Within a week of my talking to the inspector a cog-wheel measuring 9 to 10 in. by 4 to 5 in. crashed down, narrowly missing the slingman. If it had hit him on the head he would surely have been killed.

The two overhead cranes in the old brick railway workshop in Townsville cannot travel more than half way along the workshop because of the condition of the building. The walls of the building have come in causing the cranes to strike them. As the cranes travel along bricks vibrate out of the wall, only to be pushed back by the cranes as they pass. In such a situation the Railway Department is playing with men's lives. That may seem unreal to honourable members, but it is a fact.

A safety committee operates in the Railway Department, but its efforts are always thwarted by lack of funds. Safety committees operate in private industry, and they take their jobs seriously. I like to think it is because they are concerned with safety, and not wholly with production. Although a number of employers are very safety conscious, others try to cheat to save a dollar. The safety officers who police the safety regulations do a good job. Those I have had anything to do with have been dedicated. Because of the area they have to cover they are too few in number to police all of the jobs, particularly some of the smaller ones in the building industry.

More safety officers are required, but the remuneration they receive is paltry when one considers the amount of study for the job and the responsibility they carry, not to mention the abuse they receive in some instances. We always get the employer who will cheat. Although we have regulations governing safety in industry, and it can be said that an employee can refuse to work in an area he considers to be unsafe, there is nothing in the regulations to protect him from intimidation. While the employer, or

his representative, may not direct him to work in such an area, he may suggest that there is no work other than in that area, and then seize the first opportunity to get rid of him. There is nothing in the regulations to protect an employee from intimidation, especially at a time of unemployment when he is most vulnerable.

On building sites one very often sees ladders that are too short and do not extend sufficient distances above the floor or platform for reasonably safe ascent and descent. In other places I have seen pieces of 4 x 3 timber used as walkways instead of 9 or 10-inch softwood planks. When challenged, the employer will say that nobody is asked to use them, but, as there are no other walkways, the employees have no choice and are thus being intimidated.

Of course, Mr. Gunn, there are also employees who flout the safety regulations. Some of them think they are being brave; others will just not conform to any set of rules. They are complete dills and a danger to their workmates on the job.

Noise is another hazard in industry and very stringent laws should be brought down to control noise on the workshop floor and also noise that affects the community in the area. It would be interesting to know the amount of absenteeism caused by the noise problem in industry. If it affects not only hearing and nerves but the general health of all those subjected to it. Again I use the South Yard Railway Workshop as an example. The State Government Insurance Office took a decibel reading of the noise factor in this Government workshop. I do not know if the State Government Insurance Office gave the results to the Railway Department, but I do know that it would not let the trade unions know the results.

I shall give members some idea of the noise. There is an exhaust fan that is used to clear sawdust and shavings from the various machines. When the powers that be built the workshop, they made provision for this very noisy exhaust fan to be put inside instead of outside the workshop. Then there are the various noisy machines, such as circular saws, planing machine and the screaming five-head planer. This noise is coupled with noisy overhead cranes and the noise of boilermakers belting things into shape with 5 lb. hammers.

Another thing that has become a problem is boredom resulting from technological changes, mechanisation and computerisation. The changes in industry are dehumanising as technology has to a large extent taken away the need to think, thereby removing interest and the feeling of accomplishment that comes with a good job well done. The result is lethargy and a lack of interest.

In the area where customers are involved, a lack of courtesy just short of bad manners exists. It is not because people today are less concerned about other people than they were yesterday. The problem today is that

people are educated to a higher standard than previously and are being put in a position where the job does not meet the standard of their knowledge, their ability and their power of thought. I cannot imagine a more frustrating and degrading set of circumstances. I do not mean that we should ever educate young people to meet the needs of industry. That would be a backward step; it would set us on a path leading backwards instead of forwards. This frustration and boredom, owing to technological change, is something that we will have to face in the future. We see it every day when we walk into shops, offices and public buildings.

The greatest problem facing us at present in the industrial area is unemployment. What we need to offset unemployment is the proper planning of industry to meet the needs of the country and the needs of the people, not the stupid boom-and-bust system that we have today. This will need proper planning in production, distribution and exchange in the manufacturing, agricultural and mining industries. They should be planned in such a way that the whole community and the country benefit. At present, the benefit goes to the greedy at the expense of the needy, and the whole country suffers.

Of course, proper planning will take time, but in the meantime we should be looking at a public works programme with high labour content and long-range benefits, for the purchasing power of workers on such projects would give stimulus to industry, thereby easing unemployment. This, in turn, would give further stimulus to industry. If industry were properly planned, the stimulus would be ongoing and we would not have the crazy boom-and-bust periods that there have been in the past.

Nevertheless, taking that into account and realising the position that we find ourselves in today, I can only hope that the Treasurer will be successful in raising finance overseas to keep the nickel treatment plant at Yabulu and the mine at Greenvale operating. If he is unsuccessful and the mine and the treatment plant have to close, it will mean hardship for upwards of another 4,000 people in the Townsville area. That figure is based on 1,000 workers each with a wife and two children. In addition, many other people will be affected. In the past, we have seen industries close their workshops in Townsville because of the anomaly that exists in rail freights. The manufactured articles could be railed cheaper than the raw materials and this stopped their competing on favourable terms with the products of southern firms. So much for decentralisation!

If we are to achieve good labour relations, the sooner the Government changes from a policy of force, with the so-called right-to-work legislation, and gets down to tackling the problems in industry today by sitting around the conference table with a view to getting industry moving again and the unemployed back to work, the better it will be.

Mr. MOORE (Windsor) (5.44 p.m.): In order to speak to the Estimates for Labour Relations—and this applies to other Estimates—we are given a sheet showing the Vote under headings such as Chief Office and Industrial Court and the total expenditure for the year. It is not possible to debate the Estimates on the information given in the document; there are insufficient details. The department could book the time in any way it likes under the various headings. It is virtually a waste of time to try to debate Estimates without being given some detailed information. The Queensland Parliament does not have a public accounts committee through which we could look into the functions of any department. What we are being asked to do is give a blank cheque or accept the department on trust.

I have nothing adverse to say about this Minister. I think he is a man of high honour and high principles. However, there is something wrong with our system when members are asked, in effect, to debate Estimates when they are not given access to the information available to the department. It just means that we cannot do a proper job.

When we look at the Labour Relations Estimates for 1978-79, we see that the figure is \$10,071,331 as against Estimates of \$10,841,385 for last year, or a drop of nearly \$700,000, which means that this year the department will have less money to spend despite the fact that there is at present an inflationary rate of 7 or 8 per cent per annum. It also means that certain economies will have to be carried out if we are not going to lessen the efficiency of the department or deny it the initiatives that it would take if it had more money. One would assume that the assistance given to industry and businesses will have to be reduced to some extent because, as the wages bill goes up, less money is available to spend elsewhere.

The Department of Labour Relations is a very important department. It is high in its responsibility and in its area of influence, but very low in its expenditure when one considers that it has only approximately \$10,000,000 to spend. From my association with the department, I do know that the Minister has an efficient staff. Virtually any Minister is only as good as the staff that he has in his department.

The department had a very good record in the establishment of various industrial estates. When I first heard of the concept of industrial estates, I had doubts about the efficiency of the concept, particularly when I saw large areas of bulldozed land crossed by a few drainage pipes and so forth, and a sign saying, "This is a State Government project—So-and-so industrial estate." I thought to myself, "This is just a piece of window-dressing. It will never get off the ground." However, one has only to look at the Wacol Industrial Estate to see that, by virtue of the amount of territory made available, it has been possible to establish

large industries such as the making of concrete pipes. They can be situated in areas where there is ample room for storage, where the rates are not too high and where overheads are reasonably low. There are factories such as Thomas Dixon & Sons Pty. Ltd., which manufactures shoes. I realise, of course, that the footwear industry in Australia has virtually gone out of existence, but Dixon's are doing a good job. Practically every brand of shoe available here is supplied by Dixon's. I do not know whether the company makes them under licence or whether it bought them out.

Industrial estates will come into their own because the larger they are, the more efficient they become. If a company is going to make electric stoves, it can establish the section that does the enamelling, the section that produces the various plastic products and the section that produces the hotplates, so it has no problem as all the component parts are within walking distance. There are no problems connected with haulage from one section of the plant to the next, which makes for a very efficient business.

Members often speak in this Chamber about decentralisation. Decentralised industry might have its place in wartime, when a whole industry could be bombed out of existence; but, when one section of an industry is on one side of a town and another section is on the other side, heavy transport costs are involved. One of the greatest items in cost today is transport. While our industrial estates have not yet developed to the stage that they will reach in the future, they have the advantage of bringing about efficiency in industry.

Another section that comes under the Minister and his department covers apprenticeships. For many years apprentices have, to some extent, been looked down upon as second-rate citizens. When my father was a boy and served an apprenticeship in Great Britain, the advice was, "Raise your hat to that gentleman; he is a tradesman." We have passed that era, and today a person who is a tradesman is not considered. With computers and various automated processes, many people in the white-collar industries are now finding that they do not really have a future; unfortunately, they are finding themselves unemployed.

There is still a need for tradesmen. There is still a need for motor mechanics, plumbers, fitters, drainers, and carpenters, because machines cannot be geared to do that sort of work. While we might manufacture an article by some automated process and then later throw it away, that cannot be done in all areas. I cannot see service industries involved with plumbing work, electrical installations, and the repair of washing machines going out of existence. While one might have said that about farriers and coopers in the horse-and-coach days, and they have gone out of existence, I do not

think that will happen in my lifetime to the tradesmen in the industries that I have mentioned.

I think that the system of apprentices and apprenticeships has to be continually looked at. I think that it has to be changed. It has to be changed in relation to first-year apprentices because, from my knowledge of first-year apprentices—and I was in charge of an apprentice training school—very few of them earn their salt. As a matter of fact, they break more equipment and ruin more equipment than anybody else.

**Mr. Bishop:** You cannot insure against that.

**Mr. MOORE:** You certainly cannot.

It is a little ironic that at the Police Academy at Oxley, which we think is a very good establishment, we are paying junior constables—cadets—about \$75 a week, and the more senior ones \$85 a week, while they are being trained. That is a heavy cost to the community. We are discriminating there. We are crying out for apprentices. We are asking industries, which in many instances are on their knees, to pay young people first-year apprenticeship wages when those industries get no return for that outlay.

After an apprentice completes his training with an employer, he is no longer bound to that employer. He can leave at any time after he has completed his apprenticeship. If he has become an exceptionally good tradesman, through his boss's efforts, through his boss's ability to train him with his equipment, he can then ask for premium wages. He is sought by other employers and does not remain with the employer who trained him. I saw that in the railways. After having been a member of Parliament for five years or six years, I went back and said, "Where is Tom? Where is Dick? Where is Harry?" I was told that one was in Mt. Isa, one was working somewhere else, and one was overseas. Many of the competent tradesmen had disappeared; of course, some remained for their own reasons. It is difficult to ask industry to foot the bill for the training of apprentices without providing some encouragement. In effect, industry is being asked to take the place of the technical college or the Education Department and provide education in another form.

In talking about apprentices and apprenticeship training, I am always critical to some extent of the courses that apprentices do. If a person joins the Services and is being trained as, say, an electrician, he will be doing basic fitting, filing and various other types of work. When I was in charge of the apprentices training school at Banyo, I followed a somewhat similar pattern. I taught apprentices fitting, turning, various types of electrical wiring, oxy-welding, electrical welding, milling, spray-painting, various

things about electronics, rewiring and French polishing. Those apprentices were going to become electricians, electrical mechanics or electrical fitters, but I do not think that any tradesman has a proper appreciation of his job unless he has an appreciation of the work done by other trades. If tradesmen have done French polishing, they appreciate the cabinet that the article is in. If they have done welding, they appreciate the job that the welder has to do. They will not do so much of their particular job that it becomes difficult for the next fellow to operate, because they appreciate how he has to go about his work. Generally speaking, apprentices in this State lack that training and I think it is rather a shame.

Another problem is that if a number of apprentices work for a firm and one puts them on productive work, one begins to have trouble with the tradesmen. They say, "We have the apprentices doing the tradesmen out of their job." The tradesmen would much prefer to have the apprentices sweeping the floor and doing all the rough work—the cleaning down, the greasing, and so on. They say, "I had to do all that. It is good training. It shows them how to start from the bottom." I did not have apprentices doing work of that type. In the first four or five weeks, I had apprentices wiring telephone switchboards as complicated as any that a tradesman could handle, CE250-type switchboards similar to the one that was in Parliament House until the change-over.

I showed the apprentices the technique, and when tradesmen claimed that they wanted to do the job and they won the day and came into the workshop, I said, "Right, here is the blueprint. This is what the various hieroglyphics mean." When I came back in a couple of hours' time, no work was being done. I said, "What is going on?" I had to say to the kids, "Take pity on them; show them what to do." Apprentices who had been three months on the job were training the tradesmen. Therefore, I would take a lot of convincing that one cannot get very productive work out of apprentices in a very short time if one applies oneself to the task. That is not being done now. When a first-year apprentice is sweeping the floor, he does not take an interest in the job.

There is another good way of making an apprentice interested, Mr. Hewitt. When he brings in a little job of his own—and they are not supposed to—you close your eyes to it and give him a bit of assistance. If he does it incorrectly, you tell him to tear it apart and throw it in the rubbish bin and start again. He will say, "It is my own job. Why shouldn't I do it the way I like?" You say, "It is in this workshop and it does not go out until it is a perfect job, whether it belongs to you or anyone else." If you force an apprentice to do his own job properly, he does not complain when you ask him to do the boss's job properly.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.15 p.m.]

**Mr. MOORE:** The Minister has under his control the Industrial Court and the Industrial Commission. I must say that in relation to industrial matters the Minister has rather a good rapport with the trade union movement. No Government could expect to have industrial harmony unless the Minister in charge of industrial matters had the ear of trade union officials. A lot of goodwill is involved in getting the job done properly. Just as the nation could not work without the ambassadorial service and the members of the Diplomatic Corps, the industries of this State could not function without similar diplomacy on the part of the Government within the trade union movement.

If an employer involved in an industrial dispute enjoys the goodwill of the secretary of the union involved, some understanding can be arrived at and the situation can be nipped in the bud. If, however, the employer—in this case, the Government—decides that it will pass some legislation and use the heavy hand to crush a union into submission, it is forgetting that there are such things as Federal awards. It would not take a union in that position long to apply to the Federal Industrial Court for Federal award coverage, thereby taking the control of that union out of the hands of the State Government.

The State can only go so far. Our Federal colleagues, whether they be Labor or Liberal-National Country Party, cannot always be trusted. It is wise to have the trade unions under State awards and to establish a good rapport with them. That is one of the difficult jobs that have confronted the Minister, but he has carried it out very well.

I have spoken to various members in the trade union movement who regard the Minister very highly. The trade unions do not throw compliments around lightly. When they do pass a compliment, it is generally sincere.

The Minister also has under his control the Consumer Affairs Bureau. I suppose it can be considered to be a necessary department. I wonder, however, whether we are failing to educate the people properly. At best, a person who brings a matter before the Consumer Affairs Bureau is given some form of rough justice. However, I suppose it is better than what existed previously. People must be educated. There simply is not a good fairy. I can understand why children believe in Santa Claus, but when adults believe that there is such a person and that they will get something for nothing, they are being very foolish indeed. There is nothing free under the sun except the sunshine, the birds and the bees and the wind that blows.

**Mr. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon) (7.19 p.m.): In rising to speak to these Estimates, I congratulate the Minister on their preparation and presentation. The Minister has under his control the Workers' Compensation Board. When the control of workers'

compensation was transferred from the S.G.I.O., I was one of those who had some doubts about the desirability of the transfer. I am pleased to say that, as yet, those doubts have been unfounded.

Although I have been very pleased with the treatment I have received from senior officers of the Workers' Compensation Board in response to representations I have made, I have one suggestion that may help overcome some of the problems that beset my constituents. When people on workers' compensation go before the orthopaedic board and the board decides that the injury is not 100 per cent attributable to work but partially to some other cause, some explanation should be given. Constituents who are 80 per cent incapacitated have become quite upset when told that they have a 20 per cent disability that was caused at work. If they were told clearly why work incapacity was assessed at 20 per cent, the board would probably get much better acceptance.

Most employers would be pleased with the further reduction of 10 per cent in premium rates. Safety conscious and lucky employers—they have to be both—who provide immediate ambulance treatment for staff can earn up to 70 per cent premium rebates. That also is to be commended.

I understand that vast sums are spent on rehabilitation work. In the year ended 30 June 1977, the Minister said that \$54,000 was spent on rehabilitation work. In the following year ended 30 June 1978, \$119,000 was spent on this work. That is excellent, because most people do not wish to remain on workers' compensation. They would much rather get back to work. The few who choose to remain on workers' compensation rather than go back to work give the keen workers a bad name. The more that we as a Government can do to help genuine workers get back to work the better it will be. In coming years the board plans to widen its involvement in the rehabilitation field. That is a step in the right direction.

The Minister said that workers' compensation rates in Queensland are approximately one-third of those charged in other States. I have done some research on this and, without doubt, the Queensland compensation premiums are by far the best in the Commonwealth, while generally the benefits are at least as good as those in other States. That also is to be commended.

The Minister referred to the need for manpower planning. That should be encouraged, because many young people want to enter a trade or go to a university. They need some indication of the likelihood of getting a job in their chosen calling when they finish their training. I urge the Government to step up its efforts in manpower planning.

The Consumer Affairs Bureau is an important part of the Minister's portfolio. Consumer protection can be put to great effect in Queensland or in any other State. I believe that the bureau should concentrate

mainly on public awareness. It should try to educate people so that they become aware of their rights as consumers. I am sure that, to a large extent, it does that. I believe that prosecution should be a very last resort. Education must be the first priority.

There is one thing in the Minister's portfolio relating to consumer protection that I feel does need to be remedied. I refer to the advertising of certain goods only in certain weights. To my way of thinking, this is overlegislating, and it is time that regulations were amended simply to ensure that advertising is accurate. "Accurate" is the key word. I do not think we should restrict the manner of advertising, as long as it is accurate. If a person wants to advertise a product in 450 gm or 500 gm lots, surely that is fair enough as long as the weight is accurate. However, it is my understanding that in certain instances manufacturers cannot advertise in these weights, and I think it is time that we changed this type of regulation.

Apprenticeship is a very, very important part of the Minister's portfolio.

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I will accept that interjection from the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who says that it is down nearly 9 per cent. This unfortunately is true, but I think that the number of jobs created in Queensland compares very favourably indeed with the number in other States, particularly those administered by the Labor Party. So there is no easy answer to the problem.

**Mr. Davis:** Why do you get political?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I am not trying to be political; I am just giving facts. As a matter of fact, I am pleased that the honourable member interjected—

**Mr. Warburton:** Don't forget Victoria.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I will not.

**Mr. Warburton:** It had 16,000, a record figure.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** In the period from May 1975 to May 1978, the number of jobs in New South Wales increased by 2.2 per cent—that is all. In Tasmania, the number of jobs in that period increased by 1.2 per cent. In South Australia, the number increased by 3.3 per cent. But if we go to Victoria, as I have been requested to do, we see that the number of jobs there increased by 5.4 per cent. If we look at the situation in Queensland, we will see that the number of jobs increased by 8.4 per cent over that period, and if we go to Western Australia we will see that they increased by 11 per cent. So we see the pattern. In this period of very deep and tragic unemployment, the States that are governed by the Liberal and National Parties have, in proportion to population, created

more jobs than those created in the States governed by the Labor Party. This is not to say for one moment that the job we are doing is good enough. We can never be happy with an unemployment situation such as we have in Australia today.

I think that one good thing the joint Government parties have done in an attempt to widen the field of advice that we are getting to help us play an even greater role than we are playing now in overcoming the problem of unemployment is the establishment of a committee of nine members of the Government parties. That committee is touring the whole of Queensland seeking advice from further afield and seeing that people in the street are able to exercise their democratic rights better than they have been able to in the past. Government members are going out as a group to seek their advice in an endeavour to solve the unemployment problem, and that advice will be given to both the State and Commonwealth Governments. We must not forget the figures and, as they have been supplied to me by the Parliamentary Library, I presume that they are accurate. The fact remains that, in the past three years, employment has increased by 5.4 per cent in Victoria, 8.4 per cent in Queensland and 11 per cent in Western Australia, with hardly any increase at all in the States governed by the Labor Party.

Coming back to the apprenticeship question, I believe that the Queensland Government—in fact all Governments in Australia—could be doing more to encourage the employment of apprentices. Businessmen in many areas of Queensland have told me that the financial incentives are just not there to employ apprentices. The block release training scheme is very efficient for big business—I do not think that there is any doubt about that—but many men who employ only one apprentice would like a return to the old way of training apprentices under which they did a small amount of study at night so they were not away for six weeks at a time as they are at present. This scheme creates very great difficulties, particularly in country areas. I should like a choice to be available between block release training of an apprentice or training under a modern version of the old method.

Many subsidies are provided to encourage employers to train apprentices. The Commonwealth Special Assistance Program is a great help. The Commonwealth rebate for apprentices in full-time training—the craft scheme—is another one that is appreciated by employers. I have made some effort to find out just what employers think of the viability of employing apprentices and I am afraid that many of them are deterred because, despite this assistance, it is just not economic to do so.

The Minister mentioned another assistance scheme that has been promoted by the Commonwealth Government—the group

partial training scheme, under which apprentices, although indentured to private employers, are employed and trained by State departments or instrumentalities for the first year of their apprenticeship, with the Commonwealth Government paying all wages, travelling expenses and tool allowances, etc. Although the Minister has tried to publicise this scheme, I ask him to make even greater efforts to do so, because some employers still do not know about it.

I should like him to advise me whether there is any ceiling on the amount of Commonwealth money made available through this scheme and I should like to know whether the State Government could encourage employers to take a greater interest in it by telling them in which departments apprentices can be placed so as to take advantage of the scheme in the first year of their training. Pre-apprenticeship courses and pre-vocational training are initiatives that should be commended highly. I come back to the point made by many people that high taxation is a real disincentive for employment. If we are to expand these courses as we should, some other areas of Government expenditure may have to be cut. People should understand this. I know many young people who would like apprenticeships next year, but they will not get them. I do not think they are particularly worried about whether they would be paid \$50 or \$90 a week; all they want is an apprenticeship. I do not know whether the time has arrived for us to face reality and reduce the wages paid to first-year apprentices. If ever there is a shortage of applicants, the wages could be increased again. I know young people who would give anything to start an apprenticeship, but at the moment they have very little chance.

I heard the honourable member for Windsor compliment the Minister on his industrial relations.

**Mr. Yewdale** interjected.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** That is probably true, but he should be complimented. However, the fact is that strikes are becoming more sophisticated and harder to solve. It seems to have become a union tactic to pull out a few men in essential industry, cause havoc and then say, "Yes, but there were not any more manhours lost than there were last year." That is just so much mumbo-jumbo. We must place some emphasis on the Industrial Court and make it work. We do not want what happened in New South Wales recently when a train stoppage in Sydney was caused by a relatively small group of A.R.U. train examiners who went on strike over a demand for an over-award increase that they claimed had been granted to their Victorian counterparts and the Premier, Mr. Wran, intervened and gave them a little extra money. And what did the Transport Officers' Association think of that, a moderate union which for years had pursued its

industrial claims through the Arbitration Commission? As its State secretary, Mr. B. Simpson, put it: "Our people have religiously worked through the arbitration system for 15 months and found that there are side deals being made for other people." Of course, when such side deals are made, they encourage moderate unions to become militant and I think it is time that Governments stood up and insisted that people get these increases through the Arbitration Commission.

I think that we should also encourage a better grievance-handling procedure—and I am sure the honourable member for Rockhampton North will agree with me on that.

**Mr. Yewdale:** Talk sense.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The honourable member asks me to talk sense. All I am saying is that the unions should deal through the Industrial Court and not go outside it. That is what I said a few minutes ago.

**Mr. Prest** interjected.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I have not time to reply; I have only a few minutes left. I think the time has come when this Government, through the Minister, should promote a much better grievance-handling procedure. The sort of procedure that I envisage is one where time limits are placed on the steps taken to solve disputes. For instance, there should be an obligation on a union job representative and the foreman of a factory to meet and discuss a grievance of an employee within a certain time. If they cannot solve that grievance, there should be then an obligation on the job representatives and representatives of the company a little bit higher up to come to grips with the problem. If that does not work, there should then be a conference of the local trade union officials, not necessarily the ones employed in the factory, and management at a higher level still, and if that does not work there should then be provision for the State body of the union to talk with the management of that company or employer organisations at a higher level still.

There should be a limit of about 10 days between when the dispute first occurs on the shop floor and when the final steps in this procedure are taken. But in the meantime, unless it is a dispute over safety issues, surely to goodness trade union employees should be able to abide by the grievance-handling procedure because they would have a guarantee that their dispute would be discussed in lots of quarters within 10 days.

Finally, I thank the Minister very much for the able way in which he has presented his Estimates and I have much pleasure in supporting them.

**Mr. VAUGHAN (Nudgee)** (7.39 p.m.): In rising to speak on the Estimates of the Labour Relations portfolio, I would like to preface my remarks by acknowledging that as far as I am concerned this is one of the

most important portfolios in the Cabinet because of the ramifications of it and the effects that the handling of the portfolio can have on this State.

I would like firstly to refer to the Minister's remarks on the activities of the industrial inspectorate. The annual reports give the number of people employed in that section. Leaving aside the technical officers and the supervisory staff, there are in Queensland, 74 inspectors, including cadets, 21 district inspectors, 17 industrial inspectors, and six assistant industrial inspectors. I note that the wages adjusted last year as a result of inspections of wages books, etc., totalled \$504,588.72. There were 644 prosecutions—535 for breaches of award, and 109 for other matters.

I was a union official for a period of 13 years and one of the things that struck me as I travelled the length and breadth of the State was that wages books, on being checked, showed that a lot of things being done should not have been done. Wages books in a majority of cases, particularly in respect of small employers, were in a shocking condition.

**An Opposition Member** interjected.

**Mr. VAUGHAN:** They were certainly touching their employees. I rarely found a wages book among those that I inspected during the years I was a union official that conformed with the provisions of the award or of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Some were exercise books. Some showed only the gross amount, less tax, and the net amount.

It intrigued me that the employers whom I picked up professed, "Oh, my wages books are all right. They were inspected only last week, or a few weeks back by an industrial inspector." That amazed me, because I could hardly look at a wages book without finding a mistake in it.

I found that a considerable number of employers were not up to date on award variations. As a result, employees were not getting their tool allowances. Some were not getting basic wage increases that had been granted many months before. It amazed me that this situation should exist.

There should be more industrial inspectors and more routine inspections of wages books throughout the length and breadth of the State to ensure that wages books comply with award provisions. And there should be more frequent inspections of factories and shops. One can find many factories and shops throughout the State that are in a shocking condition. They operate under conditions that are a complete breach of the provisions of the Act.

I believe that the industrial inspectors, in the main, are overworked. Some time ago they did not even have vehicles. When I would go to a city like Cairns, they would hitch a ride with me on their way to the

Tablelands. And for much of the time they did not want it to be known that they were hitching a ride with a union official.

Copies of awards are freely available from the Government Printer. In spite of the fact that there are many employer organisations—and I will get on to that subject shortly—I was amazed at the employers' ignorance of the provisions of awards. They are supposed to have a copy of the award posted in their shop or workshop.

**Mr. Warburton:** It is in the Act.

**Mr. VAUGHAN:** It is in the Act, and it is in the award. But where does a person find the award? This also applies to the first-aid provisions. I am saying, firstly, that there should be more industrial inspectors; secondly, that they should carry out more routine checks of industry; and, thirdly, that they should make sure that employers are aware of the provisions of awards, and that they comply with them.

I guarantee that a union official can go around to shops and factories and prosecute any employer for a breach of award provisions, because they are all in some way breaching award provisions or touching their employees. Some are knowingly touching their employees. They are juggling the books. They are knowingly taking money from their employees by not paying them the award provisions.

One of the things that intrigues me is all the discussion that goes on about union membership. It is my humble opinion that when union membership was compulsory, before the decision handed down in 1966, there were fewer industrial disputes than we have had over recent years. I know that awards now virtually provide that union membership is not compulsory but that preference is applied at the point of engagement. What is forgotten, Mr. Hewitt, is that the arbitration system is based on unions of employees and unions of employers, and one of the problems in this State and in this nation is that people do not belong to unions. I am speaking about employees and employers.

One of the questions I used to ask an employer when I went to his shop was, "What about union membership?" He would say, "My employees do not have to be members of a union." I would say, "Where do you go if you have an industrial dispute?" He would say, "I will go to the Industrial Commission. I will take the dispute there." I would say, "Well what say the people don't belong to a union?" He would say, "The union will be dragged there anyway, whether they are members of the union or not." Of course, that is the case. As soon as a dispute is notified by an employer, the commission telephones the union and says, "There is a dispute at such and such a place. Will you have someone down here shortly to confer about it?", and the union goes.

I believe that it would be advantageous to industrial relations in this State if it was compulsory for employees to belong to unions and also for employers to belong to unions. In my opinion, all employers would be far better informed, and it would be to the advantage of both employers and employees if they belonged to their respective organisations and were kept up to date in relation to award provisions.

Let me tell the Committee of a case that came to my attention. A fellow came into the union office and said, "I have a particular problem. I have a damages claim against my employer." We sat him down and listened to his case, and it suddenly dawned on me that I had not asked him whether he was a member of the union. I said, "You certainly have a case for damages against your employer because of the injury you sustained at work. Are you a member of the union?" He said, "But you don't have to be, do you?" He was there wanting the union to take his case, but he said, "You don't have to belong to the union." He wanted the union to run up a bill of about \$2,000 or \$3,000 with a solicitor to defend him.

In my electorate, I have a case of a woman who has been employed for 6½ years on an assembly line in a workshop. As a result of the type of work she was performing, she now has an injury to her hand that has caused her to cease work. She rang me and said, "What help can you give me in respect of a compensation claim or a case for damages?" I said, "Are you a member of the union?" She said, "Oh, no, my shop is a non-union shop. They won't let us belong to a union." I recommended that that woman go to a solicitor, but the fact is that, because she does not belong to a union, she is going to have to pay her own solicitor's fees to take a case against her employer. Union membership is like medical insurance; everybody should have it.

As to the current industrial situation in Queensland—I think it is a tragedy that a situation was allowed to develop last week in which there was confrontation between meatworkers and graziers down on the wharves. That sort of confrontation is not desirable, and certainly that particular issue should not have reached the stage that it did. It was a very bad case, and it was a good example of the bad industrial relations in this State,

The meatworkers' union had an agreement or an arrangement with the Cattle-men's Union, and it was only the stubbornness of the United Graziers' Association and the graziers concerned that prevented a similar type of agreement being reached with the meatworkers' union. Something should be done, because it is undesirable that industrial relations should deteriorate to the extent that there is confrontation of the type that occurred last week. That certainly is not an example of good industrial relations.

I have heard praise heaped on the Minister during this debate, I have no hesitation in saying that when I was an elected official of the union I came down here and spoke to him about particular problems. I accepted his invitation and welcomed the opportunity. But the person in this State who does more than anyone else to destroy industrial relations is the Premier. On the one hand, he encourages rank and file unionists to rebel against their elected officials; on the other hand, when they do that, he blames the elected officials for what occurs. If there is not some sort of control and discipline within the unions, the Premier cannot advocate rank and file authority within the unions and then blame union officials for the results.

Something similar has happened in the brewery dispute. The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads made a remark about Poms in the unions. Good heavens! There are just as many Poms in the employers' organisations as there are in trade unions. What about Mr. Willis? He's a Pom; but that seems to be O.K. Union members should abide by the union rules and, as I said before, all people—employers as well as employees—should be members of unions.

The previous speaker referred to industrial disputes. One thing that irks me is the prominence given by the media to industrial disputation. There were many times while I was an elected official of a union when the media came to me and asked what the situation was on the industrial scene. I told them about applications that we had made to the Industrial Commission and what we were doing for our members. The media, however, were more interested in the industrial disputes, such as electricity strikes and so on. They wanted to know when the power would go off and that sort of thing.

Quite often we hear claims about the number of industrial disputes, the time lost as a result and the cost to the nation. The only figures that I could obtain are for the four quarters of 1976-77. They show that over that whole year a total of 457,700 days were lost as a result of industrial disputes. In the June quarter 1978, 1.9 days were lost for each worker involved in industrial disputes. Let me compare those figures with those for industrial accidents. Over the same period, the number of days lost as the result of industrial accidents involving temporary disability totalled 1,353,203.

Whereas 457,700 days were lost through industrial disputes, over 1,000,000 days—1,353,203 to be exact—were lost as the result of industrial accidents. That is amazing. But what received the prominence? It was industrial disputation.

Over the week-end I heard a radio station mention the sum of money that was lost as a result of industrial disputes. The figures

speak for themselves. In 1976-77 more money was lost as the result of industrial accidents than as the result of industrial disputation.

The previous speaker talked about the procedures involved in the settlement of disputes. One of the best things that could happen in this Parliament would be for Government members to take the special courses available in industrial relations. The annual report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops shows that such a course is available for laymen. Government members should take advantage of it. If they did, they might learn something about industrial relations and be able to speak with authority on the matter.

I see here a headline stating "Scheme from the Nationals to cut strikes". That appeared in "The Sunday Mail" on 11 September 1977. The National Party had thought up a scheme. That scheme had been in operation for years. The problem is that Government members, such as the honourable member for Carnarvon, fail to realise that industrial relations is a two-way street. Unfortunately, the employers want it to be only a one-way street. As to time factors, many awards contain provision for a time factor in relation to the settlement of an industrial dispute.

I now want to talk about apprenticeship. As has been said, there is a drop in the number of apprentices who are indentured. My attention has been drawn to comments made by the Apprenticeship Executive to the effect that some employers could do more to employ apprentices. I agree; they certainly could. The Apprenticeship Executive went on to say that the employers' failure to do so could have dire repercussions in the future. Those very statements were made as far back as 1976 by Mr. Anderson, who conducted an inquiry into apprenticeship in Queensland. His report was released in this House on 4 October last year.

For seven or eight years I was a member of the Electrical and Radio Group Apprenticeship Committee. One of the problems that intrigued me was that employers were taking on young lads as apprentices without applying to the apprenticeship group committees for permission to do so. Section 22 of the Apprenticeship Act of 1964 clearly provides that—

"Any employer desirous of employing a person as an apprentice shall make application to the secretary of the Executive or to the secretary of an Apprenticeship Advisory Committee in the form prescribed for the allotment to him of such person as an apprentice."

At almost every meeting of the Group Apprenticeship Committee there were cases of employers who had taken on lads illegally and employed them for months at less than the award rate. Many employers took the lads on and sacked them after using them as cheap labour. When such things are reported to the authorities they write a letter to the employer telling him that he

should not act in this way, but he is not dealt with under the Act's provisions. When employers have troubles with apprentices, they know how to write letters and complain to get the apprentices dealt with, but they do not abide by the Act or the regulations.

Regulation 11 of the electrical trade apprenticeship regulations provides that a copy of the regulations is to be posted in every workshop. But in virtually no workshop throughout the State is a copy of the regulations to be found. What are the inspectors doing?

The annual report of the Apprenticeship Executive referred to the pre-apprenticeship training courses. We have a real problem with apprenticeships in Queensland. Pre-apprenticeship courses were trialled last year but they were discontinued this year. So far as I can ascertain, the lads were doing pre-apprenticeship training but there were no employers to take them on. What they did was probably better than staying on at school or remaining unemployed while trying to get into the work-force. At least they got some training. If lads undertake pre-apprenticeship or pre-vocational training, they should have an employment goal in front of them.

I have some comments to make about roadworthiness certificates. It is a shame that we have only 20 minutes in which to speak in this debate. The manner in which roadworthiness certificates are issued needs complete investigation and overhaul. On 9 August this year, a young lad came to see me about a second-hand Falcon panel van he had bought from a used-car dealer. I will not mention the dealer's name, but I will say that he bought the van from a dealer at 88 Breakfast Creek Road, Newstead. I warn everyone not to go near him.

When the lad bought the car, he got with it a roadworthiness certificate issued by the Caltex garage at 1521 Sandgate Road, Nundah, signed by an A. R. Hunter. I have a photostat copy of it. All items are ticked. The young lad drove the car out of the yard and on that very night he was pulled up by the police on Sandgate Road. They told him that the spring hangers on the vehicle were faulty. They sent him for a machinery inspection at the Government Garage in Pineapple Street. The cost of faults that had to be rectified came to over \$200. Fortunately he came to me and then approached the Small Claims Tribunal. I pay due respect to that body. He has had his claim attended to and he has been reimbursed. But someone at the Government Garage said to him that several similar cases had been dealt with concerning roadworthiness certificates issued by the same centre. The Government Garage inspectors know the place.

**An Opposition Member:** They have done nothing about it.

**Mr. VAUGHAN:** They cannot have done anything about it.

A person in this centre approved a panel van with extended faulty rear-spring hangers, a faulty exhaust system, left and right front panels and a cross-member rusting away, a right front engine mounting faulty and an undersize steering wheel. The car was sold in that condition and the inspectors at the Government Garage know that many problems have arisen concerning roadworthiness certificates issued by that station. What is wrong with the system? Roadworthiness certificates are not the be-all and end-all in determining the condition of a vehicle. They can be obtained very cheaply.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. SCASSOLA** (Mt. Gravatt) (7.59 p.m.): In participating in this debate, I join in the comments made by the honourable member for Windsor about the Minister. The Minister has been an able administrator of his department and has brought long experience to the administration of that department. His period in his office has earned him the respect of people from all sectors of the community.

I was amazed to hear the statement by the honourable member for Townsville South that there ought to be "proper planning in production, distribution and exchange". It was almost like hearing some sort of garbled pledge that he obviously makes periodically to the Labor Party, a pledge in which he promises that he will do whatever he can to ensure that there is socialisation of production, distribution and exchange. There is no doubt that that is what he means by planning in that field.

It is amazing also to realise that members opposite are mesmerised by outdated statements such as the one made by the honourable member for Townsville South. Not one of the speakers opposite has had anything constructive to say about work in this country, about the value that work has, about the value that people who work in industry and outside bring to the development of this State and to this nation. The only comments that we have heard from them have been of a destructive nature and their statements about work, in the main, have been on ways to get out of it. To them every employer is a rogue and cannot be trusted. Clearly, Opposition members are incapable of understanding the value of industry, the value of work, the value of dedication and the contribution that people who work in our society make to it. Those who work and seek to make their own way are independent, but to honourable members opposite independence is the very antithesis of the socialism which they espouse.

The Minister referred in his opening speech to an amendment of the workers' compensation legislation to include members of an employer's family in the definition of "worker". That change was most welcome and will remove, and is already removing, many of the problems that arose in

the past and will remove some of the injustices that were brought about because of the definition in the legislation.

The Minister also referred to the research currently being undertaken in manpower planning and I believe that that research will be—

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** What will the research prove?

**Mr. SCASSOLA:** If the honourable member listens for a moment, he might learn something. The research will be of very great significance to the future of this State and, indeed, to the future of this country. In 1967, the then Federal Minister for Labor, Mr. Bury, had this to say—

"Australia is one of those countries which does not engage in manpower planning. We are fortunate in possessing vigorous product and resource markets in which demand and supply forces can operate freely."

That statement was made some 11 years ago. Looking at the position now, perhaps we are not quite so fortunate, and there is a need to look at the situation differently and to indulge in research that will bring some real direction in this area. The days when a person could choose a particular field and be confident of having lifelong employment in it may well be passing. There is an urgent need now for research to see where the needs really are. There is a need for a range of programmes suitable for the needs of a sizeable number of displaced employees who have difficulty in finding employment.

The most distressing feature of unemployment is the number of young people affected. They leave school in their teens after years of education in an academic sphere in the belief that they have acquired worthwhile skills that they can put to use in employment, only to find that their skills do not equip them for the work-force. They have great difficulty in obtaining employment. Many young people find that they have no skills relevant to the jobs for which they apply. In some cases they are informed that they have no experience. In other cases, because they have remained at school for a lengthy period, they are told that they are too old for the employment they seek and that younger people are required.

The 1975 survey of unemployed people conducted by the then Federal Department of Labour revealed some interesting statistics. It was found that two-thirds of the young males registered for employment were either in the semi-skilled or the unskilled area and that a quarter of the males and one-third of the females seeking employment had no previous experience. Those figures indicate and reflect a change in community attitude over a long period.

Since 1945 or thereabouts there has been in this country an increasing emphasis on academic training. Since the late 1950s and

early 1960s, there has been an increasing emphasis on tertiary academic training. There was an attitude by some people in the community that those who did not pursue academic training and did not achieve academic goals were second-class citizens, that those who sought skills in other than academic areas were second rate. Those who pursued academic training were being educated at the expense of the Government. Those who were acquiring skills in other areas, particularly technical areas, through apprenticeships were largely trained at the expense of the employer. The position in recent times is that a growing number of people emerging from tertiary institutions are having great difficulty in finding work outside, and I cite the recent example of a number of law graduates in New South Wales who had difficulty in finding employment.

Certainly the downturn in the private sector has had a considerable effect on the number of people seeking positions involving skills or apprenticeships, and one of the things that people tend to say is that the younger people who come into the work-force often set their sights too high. There is a view held also in the business community that people coming into the work-force or emerging from school and about to come into the work-force are without the skills that are appropriate for the work that they seek to obtain.

The downturn in the number of apprenticeships is seen from the figures in the report of the Apprenticeship Executive and from the comments made by the Minister.

I believe that there is urgent need for expansion of pre-vocational training that will better equip people to enter the work-force. It should be a course to develop basic skills that will help bridge the gap that exists between the school society and the work society and one that will help to determine attitudes.

Small business has played a very significant role in the employment of people in this country and it is continuing to play a very significant role. It employs almost half the Australian work-force and I have often wondered whether perhaps something more could be done to assist small business to employ more people. One of the steps that ought to be considered is the earmarking of some portion of receipts from pay-roll tax to assist small business to overcome some of its difficulties and to expand employment opportunities.

In his opening remarks the Minister also referred to the Consumer Affairs Bureau. If one looks at the recent report of the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, one will see that a significant section of it relates to the purchase of motor vehicles. If one does not purchase a motor vehicle from a recognised dealer, one has to satisfy oneself that the vehicle being purchased is free from encumbrance. Alternatively, one

has to rely almost exclusively on the warranty given by the seller to the effect that the vehicle is unencumbered.

I wonder whether some thought could be given to overcoming the problem, perhaps in a number of ways. In some overseas countries—for example, England—there is a system of log books. They are issued with the initial purchase of a vehicle and are handed down the line continuously from seller to buyer. They record all sorts of relevant information about the vehicle including, as I understand it, the matter of encumbrances.

I wonder whether in this area it might be possible to have a form of register of encumbrances, just as one registers encumbrances on land in the Titles Office, by having the bill of mortgage or other encumbrance noted on the deed.

I make those comments in the hope that they will be looked at with a view to the future.

**Mr. POWELL (Isis) (8.17 p.m.):** I rise in this debate to discuss the Estimates of the Department of Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs. In doing so, I acknowledge the remarks of previous speakers about the importance of this portfolio. Because it is so important, obviously the person who has responsibility for it must have a breadth of experience and be able to look at matters in a very sensible manner. I believe that we presently have a sagacious Minister in this portfolio.

Whenever the subject of labour relations is being discussed in this Parliament I am always interested in the number of honourable members opposite who seem to believe that it is their personal preserve and that they are the only people who have any knowledge of it. They adopt that attitude ad nauseam, and we have to put up with their usual rhetoric.

What they fail to understand is that on the Government benches are a number of people who have had trade union experience and who have been in employment for wages. On our side of the Chamber we also have people who have been self-employed, as well as people who have employed large numbers of workers. We have a large number of people with expertise and experience in union affairs from both the employer and employee sides, so it is reasonable to assume that the industrial relations policy of this Government is the envy of the other States.

The Queensland Government has in its membership a large number of people with experience, and the Labor Opposition in this State does not have such people. It is lamentable that members of the Labor Opposition do not recognise the expertise on this side of the Chamber. In fact, if one listens to their rhetoric and noise one finds that they seldom mention the word "work". They believe that "work" is a dirty four-letter word.

One of the major problems in the whole spectrum of society today is that people seem to have forgotten that a fair day's wage requires a fair day's work. It is most important that the people of Queensland realise just how stupid are the statements of Opposition members. They are very empty vessels. As they have had experience of only one side—and the poor fellows must have had extremely bad experience—their attitude in this Chamber is that they cannot accept that good industrial relations will come about only when there is a degree of unanimity between the employer and the employee.

It is indeed regrettable that, because people are selfish, it is necessary to have a great deal of industrial legislation in this State and to have industrial courts in which arbitration takes place. I might add that selfishness is not confined to one section or another; there are selfish employers, just as there are selfish employees. Records show that in a fairly small workshop, where a small number of employees and their employer get together, industrial relations usually are good and the employees and the employer do not go off into separate corners and then have a fight.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. POWELL:** It is quite evident that trouble occurs wherever stirrers and loud-mouths—and there are a number of them among honourable members opposite—become involved in industrial matters. If the loud-mouths can be kept out, if employers and employees can get together and speak to one another quietly—

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. POWELL:** —unlike what is happening in the Chamber at the moment, Mr. Wright, and discuss their problems logically, industrial disputes do not occur. Problems arise when loud-mouths and stirrers become involved.

It is a shame that the secret ballot provisions of the Act are not used more frequently in industrial relations in Queensland. If the men involved in the brewery strike in Brisbane were given the opportunity of having a secret ballot, I suggest that they would be back at work very quickly. However, they are not being given that opportunity. They are being made to stand up in front of their fellows and, by various means, foul and otherwise, forced to vote in a certain fashion. Honourable members have seen people on television explaining the way in which that happens.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. POWELL:** Again we hear the noisy minority opposite, Mr. Wright.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wright):** Order! I am very interested in hearing what the honourable member for Isis is saying. I ask honourable members on my left to restrain themselves.

**Mr. POWELL:** Thank you, Mr. Wright. It is pleasing to see that the Chair is, as usual, completely unbiased.

It is most important, of course, that the workers should have the opportunity of expressing their opinions without fear or favour.

I was interested in the Minister's opening remarks about workers' compensation. It is important to note—and I have not heard honourable members opposite comment on this—that for the second year in succession workers' compensation premiums have decreased by 10 per cent. Although workers' compensation premiums in Queensland are approximately one-third of those in other States, one does not hear honourable members opposite saying what a good Government this is because of the way in which it administers workers' compensation. All they do is grizzle about the poor deal that someone has had.

A number of people have approached me with problems relating to workers' compensation, and I can say that my representations have been received with sympathy by officers of the Workers' Compensation Section. In every case, the sympathetic manner in which my constituents were received would have to be seen to be believed. I have heard claims that the workers' compensation people are arrogant and do not do their job properly. I simply do not believe those claims. My experience proves otherwise.

The merit bonus scheme in this State, which is unique in Australia, gives employers an opportunity to encourage safety on their shop floors. This is most desirable and it should be aimed at. If the employer and the employee combine to achieve the one objective—safety—that is to the advantage of both of them.

It is interesting to note that, as the Minister said, the sum spent on rehabilitation of people who were badly injured in work-time accidents increased from \$46,929 in 1976 to \$119,999 last year. It should be noted that this Government has an extremely good record in the field of workers' compensation. As I said before, the assessment of the person injured must always be sympathetic. When a person is injured, he obviously suffers an emotional as well as a physical stress. So it is indeed good to see that the Workers' Compensation Board officers are sympathetic towards the people with whom they deal.

The Minister is also responsible for the Consumer Affairs Bureau, which is a most important arm of government in this State. It is interesting to note that Queensland is a leader in consumer legislation in Australia. It is also interesting to note that the State

conference that was held recently and was attended by a lot of people from interstate had as its theme "Consumerism—a Two-way Street".

If ever education is needed in the secondary field as well as in the public sector, it is in the field of consumerism. It is unfortunate that some resource material that was offered recently in schools showed consumerism in the light of the contention that the consumer was always right and the retailer was always wrong. The conference to which I have referred obviously scotches that idea. It is most important that the message be got across to the consumer generally that consumerism is a two-way street; that, while the consumer has responsibilities, so, too, does the retailer have responsibilities and that, provided both meet their responsibilities fairly, a fair deal will be had by all.

It is interesting to note the amount of work done by the Consumer Affairs Bureau. It received 4,910 written complaints and a total of 26,000 telephonic inquiries and personal calls. That means that the officers of the bureau have worked very hard indeed. Naturally, some of the telephone and personal calls would have concerned trivial matters that could have been dealt with expeditiously. Others, however, would have entailed a great deal of work. Tribute should be paid to the public servants in this field for the excellent job that they do.

Of them, I would single out Miss Jan Taylor, who, on the education side, does an excellent job in getting around the State. She travels from town to town spreading the consumer message. She deserves a great deal of praise from the Parliament for the work that she does on behalf of the consumers. There is no doubt that many consumer problems would not arise if people were wary of what they buy. No amount of legislation can protect people from themselves, but it is important that the Government do all that it can to educate people to be careful when they are making purchases.

Earlier speakers referred to second-hand motor vehicles. It is interesting to note that inspectors from the department made a number of snap inspections of used-car dealers. The report indicates that 1,858 vehicles were examined and an amazing 53.3 per cent required repairs. People purchasing a second-hand vehicle should be very careful about the person they deal with, the price they pay and the condition of the vehicle. It is incredible that inspectors visiting used-car yards should find 53.3 per cent of vehicles unroadworthy. The used-car dealers should take a close look at their operations.

I know a large number of these people, and the ones whom I know are very honest and present a very good product. But obviously there are those who do not do that. In this field, the Consumer Affairs Bureau and the machinery inspectors work

very hard. Our system, whereby a second-hand vehicle when sold must be accompanied by a roadworthiness certificate, goes but a small way towards getting the bomb off the road.

We have a real problem with road safety. While it is essential that drivers act sensibly and responsibly, there is not much use in their doing so if the vehicles they are driving are less than serviceable. It may well be said that a responsible driver will not drive a vehicle that is other than completely roadworthy, but it is amazing how vehicles can wear out and not be checked. While roadworthiness certificates are a step in the right direction, perhaps the system needs strengthening through a change in the legislation.

The Minister is also responsible for apprentices in Queensland. Our apprentices are the tradesmen of tomorrow and they are a very important part of the community. It is certainly sad, as the Minister told us in his opening remarks, that Queensland has had a 9 per cent decrease in the number of apprentices undergoing training. However, on looking at the economic situation and considering the complaints all honourable members receive from employers, tradesmen, builders and those engaged in the metal trades industry about the apprenticeship system, it is not hard to understand why there is a decrease.

Many employers, especially small employers, complain about the cost of apprentices, which is very high indeed. The first-year apprentice's wage is very high compared with what it was in past years, when apprentices did all their theoretical training at night and in the afternoon. Today, apprentices have a block release scheme which takes them away from their employers for seven weeks. Statutory holidays must also be taken into consideration. In all, an employer loses the services of an apprentice for about three months in a year, and those three months can be in one period. That is quite a long time.

Reference has been made to the pre-vocational training undertaken at Eagle Farm, Bundaberg and Cairns. In the light of my personal experience with this scheme, I can only speak highly of it. The officers responsible for its introduction and implementation have done an excellent job. It is interesting to note the success rate of graduates from this scheme in obtaining jobs and apprenticeships.

People in certain quarters have been lobbying strongly for the complete phasing out of the apprenticeship system. It is claimed that all the theoretical work should be done at school immediately after a student passes the Junior or Senior level, and that he should then go into the workforce—theoretically as a completely trained tradesman. Most practical people in the community would argue strongly against that proposition.

It is most important to know the theoretical side of any job. The theory must be well learned, well understood and well judged. But there is absolutely no substitute for experience. There is no substitute at all for working with the hands in a particular vocation before going out to get the full wage. If we would have the work-force accept more apprentices to be trained as tradesmen, then conditions must be right for them.

We note that the Minister mentioned in his introductory speech an industrial training commission. I must confess that there are question marks in my mind when he talks about an industrial training commission. Is it to be yet another commission to implement something that can be implemented at the moment under existing legislation with the present personnel?

I have my doubts about the future of the apprenticeship system if it is to be changed too radically. The cost must be taken into consideration, and also taken into consideration must be the geographic location and size of workshops. It is quite obvious that, on the cost of apprentices, small workshops in isolated country areas cannot possibly compete with the large city-based organisations, which can hide some of their costs.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. DAVIS** (Brisbane Central) (8.37 p.m.): Before discussing this very vital and important portfolio, there are a number of statements I would like to make to refute, on behalf of the A.L.P., some of the things that were said by the member for Carnarvon. In his speech tonight, the honourable member mentioned a very important aspect of unemployment which this Government, along with its counterparts in the Federal sphere, has helped to create. I would like to comment briefly on the committee, headed by the honourable member for Townsville West, that has been set up by the joint Government parties. I would like to quote from the "Gold Coast Bulletin" to show how successful this parliamentary committee has been. The editorial reads—

"The committee of parliamentarians headed by Mr. Max Hooper, N.P. Townsville, to investigate the whole subject of unemployment should have been a good idea and could have been greatly to the advantage of the group most needing help—school-leavers on the job-hunting trail.

"What a pity, however, that the committee hid its light behind a bushel and held its Gold Coast session behind closed doors, reporters not admitted, and therefore the public kept in the dark on any beneficial ideas placed before the group."

It goes on to say—

"On radio next morning Mr. Hooper was quoted reeling off a chain of clichés which said less than nothing.

"Some gems of wisdom may have been produced at the inquiry but they had no chance of showing through the smoke-screen because of a virtual ban inexplicably placed on the proceedings."

So much for the great unemployment committee set up by this Government.

**Mr. Casey:** It is significant that no Opposition member had been invited to join the committee.

**Mr. DAVIS:** As a matter of fact, the member for Mackay is quite correct. This is so; they did not invite us.

**Mr. Bishop:** Are you aware that the Trades and Labor Council was invited and refused to attend?

**Mr. DAVIS:** Well, if the experts in the field of labour relations were not invited along, naturally I would not expect our brothers to join Government members.

I should now like to refer to two important matters that have been brought to my notice. The first concerns the fitting of motor vehicle tyres. I am sure that the honourable member for Caboolture would know something about that.

**Mr. Frawley:** You have never fitted a tyre in your life. The only tyre you know something about is the spare tyre round your stomach.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I do not like to brag, but I am considered an expert in the fitting of tyres.

A young driver was pulled up by the police and sent to the Machinery Department to have his vehicle inspected. That department found that the tyres on the vehicle were too wide; they were illegal, and they had to be removed. This young chap had bought the tyres and rims a few weeks earlier. The tyres alone cost over \$450. The tyre firm refused to replace the tyres and rims and the young man was most upset.

On his behalf, I contacted the Machinery Department and was informed quite correctly that, as the car was fitted with illegal tyres, it had to enforce the Act. I have no complaint with the department; it can only act in accordance with its charter. It has no investigative powers. I then took the matter up with the Consumer Affairs Bureau, which was very co-operative and is having the matter investigated. The commissioner admitted that this is a very grey area.

This is only one type of problem that arises today. I am sure that other honourable members have come across it. From my service station experience, I know that the tyre companies have emphasised that if a person fits illegal tyres and his vehicle is involved in an accident, he can be liable for the damage and can be charged.

**Mr. Frawley:** All you did when you were in the service station was mix super and standard and sell it as super.

**Mr. DAVIS:** The honourable member for Caboolture has flogged that joke three or four times and he is so comical that nobody is laughing.

If a firm fits the rims and tyres and they are illegal, there must be some way of prosecuting it. The firm fits the tyres, the driver gets pulled up by the police, the Machinery Department says that the tyres are illegal, and in this case the driver has to remove them and lose \$450. I hope that the Consumer Affairs Bureau will be able to get satisfaction in this case. If it cannot, legislation must be introduced to overcome the problem.

The second matter I should like to raise concerns another young driver who must have been observed by a machinery inspector. Many people are under the mistaken belief that only the police can require drivers to stop. A machinery inspector does not have to pull up a car; all he has to do is observe a car which, in his opinion, is unroadworthy. A few days later the owner receives a notice through the mail to take the car to the Machinery Department for inspection.

In this case, the inspector checked the vehicle and listed quite a number of faults. The most savage one was that the car had flared mudguards. To restore them to the standard shape would cost in the vicinity of \$700. I am not arguing the rights of the Machinery Department; if that is the law, it has to enforce it. What I am concerned about—and it has been mentioned previously by a number of honourable members—is the issuing of roadworthiness certificates. In this case the young chap had a roadworthiness certificate. A car, which had illegal modifications, had been given a certificate. The owner has no legal redress. The vendor has gone overseas. The owner now has a vehicle that has been put off the road and he will have to pay \$700 to have the mudguards returned to the standard shape. This is another example of the need for something to be done about roadworthiness certificates.

**Mr. Frawley:** It wouldn't cost \$700 to replace four mudguards. What sort of car is it—a Lamborghini?

**Mr. DAVIS:** I am trying to remember if the quote came from Frawley's garage at Redcliffe.

**Mr. Casey:** I think it did.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I am not too sure but I think it was a garage in that area. Nevertheless, it cost \$700.

**Mr. Frawley:** What sort of car was it?

**Mr. DAVIS:** It was a Holden station sedan.

**Mr. Frawley:** You could put mudguards back on it for \$160.

**Mr. DAVIS:** It might be \$160, but, of course, he might have been dealing with a crooked panel beater or tow-truck operator like the honourable member for Caboolture, when he was in business.

Whether it cost \$160 or \$700, this car was issued with a roadworthiness certificate, but it is now off the road and, because the vendor has gone overseas, the buyer has no comeback. I believe that this example illustrates the urgent need to tidy up the system of issuing roadworthiness certificates.

I can remember that when the legislation was introduced honourable members on both sides of the Chamber spoke on the subject. I raised the point then that it was completely unfair that a person who sells cars can also issue a roadworthiness certificate. I know of a number of cases where vehicles have been sold by a used-car salesman or a new-car salesman and the company employing him has issued the roadworthiness certificate, and subsequently it has been found that there is something illegal about the car. While this may not be of any great importance to a lot of Government members, nevertheless it is very important to the people who have been caught or conned in this respect.

I would like to deal now with another matter that has been raised on numerous occasions. If it were not so serious, it would be laughable. There was a comment recently in "The Courier-Mail" about a joint-party move for a new Bread Delivery Act. When I heard that, I nearly needed a doctor to give me mouth-to-mouth resuscitation because I was laughing myself to death. Have honourable members ever heard anything so laughable? I have kept a fairly good file on bread. It is one product that I know a lot about.

**Mr. Prest:** And also primary industries.

**Mr. DAVIS:** Yes, primary industries, too, because of the wheat farm that I had. I want honourable members to listen to some of the comments. This same Government, through the deposed leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Knox, asked the Consumer Affairs Council to bring down a report, which it did in 1973.

**Mr. Warburton:** And threw some good members off it, too.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I am going to come to that, but I am glad that the honourable member made the point.

I have here some of the newspaper headlines of the day. In 1973, one headline read, "Controls warning on bread—Queensland's Country Party-Liberal Government warned last night that it might change its policy and introduce bread price controls." Another was, "State to ban bread returns." That was in "The Courier-Mail" of 23 October 1973. Knox came forward and said, "Right; we are going to do something about it." However, two months later the headline appeared, "Government shelves law banning bread return". And then the Government forgot all about it. If ever there has been an item on which this Government shilly-shallied continually, it is this one.

**Mr. Prest:** I think there is too much dough in it.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I think there is a little bit in it. I do not want to blow my own trumpet, but I raised this matter in my second speech in Parliament in March 1970.

**Mr. Prest:** It was a very good speech, too.

**Mr. DAVIS:** It was. As a matter of fact, the history of the problem goes back even further than that. The country bread manufacturers were so concerned about city manufacturers' delivering to the country prior to 1970 that they split from their association and formed the Queensland Bread Manufacturers' Association, and the big companies like Tip Top, Cobbity Farm, Pfeffers and Oswalds formed themselves into the Brisbane Bread Manufacturers' Association. That was the reason for the split; the big bread manufacturers were dumping bread in country areas. Anybody who knows anything about big plants realises that they are operating for only four or five hours a day and that, if they were allowed to operate for 12 or 14 hours, they could manufacture enough bread for the whole of Brisbane.

We received that report, which contained five recommendations, and as the honourable member for Fassifern said the other day we have to do something about it. The Government did not implement the recommendations in that report. The council's recommendation on cross-marketing was—

“that where it appears that predatory pricing and other devices are being used by a bread manufacturer established in one area . . .”—

no doubt that happens—

“ . . . to capture the market of a manufacturer established in another area, the Government bring the case to the attention of the Commonwealth Commissioner of Trade Practices.”

Has this Government ever done that? Of course not.

The report showed that there was a 10 per cent wastage of bread. At that time in 1973, bread was being sold for pig feed at 3c per 2lb loaf. We, the consumers of Brisbane, were paying for it. The recommendation in this area was—

“that the Government introduce legislation to prohibit manufacturers from receiving back unsold bread and to require that all loaves be marked with the day of manufacture.”

Is it any wonder that the small country baker cannot compete? Tip Top, Oswalds, and Cobbity Farm can go to any mixed store in any country town and say, “You can have as much bread as you like. Irrespective of what you sell, we will take back your returns next day.” Of course, under those conditions the small country baker cannot compete. I doubt the sincerity of the

Government in this matter. It had its chance to do something about it in 1973, and it did nothing.

**Mr. Houston:** Who was the Minister then?

**Mr. DAVIS:** Mr. Knox was the Minister then. The surprising thing was that the bread manufacturers at that time were quite happy to be covered by the Bread Delivery Act. In Victoria a radius of 30 miles is provided. Bread manufacturers are limited to that radius.

At the present time a change has taken place in the bread-manufacturing area. The discounters have come in. Years ago the bread manufacturers would not give discounts. They said, “No, we won't discount.” They used to enter into some shady little deal. They would go to a storekeeper and say, “We cannot discount; we have all sat around the table and decided that we won't discount. If you take our bread and get rid of the other bread, however, we will give you a new set of scales plus a cash register.” This has been going on since 1971, and I very much doubt the sincerity of the Government in trying to do something about it. It is a matter of too little too late. There is the old saying in the country that it is no good closing the gate after the horse has bolted.

**Mr. Frawley:** How many friends do you have in the country?

**Mr. DAVIS:** As a matter of fact, when they were talking to me the other day, they commenced by saying, “Mr. Davis.” I said, “Call me Brian.” They said, “Why do you always speak up for the countryman?” I said, “I have to, because the poor old Country Party blokes in the House won't speak up for my friends.”

In the time remaining to me, I wish to refer to a favourite subject, and that is worker participation. My friends on this side of the Chamber will certainly agree with what I say. Worker participation, for the enlightenment of honourable members opposite, involves companies and firms. It has been proved in Sweden, West Germany and Europe. As a matter of fact, it is slowly taking its desired spot in industrial relations in Australia. I should like to give some examples of it, but time will not permit me to do so. In Australia some of the biggest companies are now involved in worker participation. One example is Rexona, which is a subsidiary of Unilever.

**Mr. Lane:** Have the workers any representatives on the board?

**Mr. DAVIS:** Yes. As a matter of fact, my information comes from Rydge's, which could not exactly be described as a Left-wing magazine.

Rexona has a properly constituted company council, with elected delegates in proportion to the total work-force, representing each division of the company. The council meets every eight weeks.

**Mr. Lane:** No representatives on the board of directors; on a consultative council?

**Mr. DAVIS:** That is right, a consultative council.

**Mr. Lane:** They have consultation.

**Mr. DAVIS:** The honourable member for Merthyr is considered to be the great industrial advocate of the Liberal Party. As I have said before, the only industrial experience that he had was outside the Trades Hall, spying on the workers.

In the few minutes that I have available, I shall explain to honourable members what the objectives of the council are. I am aware, of course, that the Liberal Party and the National Party hate the workers' being given a chance of becoming involved.

**Mr. Frawley:** Does Rexona manufacture Persil?

**Mr. DAVIS:** It is a big company. If the honourable member does not know what Unilever is, he should not be commenting.

The objectives of the council are to—

- Improve overall company performance;
- Allow better and more informed management decision-making;
- Increase productivity and job satisfaction; and
- Improve the quality of working life.

A great deal could be done to bring about better understanding between the boss and the worker. I ask honourable members opposite whether they agree with me when I say that the days when the roles of master and servant were established have long passed. The worker has a commodity to sell—his labour—and until he is replaced completely by a machine, he and his representatives must be consulted and confided in.

**Mr. WHITE (Southport) (8.57 p.m.):** I am pleased to speak on the Labour Relations Estimates, because the Department under the Minister's control has proved very effective and has brought great credit to the Government.

Before the honourable member for Archerfield says, as he usually does, "What do you know about this?", I will put his mind at rest by saying that I have had very little experience of labour relations. I have never been in a union; I have never been an employer; and once I had the great distinction of working for a company for six months. Therefore, I do not profess to be an expert.

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

**Mr. WHITE:** If the honourable member listens, he will learn that I have done some homework, and I shall be attempting to make a constructive contribution to the debate.

In opening the debate, the Minister said that he was proud of his department, and he has every right to be. He and his departmental officers have shown a great deal of skill and patience and have built up a great degree of trust both within the department and between the officials of his department and the trade unions. I think that honourable members on both sides of the Chamber will agree that the department is held in respect by the Opposition, by employers and by employees.

From my vast experience of industrial relations, which I have outlined, I would be the first to admit that it is very much a two-way relationship. Too often I have seen management who see their role as merely giving orders to employees, and too often I have seen employees who see management as the enemy to be defeated at all costs. Of course, most honourable members realise that those two opposing points of view will lead only to senseless confrontation, lack of work, closure of industry and a downturn in the economy. It is quite clear that the more communication there is between employer and employee, the less chance there is of a breakdown in their relationship. There are very few disputes that cannot be solved by sensible discussion, provided each side respects, to some degree, the other's point of view.

Tonight I want to deal particularly with apprenticeships. It is quite obvious that over the past few years far too great an emphasis has been placed on tertiary education. It has received a great deal of financial backing. I am very pleased to see that over more recent years the emphasis has shifted back to trade and technical training. We have seen a significant decline in Australia in the number of tradesmen who are practising their craft. Figures available to me show that over the past five years the decline was of the order of 15 per cent.

It is interesting to note that in the 1976-77 financial year Commonwealth funds spent on tertiary non-technical training totalled \$981,000,000. This compares with the sum of \$119,000,000 spent on technical training. I am very glad to see that last year that imbalance was, to some extent, corrected.

As most of us know, grave concern has been expressed about the apprenticeship system. Young people face tremendous difficulties in obtaining apprenticeships. We are getting back to the stage where, as occurred about 600 years ago, parents are paying for their children to become indentured. This practice is not widespread, but it is occurring. We should be trying to do something about the lack of apprenticeship opportunities for young people.

The Minister has expressed his concern about the general decline in Queensland of the number of apprentices. Last year the number stood at 5,600, whereas this year it has dropped by about 9 per cent to 5,117. I am pleased to say, however, that on the

Gold Coast, which is in a comparatively healthy economic state, the number of apprentices continues to increase.

The numbers are set out in the following table:—

| Year Ended<br>June | Number of<br>Apprentices<br>Employed |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1973 .. .. .       | 477                                  |
| 1974 .. .. .       | 746                                  |
| 1975 .. .. .       | 703                                  |
| 1976 .. .. .       | 695                                  |
| 1977 .. .. .       | 720                                  |
| 1978 .. .. .       | 735                                  |

That table shows that over the period of five years the number of apprentices employed on the Gold Coast rose by 300, or almost 100 per cent. Although other areas are suffering, it is good to see that on the Gold Coast, for example, the level of employment of apprentices has been not only maintained but also increased.

**Mr. Bishop:** That is more than the number employed by the State Government in Queensland.

**Mr. WHITE:** The number is indicative of the economy of the area represented by the honourable member and me.

Another matter that causes concern is the cancellation of indentures. Today, an Opposition member stated that in any one year 13 per cent of apprentices cancel their indentures. That is a sad wastage of young talent. We cannot legislate, of course, to force young people to continue with their apprenticeships if they do not wish to do so. In some ways, it is an indictment of the somewhat casual and irresponsible attitude displayed by many of the younger generation. It is deplorable that 13 per cent or more of those who manage to secure apprenticeships—and they are like gold to many young people—give them away before completing them.

We must ask why the number of apprenticeships is declining. The major reason for the decline is that employers are simply not employing them. If employers are to be out of pocket when they employ apprentices, obviously they will not employ them. The sad fact is that apprentices, through no fault of their own, have largely priced themselves out of employment through high wages, leave loadings, time away from the job, etc. Without doubt, the various Commonwealth and State subsidy schemes have reduced the penalties faced far too often by employers when they take on apprentices. Some of these schemes have been reasonably successful, but most Queensland employers when told of the schemes that are available do not consider them a sufficient incentive to employ apprentices. Much as it hurts me to say it, it is time that the Commonwealth and State Governments looked very seriously at increasing these subsidies.

Solutions to the problem are difficult to find. A regeneration of activity in the country would provide a partial, but never a total solution. I do not think we will ever get back to the stage where more apprenticeships are offering than there are young people willing to take them up. Another partial solution lies in increased Government responsibility for apprenticeship training. The time has come for Governments to assist employers. For many years employers were responsible for training apprentices in their trade. I do not think those days will return; the stage has been reached where the Government and employers have a joint responsibility. The Government is accepting its responsibility through the Department of Labour Relations and the Department of Education, particularly in the technical education section.

It is inevitable that apprentices will spend more time in college and less time on job training. In this way the costs for which the employer is responsible will be reduced and, unfortunately, the Government's costs will be increased. That is in line with the Anderson report.

Another partial solution lies in pre-vocational courses. They are proving a great success. The more encouragement we give to their widespread introduction throughout the State, the better it will be. In this way basic skills are developed in young people prior to specialised training. At the same time, they can try a range of skills prior to selecting a particular trade. It is basic educational experience for young people who may not choose to go into a trade and it is valuable training for use in later life.

One of the great advantages of the pre-vocational course is that it assists in bridging the gap between leaving school and entering the work-force proper. While a pre-vocational course does not guarantee a job, it is a decided advantage. Another big advantage of the pre-vocational course is that it gets a lot of children away from Grades 11 and 12, which they are undertaking because they have nothing else to do and nowhere else to go. It will get the students out of the schools and into constructive technical training. It will provide a distinct alternative to Grades 11 and 12 for those children who have no interest in furthering their academic education, who have no interest in going on to university, but want to work with their hands. This, I believe, is one of the great advantages of these pre-vocational courses.

Indeed, many schools are to be commended for what they try to do with children who have no interest in academic training. But State schools are not the place for basic trade training. The children who stay at school because they have nowhere else to go are, in many cases, disruptive. They are a pain in the neck to their fellow students and to the staff of the school. We should get them out of the schools, which are basically for

academic training, and into TAFE colleges where courses such as pre-vocational training are provided. I am quite sure that the approach of these kids to life and to work would then be more constructive, and would be better off in terms of trade skills.

The pre-apprenticeship systems have been important. Of course, the great problem there is that if students are started in pre-apprenticeship courses, they expect jobs at the end of them. I think it is very sensible to suspend these courses temporarily until the demand for them grows again.

In monetary terms, it is pleasing to see that the apprenticeship office Vote has been increased by \$300,000 and that of this some \$200,000 is to go to practical training of country apprentices. It is also very pleasing to see, from an Education Department point of view, the increased emphasis that is being placed on technical training. I am very pleased in my own area to see the continued planning for the development of the future Gold Coast Technical and Further Education College. The Anderson report emphasised the importance of decentralising trade training. This college is due to open in 1981 and it will be a great boon for apprenticeship training on the Coast. The facilities of the present TAFE college are too limited to cater for the demands of the Gold Coast area, and hundreds of apprentices now are forced to go to Brisbane for their block training. This is an unsatisfactory situation.

The Gold Coast TAFE college will play its part in a wide range of apprenticeship training, in particular in the hospitality industry, the building industry, the automotive industry, boat-building, fishing and light manufacturing industries, all of which are very vibrant, growth industries on the Coast. I particularly look forward to seeing this college play its part in the development of apprenticeships and training in the hospitality industry, for which there is no real training centre on the Gold Coast. It is very important that this gap in training be filled, because the hospitality industry is so important to the tourist trade in this State.

We look forward to seeing the industrial training commission set up. I know some people have mixed thoughts on this particular commission. From what I know and what I have read, I believe it will be a step in the right direction, and I know the Minister is planning to introduce legislation this year to set it up. It is important because, generally speaking, it will be the commission that will implement the recommendations of the Anderson report, which I think, generally speaking, have been welcomed by both sides of this Chamber.

In conclusion, may I say that the department has every reason to be proud of its record, in particular its pre-apprenticeship and pre-vocational training, and also for the work its welfare officers do for the promotion of apprenticeships and then public recognition in this State. The department

can also be proud of its progressive attitude in our ever-changing industrial make-up. I am sure the Minister recognises that the lack of apprenticeship opportunities is a major State and national problem. Employers cannot and will not take up the shortfall. I am sure that the Minister and all other honourable members are looking forward to a very positive Government programme to make sure that this country has the tradesmen it needs for the future.

**Mrs. KIPPIN** (Mourilyan) (9.15 p.m.): Much has already been said in this debate about the new Workers' Compensation Board. The Minister outlined its workings and its development. I compliment both him and the board on the smooth conversion from a unit of the S.G.I.O. to its establishment under this department. I must commend both the Minister and the board on the lowering of premiums. Queensland has the lowest premiums in Australia and is to be envied for that.

One matter that I should like to draw to the attention of the Minister and the board is the list of injuries for which compensation is payable. The amending 1978 legislation contains a table setting out the nature of injuries and the compensation payable for them. It is quite a comprehensive table, listing 29 injuries. It covers a vast range of visible injuries, such as the loss of an eye, both hands, an arm, a joint, a finger, a toe and a foot. It also lists the loss of sight and the complete loss of hearing or deafness. Total and incurable loss of mental powers involving ability to work and total and incurable paralysis of the limbs or of mental powers are also listed. All of them can be readily recognised and measured. The problem that I bring to the notice of the board concerns head injuries and the problems that arise from them. They are very difficult to measure.

A man in my electorate fell from scaffolding and landed on his shoulder and head. He now has a rather large gap in his skull and suffers from dizziness, giddiness and black-outs, all as a result of his fall. The Workers' Compensation Board has paid his medical expenses and his wages for the time that he has been off work. This is quite commendable. But, up to date, he has been completely unable to obtain any compensation for his permanent injuries. I am willing to admit that they are intangible and cannot be readily seen, but a number of doctors will certify that they are permanent and result from his falling from the scaffolding.

For nearly four years now this poor fellow has struggled to obtain some sort of recognition. He has been to the A.W.U. and it advised him to sue his employer. Of course, he is not particularly interested in doing that. At this stage he has nowhere to turn. He will now have to go through life suffering those disabilities. At this stage it appears

that he will not receive compensation. I feel that the board could pay particular attention to this matter.

Occupational safety is another matter under the Minister's control. I wish to commend this area of operation. There has been a development of community awareness to occupational safety, particularly in the sugar mills in my district. The Goondi mill has always had quite a good record for occupational safety. In fact, it has had its own industrial safety officer for some considerable time.

Our travelling officer stationed in Townsville has developed a safety council at the Mourilyan and South Johnstone mills in the last couple of years, and the three mills have seen a lowering in the accident rate since these councils have been in operation. Safety in sugar mills is very important, because men are required to work shift work at night-time. There is also the rather serious problem that a number are seasonal workers who move from mill to mill also. There might be a number of others who are new workers in the industry. I do wish to commend the safety officers for their efforts to engender in the minds of the workers in the sugar mills the importance of safety.

Also mentioned in this debate has been the inclusion of all members of an employer's family as workers for the purpose of compensation should a member be injured during working hours. This is of particular interest to the grazing industry, because a number of employees are members of the employer's family. We have always been concerned to see that those members were covered. I am pleased that this situation has been clarified.

The other point I wish to raise concerns the lack of opportunities for hairdressers' apprentices in country areas. Much has been said about the lack of opportunities for apprentices, and this is one area in which I am interested because the majority of hairdressing apprentices are girls. The problem is that most hairdressers find that they cannot afford to employ a junior girl who has no knowledge of the industry. When she first comes into the industry she has to be paid a reasonable wage, and she has to be released for block training each year. Most country hairdressers have come to the conclusion that putting on an apprentice is just not worth the effort. It is a little different in the cities because the girls there can do their block-release training in the same area and they are not required to leave their place of work for as long. They do not have travelling time to contend with.

Perhaps one way of overcoming this problem would be for the Government to establish a hairdressing course at one of our colleges. This could be attended by first-year apprentices in order to give them a firm grounding in the technicalities of hairdressing. Once the girls have done this course, I am sure that a lot of our hairdressers would be willing to take on second-year apprentices.

I know that the C.R.A.F.T. scheme would cover this sort of thing, but that scheme at the moment does not lend itself to women hairdressers. We would have to establish some sort of college centred in one of the major provincial towns or in Brisbane. I believe that this would be a most important step in helping young women to join the hairdressing profession.

As far as apprentices are concerned, my local employers seem to be most concerned about block releases to larger cities. This causes concern not only to employers but also to parents. I realise that the block-release scheme has been established and has been quite widely accepted in industry, but it does create a problem for first-year apprentices, particularly from country areas. These apprentices often are only 16 or 17 years old. They are required to come to one of the provincial cities, often Brisbane, for their block-release training. Parents are very concerned that there is virtually no hostel for them to attend.

Recently I was involved with a situation concerning an apprentice who had been involved in a car accident in Brisbane during a week-end. We had quite a deal of trouble trying to find out just what the situation was; what the accident involved, and the condition of the lad. We found that there was really no-one we could contact during the week-end. No-one from the Apprentice Office could give us any help. The parents of that young lad spent a very worrying week-end.

I know that parents would be much happier if there was a hostel, or somewhere else where apprentices from out of town could be supervised. It has been mentioned that a village is to be built to house competitors in the forthcoming Commonwealth Games. Maybe when the games are over, we will be able to turn some of the houses in that village into a hostel for apprentices.

Those are the three problems that have arisen recently in my area. They are minor problems, I admit. I think that the Minister has done a very good job in the area of industrial relations, and in the whole area of his rather extensive portfolio.

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (9.27 p.m.):** I welcome the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Opposition in this debate. The Minister, in the very first part of his report, said that his department has a good rapport with all sections of the community. I certainly would not dispute that, and I know that honourable members on this side of the Chamber share my view.

Without wishing to build up the Minister's ego, I think it would be fair to say that among the majority of trade unions the Minister does enjoy the reputation of having been a fair and reasonable man in union negotiations in the past.

**Mr. Prest interjected.**

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** That is what I am coming to. While the Minister can hold his head high in that regard, unfortunately that is not the case with the Queensland Government. The Queensland Government is recognised as having the worst industrial relations of any State Government in Australia. It is probably more than coincidental that that stems more from the National Party than from the Liberal Party. When a person like the Premier of this State uses every opportunity to vent his spleen upon the people in the trade union movement, to voice constant criticism of them, and to give them and those who associate with them the most unflattering names and tags, is it any wonder that there is reaction from the trade union movement and its officials to policies of the types that this person espouses?

I make the point here this evening that I personally do not believe that in the field of industrial relations it particularly matters what a man's own beliefs are. He is here to do a job on behalf of his union members. Having dealt with union officials over a number of years, and having been one myself, I can assure honourable members that every one of those officials is a very responsible person in the community and does his job in a responsible way and with the best wishes of his members at heart.

**Mr. Frawley:** What about the Baroona plebiscite?

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** The honourable member for Caboolture mentioned the Baroona plebiscite. As I have said in the Chamber before, it has gone down in the annals of the Labor Party as one of the cleanest and best plebiscites ever run. That could not be said of the plebiscite in which the honourable member for Caboolture was involved recently. I am told that he was lucky to survive the protests that were made against him, particularly by Mr. Mike Evans, the secretary of the National Party, who would like to chop off the honourable member's head.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the honourable member to come back to the Estimates.

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** All honourable members recall that during the 1977 State election campaign the policy speech of the National and Liberal Parties included a promise to introduce an industrial training Bill. The trade union movement and many other sections of the community are still waiting for that Bill to be brought forward and debated in this Chamber. At this stage, there has not been any indication from the Government that the Bill will be brought down. Perhaps the Minister, in replying to the debate, might tell us why the Bill has not been brought down. Is it true that the National Party, at meetings of the joint Government parties, has been responsible for delaying the introduction of the Bill, which is of vital importance to all sections of the community?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I remind the honourable gentleman of the ruling that I gave this morning. Estimates do not provide an opportunity for discussion of legislation or pending legislation.

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** Thank you, Mr. Hewitt. I appreciate that advice and, because I respect your position, I will follow it. What I am trying to say is that the Government has an extremely poor record in the whole area of industrial negotiations.

In the Minister's opening speech, he mentioned a number of letters that he has received from people expressing their support for the policies of the State Government. One letter came from Stefan, the well-known hairdresser, and it said, "On behalf of the young people of Queensland who wish to become hairdressers, I would like to congratulate your department for the concern it has shown for something which has been overlooked for so long." I was very interested in the comments made by the honourable member for Mourilyan before she left the Chamber, and I wish she were here now. I assure you, Mr. Hewitt, that if ever there was an employer who rated as being among the worst employers in Queensland, it would be Stefan. It is quite beside the point that my wife would never go back to him after what he did to her hair the last time she was there.

In areas of negotiation, Stefan has a very unsavoury reputation among trade unions. I forget how many times while I was an official of the Miscellaneous Workers' Union I was beset by calls from irate mothers who had their daughters accepted initially as tea girls to work for that employer. They were paid a very low wage, with the promise that after three or four months doing that work they would be accepted as hairdressers. In the majority of cases that did not occur, and the union found a recurring situation. For three months Stefan would employ people as tea girls or girls to do hair washes on female clients and blow dry their hair at the end of the treatment. When the three months expired, they were dismissed. They were used only as cheap labour.

**Mr. Casey:** I am told that the honourable member for Windsor is one of his best customers.

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** That probably explains his baldness.

The hairdressing industry as a whole is one that the Minister should look at very carefully, and I would ask him to initiate some sort of inquiry into the industry in Queensland. It is more than fair to say that it is full of people who are in it only to exploit cheap labour at every opportunity.

In many instances, an inspection of a hairdresser's premises will reveal that no time and wages book is kept, that no record is available of what the employees are paid and that very rarely are the employees

given meal breaks and morning-tea breaks. I venture to suggest that rarely in the hairdressing industry is an employee paid at the correct rate for overtime that he or she works.

Anyone who drives past a hairdresser's salon at 5 or 6 p.m. will see that, although the doors are closed, clients who come in late are being attended to. I would say that in every case the employer is keeping his staff back without paying them one dollar for the overtime that they work.

**Mr. Frawley:** Have you heard anything about Mr. Liam at Redcliffe?

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** No, I haven't.

It is time that the Government accepted its responsibility and initiated a thorough inquiry into the hairdressing industry. Following on the plea made tonight by the honourable member for Mourilyan for more apprenticeships in the hairdressing industry, I advise any parent with a young daughter or son who desires to go into the industry after leaving school at the end of this year to make sure that there are prospects of genuine employment before that parent allows his child to be employed in it.

While I was an official of the Miscellaneous Workers' Union and also a part-time officer of the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union, I saw a number of occurrences that totally refute the Premier's claim that there is no longer a role in our society for trade unions. I am reinforced in my view by the speech made tonight by the honourable member for Nudgee concerning the number of manhours lost in industry as the result of industrial disputes on the one hand and industrial accidents on the other. The ratio is of the order of 1:3. No-one could convince me that there is not a role for trade unions to play. It is ridiculous for anyone to stand up in this Chamber and say that there is no longer a role in our society for trade unions.

I was interested in the remarks made earlier today by the honourable member for Cooroora concerning the tourist industry. He came up with the old catchcry, "High wages are pricing people out of the tourist industry." I do not deny that particular and peculiar problems arise within the tourist industry. The Opposition is very much aware of them, and I am quite sure that at the next State election the voters will find that some section of the Labor Party's policy speech will deal with them.

Why does the honourable member simply blame high wages for the problems that confront the tourist industry? As I said by way of interjection during his speech, Australia has the highest domestic air fares in the world. The Leader of the Opposition, who has just returned from an extensive world tour, can verify that claim as can other honourable members. A responsible national Government would enter into meaningful discussions with the two airlines with a view to lowering domestic air fares.

Perhaps the problem is that there are only two major domestic airlines in Australia and that the industry is very much a closed shop. There is very little competition in it.

A reduction in domestic air fares, besides giving a tremendous boost to the Queensland tourist industry, would create more job opportunities in it. I am not a qualified economist—I choose to look upon myself as a bread-and-butter economist—but it seems to me to be only common sense that, if more tourists come to Queensland, more money will flow to the operators of tourist resorts. Consequently, the case put up consistently by Government members that the high wage structure is forcing them to the wall certainly will not hold water.

Surely Government members do not seriously contemplate suggesting to the public in Queensland that people should work at week-ends and on holidays without overtime and penalty rates. I would be hazarding an extremely poor guess if I said that there are Government members who have worked at week-ends for anything less than the penalty rates provided for in industry. I would be extremely surprised if any of them said that he had done so.

While looking at the wage structure, we must look at the record profits made this year by Utah, B.H.P. and Mount Isa. In the light of those profits, how can Government members have the hide and audacity to talk only about the wage structure? Government members talk about people being priced out of industries. Conditions in those industries, with their associated problems, profiteering and so on, make their argument damned shallow.

It was with great personal satisfaction—satisfaction that, I am sure is felt by my colleagues and would be felt by one of the greatest Ministers ever to be in the Federal Parliament, namely, Rex Connor, if he were still alive—that I learned tonight that at long last the Federal Government is adopting a responsible attitude to ensuring that it, and it alone, has the right to make decisions in agreements with overseas mining companies on the amount of profit to stay in Australia. That may be one thing that the Federal Government can be congratulated on at this time.

I shall now deal with problems in the apprenticeship system. While the country lacks skilled tradesmen, according to the Minister's report, the number of apprentices employed has decreased drastically. In other sections of his speech, the Minister gave reasons for the decline, but he did not refer to the lack of incentives to people to take up apprenticeships in this day and age. The Redbank Railway Workshops and the Ipswich Railway Workshops are located in my electorate, and that of the member for Ipswich West. In those workshops, lads who have spent four years of their lives training as apprentices, and are within a few months of finishing their time are

receiving letters advising them that, if they want to remain as railway employees, they can accept jobs as labourers. I certainly do not denigrate the labourer's role, which is very important in society today, but it is ludicrous that a lad who has spent four years in training and is almost coming out of his time should be offered a job paying far less than he would earn as a tradesman.

When that is happening, is it any wonder that lads are not interested in taking up apprenticeships? Many lads are still interested in doing so, but a great number of young fellows will say quite openly, "Why take up an apprenticeship when I can earn more money elsewhere in another industry and have some hope of continuity of employment?" Lack of continuity of employment is most discouraging to young people. If the Government is to be seen to be truly interested in the welfare of our young people, it should be willing to consider the future of the young people employed already as apprentices.

**Mr. Prest:** Today it is far too easy for the employer to cancel an indenture.

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** Yes, it is very easy for an employer to cancel an indenture.

**Mr. Campbell:** Rubbish; that's a load of rubbish.

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** Of course it is. The Minister knows that on many occasions it is very easy for an employer to conjure up reasons to get rid of some lad from his shop whom he does not want working there.

**Mr. Campbell:** That's a load of rubbish.

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** In the few minutes I have left, I want to speak about the motor vehicle industry and the requirements of certificates of roadworthiness. There has already been mention of it in this Chamber but I want to say here quite forthrightly this evening that in my opinion the system of roadworthiness certificates can be described as nothing more than an outlandish joke. I know many people in the motor trade and I know of many shysters and fly-by-night operators who find it extremely easy, through their association, their friendship and their willingness to pass a buck, to have these certificates issued at a very minimal price to themselves.

The people we should be looking at particularly today are not the reputable car yards but the fellows in the industry known as wholesalers. These are the people who go to a reputable car yard, which will not sell a junk vehicle, and pick up a very cheap vehicle that has been traded in on a new or a very good second-hand vehicle. He is able to pick up that car from the reputable company at the price of \$150, \$300 or \$400, take it down the road, get a roadworthiness certificate for it even though it is probably not roadworthy in many respects, and within a matter of hours sell it on the open market.

I can give examples of profits of from 300 to 400 per cent. I know of a fellow in my own electorate who last week purchased a car for \$150 and three hours later sold it for \$650 on a bodged-up roadworthiness certificate. I suggest to the Government very seriously again that it look at the problems in that area because the fly-by-nighters, the people who are wholesaling in the industry, are bringing into disrepute honest people who are doing a reasonable job within this industry.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD** (Toowoomba North) (9.47 p.m.): In speaking to the debate on the Estimates of the Department of Labour Relations, I would first of all like to address myself to the Industrial Court and the Industrial Commission. These two are sections of the Minister's responsibility and between them they are allocated \$778,000. I think it is in this region of his portfolio that there is currently the greatest amount of difficulty.

There is a need, I think, for a great deal more expenditure in this region so that the department can increase its effectiveness in dealing with the prolonged industrial disputes that we see before us today. I think there is a need to enforce very quickly the provisions of section 98 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act allowing for compulsory ballots where strikes have gone beyond three days. If this is implemented, I think there is one thing the Government will know for certain—that is, just how many people wish to return to work.

If we find that a strike has a great deal of support and that nearly all of the workers are not in favour of a return to work, I think we can see that there are great troubles. But if we find, having done this, that there are very few people who wish to continue the strike, I think we can justly describe it as a strike that is being led by a small section, perhaps political extremists, perhaps agitators, who might even be paid from outside union sources for the jobs they are doing. So I think that there is a need to put a great deal more money into this section of the department so that it can get on with the job quickly and efficiently to end industrial disputes.

One of the things that concern me is the confrontation that is going on at the moment between those who seek to export live-stock for slaughter overseas and those who seek to prevent it. This is a conflict that has grown up and I think it is time that the two parties backed off from their confrontation and were called into a series of discussions on their problems. There are greater mutual problems than each party would admit.

Graziers should admit that they must produce the types of beef and mutton that the overseas buyers wish to purchase. Not all of the beef produced in Australia is considered to be desirable in, for instance, Asia. The Japanese and Malaysian markets require

different types of beef, and there is a need for this to be recognised. The people purchasing beef for the Malaysian market prefer a beast that will lose weight on the trip and arrive thin and lean. This is not preferred on the local market.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Would the honourable gentleman explain to me how this relates to the Estimates for Labour Relations?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** In a short time you will see, Mr. Hewitt. It all becomes clear in the last chapter.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Can we move to the penultimate chapter?

**Mr. Casey:** Is this how you examine your female patients?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I take exception to that comment.

We are debating the way in which this department spends its money and what good it achieves in the community. I think that this is a worthwhile subject for debate.

**The CHAIRMAN:** It is a worthwhile subject for debate if it comes under this Minister's Estimates.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** It does.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Proceed a little further and I shall decide.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** It is time that there was discussion between the two parties. If that does not come under industrial conciliation and arbitration, I do not know what does. There is confrontation between the two parties. It is not simply a matter of the police going in and breaking up the confrontation. It is not simply a matter of primary produce or a matter of export.

**Mr. Warburton:** The Act now provides that the commission can call the parties together. Probably the Minister has that power, too. Why do you think it hasn't happened?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I do not know. I am pointing out why it should happen.

Cattle have to be killed in meatworks in a manner that is acceptable to overseas customers according to their traditions and religions. The problem can be overcome in this country. Some slaughterhouses have employed slaughtermen who will kill according to the various overseas faiths.

Nobody can deny that we are exporting jobs. We all belted Whitlam when jobs were sent overseas as a result of his decision to allow the importation of cheap fabrics and other overseas goods. We are presently exporting jobs. This is now happening with meat. It has joined other primary products, together with iron, steel and aluminium. It

has always happened with wool. Now we are exporting jobs connected with the beef industry.

I suggest that this has all come about because meatworkers are paid, as a result of there being slaughter fees, approximately \$20 to slaughter a beast. This is six to eight times the cost of slaughtering a beast in the Asian countries that are our markets for beef. Industrial tribunals have, in times of prosperity, allowed wages to rise, and we have now reached the stage where we are exporting the jobs of the men who benefited from those wage rises.

It is time there were compulsory discussions between the two groups—the owners of the cattle and the people who hold responsible positions in meatworks' unions, such as the A.M.I.E.U. and the Bacon Factories' Union of Employees—to see if there can be some recovery of the jobs that are being exported in ever-increasing numbers.

**Mr. Casey:** Do you know that the representatives of the Cattlemen's Union have refused to talk to anybody about the matter?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** They probably think they are in a position of power now that they are exporting these jobs. The more jobs that are exported, the more unemployment there is in this country and the bigger downturn there is in the spending dollar in this country. That applies not only to fabrics in the shops but also to the purchase of beef. Eventually the meatworkers will face an increasing employment problem. Certainly they will not be buying much meat.

*At 9.55 p.m., under Standing Order No. 307 and the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 11 October, progress was reported.*

## HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (9.56 p.m.): I move—

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

During my introductory speech, I outlined the proposed amendments to the Act. Whilst a number of these amendments are of a machinery nature, there are others that will provide for the additional protection of the health of the people in this State.

The introduction of legislation by the Government to require medical practitioners to report to the Director-General of Health and Medical Services suspected cases of child abuse is of considerable significance. I believe that this legislation will contribute substantially to the protection of children who, of course, are unable to protect themselves. It is unfortunate that in this society it is necessary to provide such legislation, but sadly this is the case.

When a case of suspected child abuse comes to notice, every endeavour will be made to have the child presented at an appropriate hospital. This will enable a complete medical and social investigation to be carried out to determine the treatment necessary and also enable a full report of the circumstances of the case to be given to the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. The Director-General of Health and Medical Services will thus be able to assess each case reported and determine the action considered necessary. In some instances this action will require no more than counselling of the parent or parents, but in other instances long-term follow-up and support will be necessary.

Provision is also made in the Bill for regulations to be made in respect of premises in which tattooing and ear-piercing are carried on, and for the cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation of instruments. These regulations will be designed to control the risk of infection, particularly that of serum hepatitis, which can be of quite serious consequence.

It is proposed to make a number of amendments to the existing provisions relating to pest control operators. The Act presently provides that any person who for payment or reward uses a pesticide is a pest control operator and therefore must be licensed.

There are a substantial number of persons who in the course of their employment use pesticides but who would not normally be classed as pest control operators. Such persons would include bowling-green keepers and gardeners employed by various organisations.

I would again point out that the control of the use of pesticides for agricultural, horticultural and pastoral purposes is covered by the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966-1972 and the Poisons Regulations 1973.

Although the powers of inspection have been broadened, these powers will be restricted to inspectors who have been specifically authorised by the Director-General of Health and Medical Services.

Other amendments will provide for easier administrative control over the pesticides which a pest control operator may or may not use and for the proper storage and disposal of pesticides.

Provision is also made in the Bill to make regulations in respect of the labelling and packaging of dangerous substances which are not poisons and therefore are not covered by the Poisons Regulations 1973. Examples of dangerous substances are household cleaners, detergents and polishes.

The preparation of specifications for X-ray and other electro-medical equipment and the recommendation of tenders received for this equipment is presently the responsibility of the Queensland Radium Institute. However

it is proposed that these functions will now be undertaken by advisory committees of the Hospitals Drugs and Equipment Advisory Council. A number of the members of the Queensland Radium Institute will also be members of the proposed committees. This will ensure that the expertise in this field which the institute enjoys is not lost to my department. The change is a procedural one only.

The amendments are all considered necessary to continue to maintain the high degree of health protection afforded to this State.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay) (10 p.m.): As the Minister rightly said, the Bill does contain a considerable number of new principles, which are to be included in this State's Health Act. One of the major ones to which he has already referred—quite a deal of comment was made about it at the introductory stage—relates to the maltreatment of children. This is something that does concern every member of the House, particularly those of us who are parents or who have seen within our electorates children who have suffered severely at the hands of people. Much of this happens because of the social conditions which now prevail within the community.

We see children being left in cars while their parents spend a great deal of time in hotel lounges and other places. Unfortunately, it is probably tragically true that this seems to occur more among coloured families. We see many instances of children being completely neglected while their parents indulge in a great party and are completely oblivious to what is happening to their children.

The Opposition is very concerned that the Bill may not go quite far enough. In some respects the wording seems to be meaningless. It uses such terms as "a medical practitioner who suspects on reasonable grounds that a child has been maltreated or neglected in a manner." While I appreciate that it is very difficult to do so, I think that we have to spell this out a little more clearly, because children are not only being severely injured by the things that are being done to them; they are also suffering injuries, which are causing death. I know that my colleague the honourable member for Woodridge will be speaking on this matter at much greater length at a later stage.

Another point I make is that there is to be a tightening up in some of the new principles of the Bill relating to the labelling of disinfectants and pesticides and, generally speaking, poisons, and the packaging of dangerous substances. Something that I have always felt should be spelt out very clearly in the labelling of such goods by pharmacies and by commercial houses that package disinfectants and pesticides is the date by which the goods should be destroyed. I think that

this is very important. Sometimes the date is shown in small print. I think it should be far more explicit on a package.

**Dr. Edwards:** We are following the Australia-wide regulations.

**Mr. CASEY:** I recognise that we are following the Australia-wide code, but I do not think that even it goes far enough. We go into people's houses and find in an old medicine cabinet, or a cabinet somewhere in the house, bottles of tablets and goodness knows what that have been sitting there for ages. They deteriorate after a period; we know this.

Unfortunately, quite often there is a drive by service clubs, with good intentions, to collect old medicines so that they can dispatch them to other parts of the world where such medicines are not available. Those of us who have been involved in these drives know full well that a qualified chemist has to be there to do the packaging. Sometimes he throws away up to two-thirds of the medicine that has been collected because it is absolutely useless; it has gone beyond its useful life. In most cases the date by which the goods should be destroyed is not clearly shown on the package; and it must be clearly shown on the package so that not only the pharmacist who handles such goods, but also an individual, knows the date.

One matter about which I am concerned—and the Minister mentioned this in his second-reading speech—concerns the tightening up of control of pest-control operators. Quite recently in the House I drew the Minister's attention, by way of a question, to the fact that do-it-yourself pest control kits, containing dangerous chemicals and pesticides, are being made available through various hardware outlets and agencies. It is not much use having an Act that tightly regulates and controls the work of pest-control operators in this State if suddenly it is to be bypassed by having someone in an ordinary shop selling pesticides over the counter to housewives and others who are inexperienced in their application and operation.

I should like to comment also on the provision in the Bill for the cancellation and suspension of licences of hospitals that do not meet certain standards in building regulations or the provision of services. The worst hospital that I have seen in my travels in various areas of Queensland is a State-owned hospital, the old Herberton Hospital. It is not the fault of the staff of the hospital. For quite a number of years, while there was indecision within the department as to what the future of the hospital would be, not a great deal of maintenance was carried out. I understand that a determination is being made now, and that the building of the new Atherton Hospital has relieved some of the pressure. However, we must ensure that hospitals in the State system do not deteriorate as badly as that.

**Dr. Edwards:** It is not a bad record—one hospital out of 134—is it?

**Mr. CASEY:** I am saying that it is the worst one. I am not saying that there was only one that I would condemn. As a non-medical person, it was quite obvious to me that it was not satisfactory when I saw it. Certainly there are other hospitals in the State that need a great deal of work done on them, but I single that one out as being the worst. I would not say there was only one out of 134.

They are the points that I wish to bring to the attention of the House. Other members of the Opposition will deal with other aspects of the Bill.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT (Greenslopes) (10.8 p.m.):** Child abuse and child cruelty constitute one of the worst aspects of our current society, and I think that any responsible Parliament would wish to react to it. It fills us all with abhorrence when we hear about children being brutalised in any fashion; therefore, any step that we can take to curtail that is to be supported by all members.

However, child abuse, child cruelty and child exploitation may take many forms, and there are a few forms to which I would draw the attention of the Minister. It has been brought to my attention on many occasions that young children have constantly fallen asleep in the class-room and inquiries have established that they are heavily involved in their parents' business, sometimes helping in a cleaning business, a delivery business or a paper run. Often children of very tender years cannot stand these pressures; indeed, even if they were not of such tender years, they should not be so employed. We often hear, Mr. Speaker, about equally young children who are employed all week-end working in their parents' business, and all the normal pursuits of young children are completely denied to them. If these are not manifestations of cruelty, they certainly are manifestations of exploitation. We should be equally aware of them and equally resolved to do something about them because cruelty to children in any form is not to be tolerated.

The amendment of the Health Act that the Minister brings before us places an onus on medical practitioners, and I am very happy to say that it is an onus that medical practitioners seem very happy to accept.

**Mr. D'Arcy:** That's a lot of rubbish, and you know it.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** How can one respond to such a nonsensical interjection? It is a sad reflection on the honourable member for Woodridge that he would want to interject so frivolously when the House is discussing such a sensitive subject as child cruelty. One can only feel sorry for him, as one feels sorry for the children who are bashed.

What I am saying is that apparently the medical fraternity accept this responsibility that is being asked of them. I wrote to the 127 doctors who reside in my electorate, telling them the provisions of the Bill and asking them for their response. There was no adverse response whatsoever; on the contrary, there was quite a strong opinion that the Bill may not be going far enough. It is because of that response that I am on my feet tonight inviting the Minister's comment on statements that these doctors made to me.

Let us recognise first of all that they accept the onus. However, they look to the next step when they refer an abused child to the department. They look at the words—

“that child to be subjected to such diagnostic procedures and tests as a prescribed medical officer considers necessary to determine the medical condition of that child.”

That paragraph begs the question. Can we assume that the medical condition of the child is very poor, that the child has been brutally handled and, as a consequence, is deserving of immediate medical attention? The injury may be quite serious; the child may be in quite a critical condition. If so, to whom does the department then refer for authority to carry out treatment? Does it refer to the brutal people who brought this condition about in the first place? Or is some authority granted to the department to act in its own right? It is important that these things be defined.

One of the doctors who corresponded with me referred to Jehovah's Witnesses. I think this matter deserves some mention. If a Jehovah's Witness of mature years, of his own volition and in his own mature judgment, says that because of his religious conviction he will not accept a blood transfusion, that is his absolute right. Similarly, if because of that judgment he dies, that, too, is his right. I do not argue against that one bit. However, if he chooses to make that judgment for a young child, that is an argument of a different order.

Once again I believe that, if the State does not have the right to intrude, it should have the right to intrude. I would be grateful to the Minister if he could advise the House on whether or not that aspect has been taken into account.

As to those persons who bash children—on many occasions they are deserving of punishment. They are certainly deserving of some treatment. I do not believe, however, that they should be allowed to continue without any censure, without any reprimand and without any punishment. If they are to be tolerated and if they are not to feel the force of the law, the incidence of child-bashing will continue. In personal terms, I can only say that there are few things that fill me with greater disgust than the bashing of young children.

I had an obligation to those people who corresponded with me to bring this matter to the Minister's attention. I would be very grateful if he could give me his advice upon it.

The only other portion of the Bill to which I want to refer is Division XIV—Tattooing and ear-piercing. It is a matter of pleasure to me to see that the Health Department is now looking at these practices. Tattooing in particular is becoming more than prevalent. We see a greater number of young people, both youths and girls, with tattoos over their arms, legs and shoulders. Once again I am filled with personal disgust. But, more importantly, I am disturbed to think that young people of immature years are getting themselves tattooed, that is, they are doing something that in later years they will regret.

This matter was discussed on a previous occasion when the Children's Services Act was amended to include a new section 69A, which provides that the tattooing of children is prohibited. It is a matter of some regret that this provision concerning tattooing is not included in totality in one Act or the other. If tattooing is to be regulated, certainly the age at which people can be tattooed should be in the Act that provides for the regulation of tattooing salons.

The fact of the matter is that there is in Queensland a legal provision setting a minimum age at which people can be tattooed. When I see young people in the streets flaunting these hideous marks on their bodies, I am of the opinion that this minimum-age provision is not being enforced. Although the Children's Services Act is not one administered by the Minister, I would invite him to take an interest in it as well.

The Bill before us is one of great consequence. I am sure that, notwithstanding the raucous, ill-timed interjection which greeted my speech, it will nevertheless receive the overwhelming support of the House.

**Mr. D'ARCY** (Woodridge) (10.16 p.m.): I am pleased that the honourable member for Greenslopes thinks that my interjections on this Bill were ill-timed. The Minister should say to the Parliament that the Bill should be looked at in the light in which it has been presented to Parliament, that is, as a most innocuous Bill.

**Dr. Edwards:** That is not what the honourable member for Mackay said.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** It is one of the most innocuous Bills presented to Parliament by this Minister. He has proved himself in the Health portfolio, which he controls, to be one of the most wishy-washy Ministers of all time.

We support the Bill because we have no other option. The Bill produces what the Press wants to hear; what should be mouthed

to the Press in this State by the Minister, with his minions behind him, as Leader of the Liberal Party in Queensland. It is akin to statements usually made by the Minister. Every morning he makes some sort of wishy-washy ministerial statement to Parliament about health matters in Queensland. This Bill is no different.

As I said at the introductory stage, it is unfortunate that the Bill means absolutely nothing to the Parliament or the State. For months and months prior to its introduction we were told on T.V. and through the other media that the Bill was designed to do something for molested children in Queensland. In the light of that propaganda, the Bill is nothing but an apology for the Minister who introduced it.

In reply to the honourable member for Greenslopes, I may say that five of the 100 doctors he spoke of are on the A.L.P.'s health committee. The honourable member should hear what they said about the Bill! Compared with their reasonable comments on the Bill, the comments by the honourable member for Greenslopes were rubbish.

I repeat that this is a wishy-washy Bill. These doctors are prepared to stand up and be counted. The statement that each one of them made was—

**A Government Member:** What are their names?

**Mr. D'ARCY:** I will give their names. They are for publication, as the honourable member knows. They are the doctors on the A.L.P.'s health committee. They said that under this Bill no doctor will be reporting child abuse in Queensland.

Honourable members should read the relevant section. I doubt whether anyone in this Parliament has gone to the trouble of reading new section 76K headed, "Notification of Maltreatment", which reads—

"A medical practitioner who suspects on reasonable grounds . . ."

What does "reasonable grounds" mean? The section continues—

" . . . that a child has been maltreated or neglected in a manner likely to subject the child to unnecessary injury, suffering or danger, shall forthwith notify the Director-General by the most expeditious means available in writing or otherwise."

**Mr. Lickiss** interjected.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** That sounds like something the Minister for Justice would introduce. We have heard the Minister for Justice introduce legislation in this house and we know how he administers it. No wonder he commented on it. That is exactly like the caper he indulges in.

What does that section mean? It means absolutely nothing. It is a protection. The doctors who have spoken to me in detail

about this particular Bill have virtually said, "This is nothing but a fob to the Press. It has nothing to do with the doctors at all. The doctors will continue in their own happy medium." The Minister for Health, who is now the leader of the Liberal Party, is showing himself as nothing but a fob to the Press of Queensland. That is what he is doing. This Bill, which has had so much pre-publicity about the maltreatment of children in this State, would not stand up in any court of law. The Minister for Justice would be the first to realise that none of its provisions could possibly stand up against a doctor in any court of law.

Whereas extreme protection exists in many of the States of the United States of America, here in Queensland we have nothing but an absolute fob to the medical profession. We have a Bill being introduced in this Parliament that is wasting our time, the time of the Parliament and the time of the people of Queensland, because we have a Minister who is so weak and wishy-washy that he is not prepared to stand up to the profession that he stands for.

When we read the Minister's introductory speech—I am talking at this stage only about the section that involves the molestation or hurting of children—we see that his statement is enough to make Queenslanders understand that he does not intend to do anything at all about the provisions that apply in other States, in the United States and in other countries. I cannot find the passage in which the Minister made that statement, so I shall paraphrase it. The Minister said that it will not harm the relationship between the doctor and his patient. The Minister misunderstands who the patient is. The patient, surely, is the child. The Minister completely misunderstands that. He made the statement I adverted to in what were initially his opening remarks.

**Dr. Edwards:** I think you will have trouble finding that.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** It is in the Minister's introductory speech—

"Mandatory reporting will not disturb the doctor-patient relationship."

What does that section mean? It means the Minister is talking about a child of six months.

**Mr. Lane:** Don't you understand that?

**Mr. D'ARCY:** I understand that. The Minister is saying that a child of three, four, five or six months has a relationship with the doctor. Of course he does not in that sense. The Minister is talking about the relationship between the doctor and the patient who brings the child to him. He is talking about the parent, and he has made that clear in his statement. That is why doctors refuse to report in that type of relationship. According to the Minister's speech,

a medical practitioner will be reporting a medical problem to another medical practitioner as is done, for example, in certain cases of communicable diseases. What is he talking about? He is talking about sexual diseases.

**Government Members** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. D'ARCY:** He is not interested in this matter. That is the real problem. He is not introducing a Bill to handle this problem. He has simply done a stage job for the people of Queensland. For months prior to the introduction of this Bill he convinced the people of Queensland that many of these measures would be introduced. And what has he introduced? A Bill that has no teeth. As I said at the introductory stage, I expected, at least from this Minister, some decent, reasonable amendments that would reflect what he said he intended to give the people of Queensland. In fact, he has given the people nothing but a showpiece or a facade.

In the future he will claim that Queensland has legislation to protect children. But we know that it is not worth the paper it is printed on. The Minister and the Government have been found wanting. This Bill is an absolute disgrace. I am disappointed with the Bill that has been presented to this Parliament. It is probably one of the most disastrous Bills ever presented to the Parliament of Queensland. It is a facade and lacks body. It is relevant to point out that most Queensland doctors are saying that they do not intend to comply with the Bill because it is so weak. Government members know how the legislation should operate. I ask them if the Minister is capable of introducing legislation that will do the job.

The Bill provides—

“A medical practitioner who suspects on reasonable grounds that a child has been maltreated or neglected in a manner likely to subject the child to unnecessary injury, suffering or danger, shall forthwith notify the Director-General by the most expeditious means available in writing or otherwise.”

**Dr. Edwards:** You read that before.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** I know I did.

Then the Bill gives the Director-General the power to take action. It does not provide for the supplying of background information and does not adhere to the principles of social welfare in this State.

The most disastrous aspect of the Bill is the reference to, “A medical practitioner who suspects on reasonable grounds . . .” Most of the interjections during my speech have come from the honourable member for Merthyr, who, before his election, was a

policeman. That is very interesting, because he should know the meaning of the words, “on reasonable grounds.” His interpretation of those words must leave a lot to be desired. The interpretation of those words in this Bill also leaves a lot to be desired, especially as we give doctors *carte blanche*.

Fortunately, in the last decade we have started to wake up to the activities of doctors. Prior to that, we gave them *carte blanche*, because of their title, to do as they wanted, which was virtually to commit murder. A different situation now applies in the United States of America. It has reversed itself beyond all control. But surely in Australia we can strike a happy medium between a doctor standing on a pedestal prepared to do whatever he can for his patient and the situation in America, where he is open to any sort of prosecution for his decisions. That is the sort of situation we need.

The Bill will not create this situation in Queensland. We hear the Minister continually saying that it is the same as the legislation in other States of the Commonwealth. That has been his standard reply. It seems that in Queensland we have not been prepared to lead the way in the medical field, and the Minister knows that we are well behind other States. But I think it is time that Queensland showed a preparedness to lead the field. Even with the introduction of this Bill, we are behind some other States. Of similar legislation introduced in three States, this is the weakest yet.

I notice that the Minister for Health shakes his head when I say that. He should not shake his head, because I have looked very carefully at the legislation introduced in the other States and I can assure him that this legislation is the weakest that has ever come out of a Health Department in Australia. To say that the Minister for Health has the ability to compete with the Health Minister of any other State is a joke. All that the Minister is doing is mouthing platitudes to the Press. It is sad that Queensland is so far behind the other States of Australia when we have so much to offer in so many fields.

I have looked at other aspects of the Bill, but that particular aspect is the one that I find most disappointing, particularly when one considers the amount of publicity it had prior to its introduction in this House. We in the Opposition must accept the Bill, because anything that can be done to prevent child molestation or malpractice towards children in this State is worth while. We believe that this Bill is necessary, but what I am saying is that this particular section of it should be in line with similar sections in other States.

It could even come close to the legislation recently introduced in the Californian State Legislature in the United States of America.

We believe that the Bill as it stands is so weak as to be completely and utterly ineffectual. It is as wishy-washy as the Minister himself. It is nothing more than a reiteration of the weakest part of this Government and something which, as far as the Government is concerned, cannot be an effective part of legislation in this State. If it cannot be effective, it should not be part of the legislation of Queensland.

There are other aspects of the Bill I should like to comment on which highlight the weakness of the Minister and the Bill. Take for example, the packaging, marketing and labelling of products that are not only dangerous to children and adults in Queensland but to all Australians in general. The Minister talks about Queensland being to the forefront in packaging in Australia. There is one State that is to the forefront in this field.

Pill bottles can be sealed in such a way that they are virtually child-proof, or are not able to be tampered with. Other States provide that bottles should be sealed in this way not only for pills but also for the other things that the Minister mentioned—polishes, poisons and cleaning fluid. To open these bottles, a child must press down the plastic lid and then turn it round. The children who are susceptible to these things are those aged from eight months, when they start to crawl, to about two years, when they start to know the cupboards they can open and those they cannot open. In our community most mothers tend to leave things such as cleaning fluids under the sink or in other places which are easily accessible to children. The Minister has made no effort at all to stop this type of child abuse.

What happens in the other States when a child has swallowed a poisonous substance? The mother rings the ambulance or the hospital, and immediately an antidote is given. In Queensland, there is no such department which can give a child an immediate antidote. When a child who has swallowed Pine-o-Cleen, Handy Andy or some other substance from a bottle that has a plastic top, which comes off easily, is rushed to the hospital by one means or another—in an ambulance, taxi or whatever—he goes into the casualty section, is seen by a doctor and is then shunted off to the section of the hospital where such poisoning cases are treated. This does not happen in the other States. There a child who has swallowed a poisonous substance immediately goes into the section of a hospital that treats such poisoning cases. This Bill gives the Minister an opportunity to do something about this type of packaging, but he has not done it. It is as simple as that.

**Dr. Edwards** interjected.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** No, he has not done it. This Bill is so wishy-washy that it is hardly worth the paper it is printed on. There are

about 16 clauses in the Bill, and the Minister just has not given proper consideration to any of them, including the one relating to child poisoning. Reference will be made to the amount of money it would cost the State of Queensland each year to have in its hospitals a section to deal with children who have swallowed poisonous substances. Each year the Government spends thousands and thousands of dollars on treating snake bites. The number of children in Queensland bitten by snakes or spiders would be minimal, but the number of children in this State who swallow some sort of disinfectant, poison or other dangerous substance which gets into their lungs, their windpipes or other sections of their anatomy—

**Dr. Edwards:** Sit down.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** I am pleased that the Minister does not want to hear what I am saying about this. He never wants to hear about anything important. Every time we see him on television he is opening some hospital. He is shown standing there with a benign smile on his face opening a hospital. He is called "Noddy"; he is always nodding when he is opening something. He is nodding now. He does not want to hear about important things that worry the parents of Queensland.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the honourable member to come back to the Bill; to get away from the wishy-washy and get onto a bit of Omo, or something like that.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** The Minister has power under this Bill to do something about the packaging of these dangerous materials. There are nine pages in the Bill. It covers about 14 sections of the Act, which shows the amount of effort that the Minister has put into it. Unfortunately, his effort has been on television rather than on the Bill. It is time that the Liberal Party and the Minister woke up to themselves and realised that the people of Queensland are beginning to expect some positive results from the Government and the Minister.

It is a shame for Queensland that such a Bill has been introduced into this Chamber. The Bill has been promoted with the people of Queensland through the media, and it shows the calibre of the representatives of the media in this State that they were not able to see straight through the Bill, transparent as it is. The Bill only mouths public opinion and, like the Government, has no teeth and no backbone. It is as weak a Bill as one could imagine.

**Mrs. KYBURZ** (Salisbury) (10.41 p.m.): It would be extremely remiss of me not to comment on the tirade of the honourable member for Woodridge, and I think it is remarkable that in this Chamber we hear the most interesting speeches from him after 10 o'clock. It must be witching hour or something of that sort.

**Mr. CASEY:** I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Salisbury knows full well that the Bill did not come on until after 10 o'clock.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Salisbury.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** After the flamboyant little fandango that we have seen, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I was perturbed and disgusted by the obvious disarray in the ranks of the Opposition in relation to the Bill. We heard the honourable member for Woodridge ranting and raving. I do not deny him the right to say what he said; he is entitled to his opinion, as long as it is reasoned and reasonable. However, the honourable member for Mackay expressed an entirely opposite opinion two speeches previously. I wonder what the Opposition really thinks about the Bill. It is of little consequence, because I do not believe that the statements by the honourable member for Woodridge were reasonable and they surely have not been deliberated on at length by his party. If the honourable member concentrated less on histrionics and more on facts, we might hear a few more interesting comments from him.

**Mr. Casey:** Come back to the Bill.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I should like to ask the honourable member for Mackay later whether he is sitting there going white with embarrassment or with tiredness.

**Mr. Casey:** Neither, actually.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I was particularly interested to learn that regulations relating to tattooing are to be introduced, because I know that a great deal of risk is involved in tattooing. If one goes round the bazaars in Istanbul, or even in Afghanistan, one sees tattooing being carried out under the most unbelievable conditions.

People often label tattooing as primitive. It is a very ancient form of body decoration and is used widely throughout the world. The fact is that currently it has become fashionable, as has the wearing of one earring or the putting of diamonds in a man's navel. It is just another of the weird things in which some members of the subculture that is the "in" scene at the moment like to indulge.

I agree with the honourable member for Greenslopes that there ought to be a minimum age for tattooing. I would go as far as saying that for girls the minimum age should be 18, or perhaps even 20, because I know that many girls regret their stupidity in being tattooed when they were very young. I very much doubt whether the regulations governing age are enforced at all. Just as it is easy to have one's ears pierced, it is easy for one to be tattooed. As I said before, a woman can go to a hairdresser or line up in a Myer store to have her ears pierced. I have often said before that the fact that that can be done is appalling.

The major provision in the Bill deals with the reporting of child abuse. I think it is that provision that so angered the member for Woodridge, and so appeased the rest of the Committee. I would point out to the Opposition that no Government can legislate to prevent child abuse, just as no Government can legislate to prevent dogs from barking. They are social problems, and no amount of legislation can solve them in any way. Legislation can only ameliorate the situation in which those social problems proliferate.

**Mr. D'Arcy** interjected.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** Those words are probably too difficult for the honourable member to understand.

Before I deal with the provision concerning child abuse, I want to discuss the labelling and packaging of dangerous substances. I believe that all substances, dangerous or not, ought to be labelled. In the supermarkets there is a proliferation of products about which one knows very little. I believe that even floor polish can be dangerous. I know that salt, Gravox and items such as that are extremely dangerous if children swallow them in large quantities. Although it seems unlikely that children would swallow large quantities of those products, they seem to be able to get at anything that is available. There ought to be adequate labelling on all products. There is certainly insufficient labelling on just about all products on sale in Australia.

As far as child abuse is concerned—the Bill does not go far enough in relation to the reporting of it. Besides doctors, other people should be responsible for reporting child abuse. While I was a teacher, which seems many long quiet years ago, I often saw children who had obviously been maltreated. It is difficult to decide when to do something about such children and when not to.

**Mr. D'Arcy:** When you start to see it, it should be done straight away. It is not difficult at all.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** In reply to that interjection—whom is one to believe? If a teacher calls the parents in and asks, "How did this happen to Johnny? He has welts across his legs and they are bleeding and his face is torn and patchy," and if the parents say, "He fell off a swing," what does the teacher do?

**Mr. D'Arcy:** The doctors and the teachers involved have some knowledge of the child's background.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** Of course they do. That is why I am saying that teachers, social workers, pre-school teachers and kindergarten teachers ought to be able to report incidents of child abuse. The Minister is nodding his head and waving his pen. I take it that means that such a provision might find its way into the Bill.

What we tend to forget is that until the beginning of this century parents had absolute right over their children—over the bodies of their children and over the activities of their children. Not only did fathers have the ownership of their children; they also had the ownership of their wives and their animals. For that reason, a society for the prevention of cruelty to children and wives was formed in New York just after the turn of the century. At that time it was realised that many children were being abused.

On looking through the Bill I was particularly interested to discover whether or not a doctor would have to report incidents of sexual abuse of children, which I regard as a particularly severe form of maltreatment.

In going through cases of child abuse reported in Sydney, I learned of very interesting facets of sexual abuses. They are predominant in multiproblem families with low socio-economic backgrounds, relatively immobile stature in the community and a great deal of difficulty in relating not only to the world around them, but to their own parents and, therefore, to their own children. Often they have neonatal problems, sometimes they have congenital abnormalities and sometimes the parents relate inadequately to each other and births are usually extremely difficult. Those factors were worked out from 187 cases in Sydney. Honourable members can refer to medical journals if they wish to read about child abuse, namely, the neglect syndrome.

The range of the syndrome is very interesting particularly as it relates to ingestion of poisonous matter, that is, feeding poisonous matter deliberately to children. That is very hard to understand. On going through the material, it is obvious that the parents need understanding, but that, in most cases, they do not need a great deal of punishment.

I am concerned about the number of cases referred to in medical journals recently concerning single-parent families—usually young girls who obviously are not coping with their own lives and with the lives of their babies. Our community support system for these mothers is totally inadequate. Many women and girls are floundering. It is a blight on society that through our social workers we are urging pregnant 13, 14 and 15-year-olds to keep their babies. It is deplorable. At that immature age—when she is just on sexual maturity—a girl has not the capacity to understand what her body is going through and what the role of a parent involves. The result is absolute sadness for a whole generation of youngsters coming into the world.

It is very easy to pontificate on what other people do and do not do; but I am totally concerned that we should make a start. We have made a start with other legislation; let us at least make a start here. The honourable member for Woodridge complained about the Minister puffing hot

air. If he has, he is not the first hot-air puffer. There have been many others before him. At least this measure is a try.

**Mr. D'Arcy:** It is a pretty poor one, though.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I disagree with the honourable member.

Some medical practitioners are weak-kneed. After all, they fell for Brych; why wouldn't they fall for any charlatan who says, "You will come under legal censure."

**Honourable Members** interjected.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I agree that the majority of them are probably quite capable. I said that some fell for Milan Brych. I did not say all. I qualified my statement and I do not take it back.

**An Opposition Member:** The Premier did; the Premier fell.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** That speaks for itself.

**An Opposition Member** interjected.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I think the honourable member is dead right; I hope he is, anyway.

I believe that the majority of medical practitioners will not object to the provisions of the Bill. They are not subject to any legal sanction for statements that they make. I believe that that is as it should be. However, I do not believe that many parents will institute defamation suits against doctors who claim that a child has been abused. That has not been reported in any of the medical journals I have sighted concerning Sydney and Adelaide. No doctor has been proceeded against when he has given a statement or notification on child abuse.

We have to realise that this Bill is a beginning. As I said, I would like to see other professionals—if those other people can be so termed—able to report instances of child abuse.

Society has many ills, and child abuse is one of them. We cannot legislate to prevent it but we can legislate to reduce its incidence. We can establish support systems that maintain stability within families. As I said, there are many obvious reasons why child abuse occurs. I believe that the families in which it occurs are easily recognisable. Something ought to be done about those families at the Maternal and Child Welfare Clinics, which is where the babies are presented and where the mothers present themselves. That is where the whole system ought to begin. Change can begin rapidly and readily there. I hope that the whole interconnecting web, particularly the maternal and child welfare system that we have in the State and that works so very well, can be utilised in respect of the ramifications of this Bill.

Mr. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (10.56 p.m.): I would like to deal with clause 17 (d) of this Health Act Amendment Bill, which states that inspectors—

“may remove for examination or analysis a sample of any substance which he believes on reasonable grounds is being used, has been used or is likely to be used as a pesticide by a pest control operator.”

This clause is relevant to the questions I have asked in this Chamber on many occasions of the Minister for Health and other Ministers about arsenic contamination of land at Carindale. The arsenic was used at Carindale to treat hide beetles, so it was a pesticide. One thing that amazes me is that the arsenic is still there. I have raised that point virtually throughout the 12 months I have been here. The arsenic is there, and still nothing is done about it.

In an answer to one question that I asked of the Minister for Main Roads, he told me that he had sent out officers from his department to do tests and that they showed a positive result of 45 parts per million to 545 parts per million of arsenic content in the ground. However, I found out that the inspector who did go there took with him a spade and a jam tin. He did not have the proper equipment to do the test. The Minister told me that the inspector was qualified to do the test, yet the man who did the test stated that he did not normally do this sort of work, so he had to take a jam tin from home to collect the soil. However, the test did prove to be positive.

An answer to a question that was asked in the Chamber last week showed that part of the land in Carindale is being subdivided, which, I think, constitutes a very serious health hazard to people. I do not know which section it is, but it is one of the sections on which the tests were positive, showing an arsenic content of 45 parts per million to 545 parts per million.

The developers have started to develop the land. The land is on the eastern side of Donnington Street. One can still see the mounds where the wool-scour operators dug up the dirt and buried rotten skins and rotten hides that were contaminated by arsenic. Following continual questioning by me, the Government had tests done on this land and they have proved to be positive. I think it is about time that somebody went out there and did something about it, and I hope that this particular provision in this Bill will allow somebody to go out there and do further tests.

“The Courier-Mail” of 26 May 1978 reported—

“Developers of the 350-hectare Carindale estate at Carina are considering ways to decontaminate an area of the estate affected by arsenic.

“The contamination was detected in soil sample tests carried out by the developers over the last 12 months.

“It is confined to an area of 2.2 hectares in a gully on the estate, near the site where a woolsour previously operated.”

We look at that statement that the developers made in “The Courier-Mail” after I first exposed this, as a result of tests that the Minister for Main Roads had done, and we see that the developers are trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the Government. The tests that were done showed that arsenic contamination was over much more than the 2.2 hectare site. They did four tests on areas approximately a mile apart and the four tests that were done all proved to be positive. It is about time that somebody started to do something. It has always been my belief that it is the responsibility of the Health Department.

One needs only to look at what has happened recently in America. An article in the “Philadelphia Inquirer”, headed “Dream turns nightmare over chemical graveyard”, reads—

“They thought they had bought the American dream on 97th and 99th Streets, but instead they invested their lives in a neighbourhood where the mailman wears a gas mask.

“The basements of their small, wooden houses reek with chemicals that smell like dead animals, and the radishes in their gardens have turned black. The ash trees in their backyards have withered and died, and some of their dogs are covered with sores.

“Then there are the children: one with an extra row of teeth, another with a club foot, a third who is retarded. And the mothers are pregnant again.

“These families bought houses that were built over the gravesite of Hooker Chemical Co.’s garbage. More than 80 different chemical compounds, 11 of them capable of causing cancer, were dumped in an old canal in the southeast corner of Niagara Falls and covered with clay.”

As I said in the Matters of Public Interest debate a couple of months ago, a person can get cancer from arsenic. We really do not know what can happen. It is the responsibility of the Minister and the department to get out there immediately and take tests. If the land is contaminated, the development must be stopped until we find out the exact area that is contaminated and would be a health hazard to people who buy the land.

Another case in the United States was reported in T.V. news on Channels 7, 9 and 0 a couple of weeks ago. It reads—

“In the United States, the deliberate dumping of indestructible chemicals at the roadside is costing the State of North Carolina two and a half million dollars.

"The chemical was distributed at the road edge to get rid of weeds, but it was later found to cause dizziness to people passing by.

"The State is now removing the soil for decontamination."

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! That has nothing to do with the Bill. Would the honourable member return to the Bill?

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** I am trying to inform the Minister that, in America, the health authorities are doing something about chemicals that have been dumped in the ground. Arsenic has been dumped in the Carindale Estate and over the past year I have been able to discover, through questions directed to Ministers, that the arsenic is there and that it was used in the wool scour to treat hide beetles. The Minister should do something about the problem immediately.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD (Toowoomba North)** (11.3 p.m.): In rising to speak to this Bill amending the Health Act 1937-1976, I should like to say that, while we are encouraging medical practitioners to report suspected injuries, I see that role as one not for medical practitioners only, but for the whole society. It should be the role not only of doctors but also of social workers, teachers, nurses, police, ambulancemen, neighbours and even relatives. It is only when the whole community becomes interested in the problem of maltreatment of children that we will start to get anywhere. When the whole community is aware of the problem and takes on the task of reporting these matters, we will discover that the incidence of maltreatment of children is much higher than anyone dares to suspect.

**Mr. D'Arcy** interjected.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** The honourable member has made his speech and he did not make a single point worth noting. One of the things he said, and he will be eternally held to it, to his discredit, was that five A.L.P. doctors, who are apparently his advisers, would not report child abuse. That is a terrible thing for him to say on behalf of the A.L.P. He said it in the House tonight. If he had had his wits about him, I am sure he would not have said it.

The reporting should, of course, lead to supportive treatment. That is the next problem. It is not, as the honourable member for Salisbury said, only the people from the lower socio-economic classes who maltreat children. The problem is universal—from the richest to the poorest, from the best bred to the worst bred. There is no single class of people that is not capable of maltreating children. People generally need to get that firmly in their head. It is not other people who maltreat children. Those who do it are people from their street, their neighbourhood, their church, their schools and their community.

There is a need for people to be able to come forward in confidence. I think the Minister should know about this. I reported child abuse cases long before he was in Parliament. Such reporting has led to a death threat. Now, the doctor concerned has to reply to the person that if he catches him anywhere near his house, he will blow his brains out, and he has to do this in front of a police sergeant so that the person knows exactly what is meant.

That brings me to the next point brought out in this Bill, and that is that there must be absolute confidentiality at all times for those who report child abuse. Provision is made for this in the Bill. However, as the honourable member for Salisbury points out, this is going to be challenged in our courts by the legal profession. I think we should obtain an opinion whether we can for all time keep these matters in confidence.

**Mr. D'Arcy** interjected.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** The honourable member for Woodridge has had his go.

**Mr. D'Arcy** interjected.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** He stood on his feet on behalf of the Labor Party; but did not give notice of a single amendment. He did not advance an alternative. All he did was bellyache endlessly about the lack of success of Dr. Edwards. I believe he is even ungrateful about the proposed hospital to serve his electorate. He is just a bellyache and has not a single thought in his head. He did not put forward one good idea on behalf of the Labor Party. I endorse what the honourable member for Salisbury said about him, namely, that he is very seldom in the House before 10 o'clock, and we all know that the pubs shut at 10 o'clock.

There is a need for social workers and nurses to be able to offer realistic support to mothers who are in any kind of emotional stress or in a situation where they cannot cope. This assistance needs to be given early, long before there is any threat of violence. This means that there must be people who are capable of anticipating that a person might be under stress, and that would have to include women who are under psychiatric treatment and women who have a problem with an alcoholic husband or a person who is known to be violent. Open lines of communication will have to be available so that child abuse can be prevented. I am aware of one case where a child of 12 got out and dialled 000 because her father was about to commit a particular crime again, and that 12-year-old, by its prompt action, prevented the commission of that crime. If a 12-year-old could intercede on behalf of its family, surely the neighbours would have known exactly what was going on in the area and could have reported the matter.

There is a need for the reporting to be to the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. I hope that the regulations provide that a telephone call is acceptable. I hope also that a letter on a doctor's letter-head admitting a child to any hospital in this State will be sufficient notification. If a doctor says that he believes a patient has been battered, abused or in any other way maltreated or is suffering from neglect, I hope that this will be sufficient notification of the Director-General of Health. I hope that the regulations will make provision for that person to then act at any time of the day or night to carry out the next step, and that is to detain for 72 hours the person who is suspected of being maltreated. The superintendent will then have the responsibility on behalf of the Director-General of Health of carrying out whatever investigations he deems necessary.

Some of the investigations found to be necessary in some cases have included a total body X-ray. This is a terrible thing to have to put a child through. We are all aware of the dangers of X-rays. Many honourable members have spoken on them in this House when a particular Bill was introduced earlier in the year. If these battered children have to be regularly X-rayed, I believe that we would be doing them a great disservice. X-rays should never be undertaken purely for diagnostic purposes just to see how many more fractures some of these poor little mites have suffered since they were last admitted.

This is the sort of procedure that has been talked about in other places, and I think it is something that we will have to guard against here. Certainly, we must take X-rays in diagnosis; but once a diagnosis is established, we must do everything in our power to ensure that the child is never battered again, and is never subjected again to what some people refer to as routine, total body X-ray. If this happens, later in life the child will run the very real risk of developing cancer.

We need to report many things, and trauma is just one of them. Any trauma that does not tally with the history that is offered needs to be reported. If the explanation for a fracture, particularly of the limbs, in a child under 12 months old is that he fell off the bed, the doctor who sees the fracture needs to get his diagnostic cap on and think out just how the child suffered it. Fractures caused by such happenings are extremely rare. It is usually found that the fracture has been caused by the kid's arm being snapped over somebody's else's leg, just as one snaps kindling. This sort of thing happens. Any injury that cannot be explained should be reported.

An injury that springs to mind was caused by a dummy up the back of a child's nose. When the child was brought to the doctor, he saw that the plastic part of the dummy was missing. The soft rubber bit was stuck right up behind the kid's nose, and it took

a surgical team to get it out. This sort of thing cannot arise from the child's sucking on the dummy and the rubber piece coming off. There could be a blockage of the larynx, or a child could be choking. Certainly anything abnormal needs to be reported.

We also need to be on the look-out for neglect, and that includes neglect of infections, neglect of injuries from natural causes, and neglect of nutrition. I am afraid that the nutritional aspect of neglect is becoming ever more apparent, particularly in the larger cities where it can be hidden.

I was told once that a child of nine months had committed a serious crime; that he had crawled next door and stole some milk for breakfast. That, perhaps, was the youngest criminal we have had in the State; but at least, at nine months, it had its head screwed on. It went about getting the food it needed so much to stay alive.

Kiddies are neglected at all ages and all stages of development. If somebody's development or maturity is arrested, it is arrested for all time. There is a drop in the I.Q., and that person is a burden on the State. There is a need to protect kiddies. There is a need to get kiddies who have any nutritional problems, and to sort out those problems. If that does not happen, a burden is created, either in the unemployment line or the social security line. There is a need to prevent these things from happening.

There is a need also, I think, to thoroughly investigate sexual offences of minors, no matter how they seem to have occurred. Whereas this Act refers to children up to 17 years of age, other Acts refer to 16 years as the age of consent. Certainly, any sexual offences need to be thoroughly investigated. If they have been committed by other minors, the law provides what should happen in those cases. Young children are presented to doctors for treatment for things such as venereal disease, and I am talking of children of the tender age of five and under. All of these cases need to be thoroughly investigated. It may not be something that the parents have done; it may be something that some other person, who has had access to the child, has done. When these things are discovered, they need to be very thoroughly investigated. An investigation might reveal some surprising things.

The honourable member for Woodridge said a lot about children getting access to chemicals and other products. He said also that there are many child-proof cabinets on the market. All that is required are push-buttons, 6 in. apart, with a puller in between. No child can open that. With two buttons working in conjunction an adult can open the cabinet by pushing in with a finger and thumb and pulling out a knob with the other fingers. It takes four or five children acting in concert to open such a cabinet, and that is fairly difficult for a team of small children to organise. Cabinets of that type

are not special; they are available in any hardware shop. The design is shown in a Government pamphlet—"Play Safe with Drugs", I think it is called—and it is time that such a cabinet was incorporated in every house that is built.

The Bill also provides for the cancellation of licences of hospitals, and I do not think that any honourable member has yet spoken about that. As part of its responsibility to the community, the Department of Health needs to be ever-vigilant and make sure that there is never again in this State a need to close what were colloquially known in the 1940s as the baby-shop hospitals. Many of them were dangerous. They had inadequate sterilisers and inadequate surgical equipment; they could not cope with emergencies or resuscitation; they were not equipped for the administration of anaesthetic; and they could not cope with the problems of all patients who presented.

No hospital that falls below the guide-lines laid down by the department should be allowed to stay open for even a single day, because the day that it is allowed to stay open could be the day on which a disaster occurs. There is a need to keep all hospitals up to date, and the little certificate hanging in the entrance to a hospital means a great deal. It means that the Government has given its stamp of approval to that hospital for what it sets out to do. It means that it can cope with nursing problems, it can give reasonable treatment, and it can be expected to be clean and safe.

There is a need for the department to be able to act, and I note that there are two stages of disapproval. The Director-General of Health and Medical Services can first give the licensee an opportunity to show cause. If that is ignored, he can either cancel or suspend the licence and cause it to be returned to his office.

The Bill also contains provisions relating to pesticides. I say here and now that the do-it-yourself pesticide Baygon is more toxic and more dangerous than many of the insecticides used by licensed pest control operators. There is a need for great care, and persons who use Baygon must ensure that they do not get it on plates or heating utensils or food preparation surfaces. It is far more toxic than the insecticides used by Amalgamated Pest Control operators and the Flick men. Now that there is a do-it-yourself kit, it is very important that people who use the product know exactly what they are doing, know about its toxicity, and know not to breathe it.

Very important powers are being given to inspectors to enter premises, to inspect premises, to order the destruction of things that are apparently being used as pesticides, and to remove samples for analysis. It is only fitting that inspectors should be able to enter, because these insecticides are extremely toxic. We must ensure also that those used in homes, in particular, are the least toxic and that licensed operators thoroughly understand what they are doing.

Members have spoken to the Minister about the labelling of dangerous substances, and I am pleased to see that the Bill provides for correct labelling of dangerous substances. There are already a great many on the market, and more will become available year by year. Such things as poisons, drugs and biological control agents should all be used with extreme caution, and there is a need to have on the labels exact instructions, some indication of the type of poisoning that results, and an indication of whether respirators need to be used, whether protective clothing or gloves should be used, and exactly how the remaining poison should be disposed of. Admittedly, it is a lot to put on a label. However, many poisons could be sold in packets large enough to have all the instructions printed on them. If that is not done, tragedies will occur. The Government is taking a worthwhile step by providing for the correct labelling of dangerous substances. The Minister is to be congratulated on bringing this Bill forward.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (11.21 p.m.): Laws should be designed to protect, not control, people. This Bill will protect people. The honourable member for Salisbury raised a very interesting point concerning the tattooing of females under the age of 18 years. I whole-heartedly agree with her. A great many persons whom I shall describe as young ladies get tattooed when they are 14 or 15 years of age. They begin to feel their femininity, they wish to have a peer connection and they mix with some very odd young men. They go to a tattooist and, before they know where they are, they are tattooed. Subsequently they come to me, as an active practising plastic surgeon, to have their tattoos removed. It is amazing to see where they have their tattoos. Some of them are very difficult to remove. The fact is, however, that they are marked.

When I was a young man, the only women who wore tattoos were prostitutes. During the war years, Hitler had females of various races tattooed. He had them conscripted into prostitute camps for his troops. In the post-war period, it was most distressing to me to see women who were proud of the tattooed numbers on their arms. Such tattooing highlighted what Hitler did to the world. Nowadays, we tend to forget that.

A tattoo is a mark, and no woman under the age of 18 years should be allowed to wear one. So I congratulate the honourable member for Salisbury for raising this matter. Medically speaking, tattooing is a problem.

The Opposition spokesman on health was very verbose. As the Americans would say, he spoke a lot of crap. All he did was abuse the Minister for doing something that should have been done many years ago. He criticised the medical profession, which has been criticised for centuries. In spite of that criticism, over the centuries the health of the public has been improved.

Not every medical professional man becomes a millionaire. Some of the best medical men in the world died as paupers. They may have had monuments raised to their memory, but they did not have great financial security. I would suggest to the member for Woodridge that he sit down and think about what the medical profession has done for this country and for the world. Right from the days of Hippocrates, the medical profession has done a darned sight more than the Labor Party has ever done for society, and it will do a lot more in the future.

A wide horizon of medical science has been opened up, as has a broad aspect of legal procedures and care of the individual. This Bill is one that opens up the horizon. The Minister has been courageous enough to bring forward something that has been hidden under the carpet for years—the abuse of children.

In 1962, a man named Kempe wrote an article on the abuse of the child. He spoke not only about physical abuse but also about sexual and nutritional abuse. He said that a father could pat a child on the head and at the same time kill it by not giving it enough water. He said that a father could feed a child while at the same time he abused it sexually, thereby making a mental wreck of that child. Those are subjects that this Bill will bring out. A lot of people do not realise that beneath the surface of this Bill there is great depth. Out of it will come regulations that will raise the eyebrows of the average mother and father. The surface has only been scratched.

Many years ago, a man named Barton Schmitt wrote in "Folio traumatologica Geigy" an article on child abuse. It was neglected by members of the medical profession, because they did not believe that it occurred. They did not think it happened. The black eyes that could be seen were only the marks on the mugs like me who went into the boxing ring. They thought that broken noses and busted teeth were suffered only by pugilists, but they occur when kids only six to 12 months old are battered. A high percentage of the children who died between the ages of six and 12 months were battered to death. The Minister has done something about correcting this problem in our State.

I am surprised that the medical profession should be reluctant to notify these incidents. That is the position because they have never been legally safeguarded. It is all very well for a person to go to a policeman or a child welfare officer and say, "I think this child has been battered," but he has no legal backing until this Bill becomes law. Years ago, as a hospital superintendent, I had the backing of a very sensible man in the Child Welfare Department, as it was then called. When I was confronted with a battered child, I put him away. Any injury to a child means, until it is proved otherwise, that the child has been subjected to battering. In this

context, the main thing is the education of the doctor, the school teacher and the nurse. Education is the backbone of the Bill. People must be educated, not punished.

It is all very well for the honourable member for Woodridge to say that doctors are frightened of this problem. Many doctors do not even see it. The schoolteacher and the welfare officer see it. The council health doctor or the council nurse may see it, but doctors do not always see it. Any child who is injured should be considered battered until it is proved otherwise. That is what the law must say. The doctor and the welfare worker must be safeguarded by very stringent laws in the Criminal Code, not in the Health Act. Until doctors, nurses and welfare workers are protected, children will not be protected. These are basic factors. In the case of every injured child, there should be suspicion that he has been belted by a parent or other person close to him.

What types of abuse are there? It is interesting to note that we are a hell of a long way behind America. On looking up some statistics, I saw that half of the United States recognised that any child who is injured is suspected of being battered, and the injury is reportable at law to a law-enforcement society or agency. The honourable member for Woodridge is about six years behind the times. We are behind, too, but at least the Minister has the courage to bring things out in the open. In instances of physical abuse, the first people to be suspected are the parents, caretakers and babysitters. On reading the figures, it is amazing how many wives' lovers bash children.

Another point to be remembered is that a child who comes into hospital looking like the children in some of the horrible pictures one sees of neglected children—children looking like bags of bones, without buttocks, with scraggy little arms, seemingly starving to death in a land of plenty—may be in this condition as result not of a battering but of neglect. We have passed various Bills to support the dairying industry. A child may never see milk, not even mother's milk, yet the parents get away with it. The honourable member for Woodridge said that medical officers do not report such cases. They do report them, but nothing is done. The Minister told us what happened.

Doctors are to be protected, and they will then report them. This is called nutritional neglect and the child is put in the hospital ward with the noting, "failure to thrive".

One of the worst cases of failure to thrive in the northern areas comes about when a child is not given enough water. Mother's milk is not good enough. A child can be killed if it is not given enough water.

One of the things that has been with us, and always will be with us, is sexual abuse. When I first came here the then honourable member for Townsville South, Mr. Tom Aikens, and I—

**Mrs. Kyburz:** He was a disgusting old man.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** He was not a disgusting old man. Rosie, my dear girl, you are an immature woman. When you reach his age, you will realise that a lot of things that he said were quite right.

**Mrs. Kyburz:** They might have been, but I objected to the way that he said them.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** He upset the honourable member for Salisbury, and any woman who is upset never forgets anyone or forgives anyone. But she is forgiven.

Mr. Aikens and I decided that if a person sexually abused a child and the child died, that should be considered murder, not manslaughter. Unfortunately, there are many cases of sexual abuse of children that do end in death and there is nothing done about them. It is much more common than we realise. An interesting point is that there are certain figures that show that incestuous relationships can have subnormality as their end products. I refer the House to a report in "The Medical Journal of Australia" on the Royal Commission on Human Relationships, which reads—

"Thus the widespread public belief that incest results in mental retardation is well sustained in prospectively ascertained and controlled series. We do not wish to enter the debate on the moral and psychological consequences of incest. Professionals who work and counsel in this area must not forget the clearly demonstrated severe genetic consequences amongst the offspring of incestuous unions. Clearly the Royal Commission on Human Relationships was misguided in this area."

The report of human relationships was a bit off beam. They said that an incestuous relationship was all right as long as a person does not get caught, but they forgot about the consequences of it. It is a completely immoral report and a completely immoral result in its final summation. According to all the figures in world literature, it is completely and utterly wrong.

There is one other child abuse that I think should be discussed tonight. That is the case in which a doctor orders treatment for a child but the child does not receive it. I have seen this happen several times, especially when I was in hospital practice. I found that when a child who did not thrive was put in hospital on the same medication, that child improved. When I looked into the matter, I would find that the child was not given the prescribed medication, because someone was told that it was not good for the child. Either they belonged to some

spiritual or religious group or there was some suspicion that the children should not be medically treated. This is culpable and, if the child dies, they are guilty, in my opinion, of homicide; they have not given the prescribed scientific treatment to the child.

The other thing that I find distressing, which should be emphasised when this legislation is fully enacted, is the emotional abuse and denigration of a child. This happens in our education system today. The Radford scheme is one of the most vicious, vindictive schemes ever inflicted on children. It places child against child, teacher against child. Because of personal disability and inability to equate, some children are marked down by teachers in their results, even though these children may be far superior mentally to the other children. In my opinion, the Radford scheme is a form of child abuse and the sooner we get rid of it the better.

A child can be isolated in the school system. He can be placed apart. Parents can place a child aside. Isolation of a child is bad. Some people do not attempt to understand a child and will isolate him. They virtually put him into solitary confinement. Have honourable members ever seen a prisoner who has been put into solitary confinement? I saw one who was put into solitary confinement by the Japanese for 18 months. He was condemned for nothing; he did not even commit a crime. When he came out of the gaol he looked like a zombie. That is what happens to children when they are isolated.

Scapegoating is another way of upsetting children. It is a form of mental cruelty and child abuse. We practise it in our own families. We practise it among our fellow politicians. We run them down. We have a Premier who is running down half the members of Parliament. He is scapegoating. In this case, it is adult abuse. Sometimes I think it is really child abuse, because we behave and react to it like children. We should ignore it. All of this leads to mental retardation and lack of mental thought.

Children with chronic diseases are neglected. If a child comes to a hospital because his treatment as directed by a medical practitioner has not been carried out, the parents should be charged with child neglect. If a child comes to a medical officer with an acute disease and it has not been looked after, the parents should be charged with child neglect. Acute disease and chronic disease can kill just as easily as a gunshot wound.

**Mrs. Kyburz:** What are you going to do with them when you charge them?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I will come to that.

The basis of good medical practice is the diagnosis, the treatment and the after-care. Those in charge of these affairs must be

educated. The junior resident and the senior resident must be educated in all facets of child abuse. The consulting surgeon and physician are the weak links because many of them will not spare the time and are not willing to go to court to give evidence on behalf of an innocent victim—a child. They may consider that their practice will be prejudiced. It will not be. By doing this for children, they will only gain strength.

The hospitals must be quite willing to back their consultant physicians and to receive children admitted by physicians. Hospitals must be willing to have their consultant physicians examine children and then give their opinions in a court of law. Hospitals should not send the superintendent; they should make sure that the physician attending the patient gives the evidence, because he knows the intimate details of the patient.

The police must be educated. A special squad is needed to handle these cases. The Children's Services Department must be educated. At the moment completely wild and uncontrolled children are running around the streets in Townsville. We must not be frightened to dismiss people in the Children's Services Department if they do not do their jobs. The ones to say whether they are doing their jobs are members of Parliament and the parents of the children, as the parents come to the members of Parliament and they go to the hospitals and say, "Help me please with my children." What happens? The matter is reported to the Children's Services Department and nothing happens. Children still run around the district.

**Mrs. Kyburz:** Parents don't want them.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** That is very interesting. So we have to educate the parents. How do we educate parents? The only way to do that is to use the power of the law. This is unfortunate.

**Mrs. Kyburz:** I disagree. That is what SEMP did.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** SEMP didn't do anything except disrupt the power of the parent.

After-care is most important. The Bill does not deal with after-care. Our Children's Services Department and Police Force must be reinforced. The Labor Party screams about the Police Force. God help us if we did not have it. A special squad should be set up consisting of men and women who are trained to understand the problems of childhood and the problems of parenthood. It is no good sending a bachelor to interrogate a drunken father who is out of work. It would be the same in the case of a subnormal child; a bachelor could not do it. An educated person with a bit of thinking behind him is needed.

We have to educate our police officers and the officers of the Children's Services Department in much more depth than we

are educating them at the moment. I feel that this Bill is only a preliminary one which merely scratches the surface of the problem. However, I am quite sure that further regulations will follow and that there will be other thoughts that will cover other problems. In many ways the Bill does not cover adequately all the situations that arise, but out of it will come a better existence and less child-bashing in the community.

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (11.41 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions. The honourable member for Mackay had to speak on the Bill because the spokesman on health matters had not arrived in the House. It was unfortunate that the honourable member for Woodridge did not show enough interest to be here at the right time, but, as I shall explain shortly, he may as well not have been here anyway.

The honourable member for Mackay supported the child-abuse legislation, which was very gratifying to hear. Of course, the Opposition supported the Bill at the introductory stage; I will talk about that in a moment. The honourable member mentioned the problem concerning old medicines. Certainly for a long time now my department has been undertaking an education programme to teach people to dispose of old medicines when they had finished a particular course. As honourable members would know people tend to take a certain number of antibiotic tablets until they feel a little bit better; then they put the remainder of them in a cupboard. If they become ill again, they will finish them. This situation is not acceptable to the profession, and certainly my department has been very active in its education programme.

The honourable member for Mackay also mentioned the self-use of applications for pest control in homes. I am advised that the department is watching this very closely. Any particular packs that are used must meet the requirements laid down in the Poisons Regulations, as I indicated in answer to a question the other day. Because of the risks that can occur we will keep this problem under close observation.

The honourable member for Greenslopes made a very worthy contribution concerning child abuse. As he indicated, he circulated all the doctors in his electorate. Members of the medical profession throughout the entire State, except for the five A.L.P. doctors who are on the committee of the honourable member for Woodridge, are in favour of this legislation. It is obvious that those five A.L.P. doctors have ulterior motives for not supporting the Bill.

The honourable member for Greenslopes said that the Bill probably does not go far enough. Several honourable members suggested that. However, I want to make it

quite clear that this Bill is the beginning of a continuing and ongoing programme. It is obviously a programme which must be taken with ease and understanding so that the rights of patients and the rights of parents will not be interfered with. I shall talk a little bit more about that later on. The honourable member mentioned Jehovah's Witnesses and their children. There are Acts by which children can be made wards of the State so that treatment can be administered when problems arise. He said that he welcomed the provisions covering tattooing, and expressed concern about the age of persons being tattooed. I will certainly take that matter up with the Minister for Welfare.

The honourable member for Woodridge made an incredible speech. I think that is the only way it can be described. It must be remembered that he paid a tribute to the Bill at the introductory stage; now he says that it is a wishy-washy Bill. He said that he did not understand that a baby is a patient. It is incredible that a man who is the spokesman for the Labor Party on matters concerning the Health portfolio would consider that a baby under the age of five months or three months was not a patient, and that there was no doctor-patient relationship. It is incredible that he should not understand that a baby is a patient.

**Mr. D'Arcy** interjected.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** By his aggression and his hopelessness the honourable member has certainly indicated to the House his most inept attitude towards the Health portfolio which he is supposed to shadow. He could not convince the people of Albert in three years that he should stay here, let alone convince this House that he is performing well this evening. His attitude was a disgrace and a disaster. It is a shame that the Opposition is represented in this House in the Health portfolio by a person who has obviously made no attempt to understand the meaning of the Bill. He made a statement regarding containers for tablets. Again, he is completely unaware of the true situation. If he had any information available to him, he would know that the matter of containers for drugs throughout Australia comes under Commonwealth regulations.

**Mr. D'Arcy:** That is what you are always hiding behind. You hide behind it every time we are dealing with any part of your portfolio. You refuse to recognise this.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** It is customary for the honourable member to keep screaming out all the time. He does not understand one aspect of the Health portfolio. The situation is that the States together form the National Health and Medical Research Council. The States together form various committees, and our contribution is made through those committees. The Standards Association of Australia recently set up a committee to consider mandatory types of containers, so that there could be child-proof containers

for all kinds of tablets. For him to make such a statement is irresponsible; it indicates his lack of knowledge of the whole situation.

He gave a long dissertation on poisons. Apparently he does not know that in the Royal Brisbane Hospital we have what is recognised as the best poisons centre in Australia. Professor Mary Ellen Avery, who was here during the Children's Hospital Centenary Week, and other people said that our poisons centre was equal to, if not better than, any poisons centre throughout the whole world. That centre receives about 1,000 calls a year from people who are concerned about the contents of poisons.

It is a pity that I have to waste the time of the House to reply to such statements by the honourable member. I hope that the Leader of the Opposition will make some effort to educate the honourable member for Woodridge in the way he should perform in debates in this House.

The honourable member for Salisbury made a very worth-while contribution to the debate. I was very pleased to hear her statement regarding the tattoo regulations. Her statement about the role of teachers is well accepted. At this stage we certainly believe that the matter should be in the hands of the medical practitioners. We are hopeful that we can have discussions with the teaching profession, and with other people in the community, so that when they are suspicious that child abuse has occurred, they can discuss the matter with a medical practitioner, who then will have the power, if necessary, to refer the matter to a hospital for investigation.

She indicated that the Bill is just the beginning; of course, that is indicative of what we are hoping to achieve through the Bill. I fully support her view that we need a continuing assessment of our support for parents and families confronted with this problem. I know that she welcomes the role of the community health programme as part of the support programme.

The honourable member for Chatsworth was on his usual hobby-horse of arsenic contamination. He fails to recognise that that land will not be subdivided until the Brisbane City Council allows such subdivision to occur.

**Mr. Mackenroth:** It has been subdivided.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** It is being subdivided where it is safe from the point of view of health standards.

**Mr. Mackenroth** interjected.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** Let me have my say; the honourable member had his say earlier.

As I have indicated to him on a number of occasions, tests have been taken in other areas. When tests are not satisfactory, the

Brisbane City Council will keep in close contact with us. If it allows subdivision to occur in such areas, we will have to take action against it. My position is quite clear.

**Mr. Mackenroth** interjected.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I ask that the honourable member keep quiet for a while and stop babbling on like Kedron Brook. What I am trying to say is that the Government well recognises that health hazards can occur if there is arsenic concentration to the degree to which he referred. Our position is quite clear: we have taken a stand, and there will be no problem about allowing houses to be built on the land. Arsenic contamination does not give off gases; it does not give off contamination. One can be contaminated only by continual contact with the problem to which the honourable member referred, and that, of course, cannot occur in this situation.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North spoke about community involvement, and stressed the need for confidentiality. He explained the full aspects of the Bill. It would have done all members of the Opposition a great deal of good if they had listened to what he said.

The honourable member for Townsville made one of his best speeches in this House. His contribution tonight was an outstanding one. His statement that the Bill is designed to protect and not to control shows that he understands the Bill fully, and I pay a tribute to him. Of course, he spoke as a practitioner who has had long experience of the problems associated with the abuse of children.

The honourable member for Townsville is one of the legends of North Queensland in medical practice, and his contribution to the debate indicated his long-term experience. He stressed the need for education of the community and the profession, and I think that his comments would be supported by all honourable members.

I thank all honourable members for their contributions to the debate. I believe that the Bill will be the forerunner of outstanding programmes in this particular field and, in spite of what has been said by honourable members opposite, will be regarded as leading legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion (Dr. Edwards) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 8, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 9—New Division XIB of Part III; Maltreatment of Children—

**Mr. D'ARCY** (Woodridge) (11.52 p.m.): How sensitive the Government is, Mr. Hewitt, when it comes to the notification of maltreatment of children in this State. We heard in the second-reading debate speaker after speaker from the Government side. Of course, the Minister is not really serious about the Bill. If I believed that he was really serious about it, I would have taken his opinion and his word much more seriously, as I usually do. But in this instance I do not believe that the Minister or the Government of Queensland is serious about this clause.

Although, as I said, many Government members took part in the second-reading debate, the one for whom I had most respect was the honourable member for Townsville (Dr. Scott-Young). I think he did have some understanding of the Bill and of the fact that provision should be made for the prevention of child abuse in this State rather than for punishment for child abuse.

**Dr. Edwards:** You are not supposed to be talking about punishment.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** The Bill does deal with punishment. Does the honourable gentleman wish me to read the clause to him again? That is what we are talking about. I can understand that the Minister does not wish to hear it again. In his place, I would not wish to hear it again, either.

**Dr. Edwards:** We have heard it three times.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** That is right; the Minister has heard it three times. The honourable member for Mackay tells me that he read it to him. I do not blame him for reading it to the Minister. Does he want to hear the whole clause again? That is what we are talking about.

**Dr. Edwards:** You are wasting the time of the Committee.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** I am not wasting the time of the Committee.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I also am of the opinion that the honourable member is wasting the time of the Committee. He will proceed with the debate.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** We are dealing with clause 9, Mr. Hewitt. Earlier in the debate we heard speaker after speaker deal specifically with the provisions of this clause and the way in which they will be implemented under the Bill.

The Opposition does not believe that enough credence is given to their participation. The Minister attempted to criticise me, but that is entirely irrelevant. The point I wish to make is that Government members, including you, Mr. Hewitt, spoke about the way in which this clause will be implemented by the medical practitioners, the way in which medical practitioners will inform the department, and what action, if any, will then be taken by the department under the Act.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North attempted to defend the medical profession in this instance, but that attempt was a very weak one. Three Government members said that not just the medical profession but other sections of the community, too, should have the power to notify the Director-General of Health of incidents of child abuse. It is a fact that the member for Toowoomba North and his fellow doctors laugh at the Bill and say that they do not intend—

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I rise to a point of order. I find the honourable member's remark offensive. Never once did I say that doctors want to laugh at the Bill. The attempt by the member for Woodridge to cast a slur on me is beneath the dignity of the Chamber. It is about all that he is good for. I ask that he withdraw the remark.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Does the honourable member ask for a withdrawal?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I certainly do.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member for Woodridge will withdraw the words that were offensive to the honourable member for Toowoomba North.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** I will withdraw whatever the honourable member thinks was offensive.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I rise to a point of order. The member for Woodridge said that if I regarded the remark as offensive he would withdraw it. I find his words offensive, and I ask that he withdraw the last remark, too.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member for Woodridge will continue with his speech.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** Thank you, Mr. Hewitt. The honourable member for Toowoomba North is oversensitive to this issue because he was defending the A.M.A. and its attitude in not wanting to report child abuse. It is understandable that doctors, including the Minister, do not want to do that. They would find it embarrassing. This means, of course, that the Bill will not work.

Other points were raised by Opposition members. The Minister praised Government members, all of whom criticised the Bill for not going far enough in this clause.

The Bill makes no mention whatever of sexual abuse. It has been revealed that over 25 per cent of child abuse involves sexual abuse. Yet the Government wants to do an ostrich act, as it usually does. This clause does not go far enough.

Although doctors may notify the Director-General, no mention is made of the action that he may take. He is no longer under

any direction, except perhaps that of the Minister. It is quite obvious that all the Minister wants to do is to be vindictive and sweep the Bill under the carpet. He is not prepared to take any real action.

Except for a couple of weak-kneed members, this Parliament has voiced a true opinion of this legislation. In spite of that, the Minister is not prepared to take this matter seriously. I, however, take it seriously. We should be looking for preventive measures that will have an effect on every child and every family group in Queensland, an effect that is even more serious than that caused by our current economic situation.

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (11.59 p.m.): I really should not bother to answer the comments of the member for Woodridge, but it is important to place in "Hansard" the fact that the honourable member wants the Bill to deal with sexual abuse and something else. This is completely covered by the words "maltreated or neglected in a manner likely to subject the child to unnecessary injury, suffering or danger". I do not intend to reply to the honourable member any further.

Clause 9, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 10 to 24, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### [Wednesday, 25 October 1978]

#### RAILWAY CONNECTION, ERAKALA TO MACKAY HARBOUR

##### INITIATION

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport): I move—

"That the Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution—

"That the House approves of plan and section, book of reference and resumption plans of a proposed railway connection from Erakala on the North Coast Line to Mackay Harbour."

Motion agreed to.

##### COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport) (12.1 a.m.): I move—

"That the House approves of plan and section, book of reference and resumption plans of a proposed railway connection from Erakala on the North Coast Line to Mackay Harbour."

The relevant documents for this proposed railway were laid on the table of the House on 18 October and members will have had an opportunity to ascertain from that material the necessity for the deviation. The stage has been reached where the bridge over the Pioneer River on the Mackay Harbour Branch will require replacement if rail connection to the harbour is to be maintained.

It will be observed that the proposed new connection will leave the main North Coast Line north of Mackay, and thus this particular traffic will be removed from the centre of Mackay. The adopted route is along a transport corridor recommended in a report by Ullman and Nolan Pty. Ltd., which was commissioned by the Co-ordinator-General.

The connection will comprise a single track 11.2 km in length and, including the cost of resumptions, is estimated to involve an outlay of \$8,209,000.

I commend the proposal for the support of honourable members.

Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (12.3 a.m.): The proposal seems relatively simple but it does not reveal what has been going on in Mackay for 10 or more years. It does not disclose the trouble that the public had to go to to get a satisfactory route finalised for this deviation to Mackay Harbour. When the line to the Mackay Harbour was first built in conjunction with the construction of the harbour in the late 1930s, the sugar and other trade through the port was relatively small, the trains were short and the urban area was about a third of its present size. At that time no fertiliser was coming through the harbour and there were no commercial or industrial establishments in the locality. Things have changed entirely since then.

The railway line was an extension of the existing goods yard in Mackay. It came along the Pioneer River bank, along River Street, and made a very sharp turn onto the railway bridge. It has been forecast that the present exports through the harbour will double between 1990 and 2000. The sugar trade alone is expected to double in that time. Rail traffic is completely blocking off access roads to the city and is restricting both train and traffic movements in Mackay.

As the Minister said, this has been caused by the deterioration of the railway traffic bridge across the river. As a member of the Mackay Harbour Board, I well recall more than 10 years ago considering a report concerning the bridge and the problems associated with it. Part of the bridge was in danger of being lost with any flooding in the Pioneer River. The problem was accentuated by the bridge, which created a three-foot-high dam on top of a normal flood in the river. That made a big flood every time the river, which has a history of flooding, came down in a rather broad sweep in the wet season.

For the last 10 years there has been the risk that, with a major flood in the river, the rail bridge to the Mackay harbour would go downstream. From the time it was first constructed there, the bridge has, of course, also been accused of causing major flooding in the Cremorne area. The loss of the bridge would mean tremendous disruption to commercial life and trade within Mackay. Obviously, there was a need for the bridge to be moved.

There is also a need for an improved rail link to the harbour, as additional sugar sheds have been built since that time. In the mid-1950s, after the harbour was built, we changed completely to bulk loading, and now, with the new sugar shed being built there, we will finish up with the world's largest bulk-sugar terminal. It will also be necessary for the Mackay Harbour Board to construct new and additional marshalling yards in its area there to cope with the trade as it has changed over a period.

As I mentioned earlier, my first association with this problem was as a member of both the Mackay Harbour Board and the city council. Whilst I was acting mayor of Mackay, prior to my entry to this Parliament, when it became obvious that the Pioneer River was going to create a problem for us I convened a meeting in the council chambers of all the various authorities, including railway engineers, who were concerned with the problems of flooding in the river.

The road bridge was in much the same situation. The Main Roads Department did move on this and underpinned the piles, but we could not get any action initially from the Railway Department.

Since that time, this matter has been constantly raised by me in this House by way of questions and speeches. Finally, in 1975, the Government agreed in principle to relocate the harbour rail route, and Gutteridge, Haskins & Davey were appointed consulting engineers for the project. Both they and Ullman & Nolan, consultants to the Pioneer Shire Council and the Mackay Harbour Board, agreed to the northern route in the initial proposal. Of course, this is when all the rows started. The communities of Andergrove and Slade Point rose up in arms, because the new rail link would be coming right through residential areas and would be completely disrupting community life in both those localities.

So, sensibly, further investigations were undertaken and the new route has now been decided upon which is satisfactory to all. Strangely enough, it is the one that was originally suggested by the Andergrove Progress Association, by me and by a number of other people in the area as the most sensible route and the one that would not disrupt community life. I think this is a

good example of what is required of Governments in relation to taking notice of people and taking people into their confidence right from the outset. The ordinary people in the community know and understand how these things will affect their community. They are not dills, but sometimes, unfortunately, they are treated by Governments as though they were. To show this, I have in my office a whole pile of letters from the years in which this row was developing. They are letters that came to me and were sent by me. They are letters from the progress associations of Andergrove and Slade Point, other associations in the area, and private individuals. They all tried at one stage to get information from the Government on the route, but unfortunately it was not forthcoming.

I would like to pay a special compliment to Mr. Geoff Nolan of Ullman & Nolan. He had the good sense, on behalf of the Pioneer Shire Council, to have a public meeting with the people of the area and to fully explain to them some of the problems associated with the selection of the route. In return, he also got from the people their ideas as well. As a result, the controversy died down and people became satisfied. The route that was finally chosen was satisfactory to almost everybody in the community.

There are several points that come out of this, and one that I should like to mention concerns the resumptions shown in the working plans and sections. The people will want a quick settlement for the resumptions. Sometimes the settlement of land resumptions by the Railway Department and the Main Roads Department drags on and on. People accept that the railway line will go through their properties and that their properties will be affected. Unfortunately, a considerable time sometimes elapses before compensation is paid to them. I ask that the Minister look at this matter and insist on a speedy settlement of any compensation problems that arise. Many people have already been hurt. When the original route was chosen, they accepted that the line would go through their properties and, because they thought they could not live close to a railway line, they sold out at a reduced price. Then the route was changed.

The Minister mentioned a figure of \$8,000,000. The Mackay Harbour Board will have to meet the cost of constructing a loop at the end of the line, relocating and building new marshalling yards, providing a road overpass and resiting some of the existing buildings. It will also be involved in land acquisitions. Its costs are estimated to be \$3,675,000, so the total value of the project is in the vicinity of \$12,000,000. But it will really set up the rail facilities leading to Mackay Harbour, which is the leading sugar port in Australia.

I should like the Minister to say why an environmental impact study was not undertaken. I understand that one was undertaken in connection with the Rockhampton rail connections that will be discussed later.

This work will not entirely overcome the railway problems in Mackay. It will be necessary to relocate the southern approach to the city. One proposal has already been put forward and is being considered by the shire council so that a multi-modal corridor can be created. I understand that the council is also considering such a project in regard to the Erakala to Mackay Harbour line. It is important that proper planning be done at the right time.

One great need is the extension of the Goonyella line to Clermont to pick up the grain trade in the northern part of the Central Highlands. The port of Mackay will be much closer to that trade and must eventually become a grain port, so grain trains will be coming into the area and, because of the new extension, they will have easier access to the harbour than if they had to take the old route down River Street and across the bridge. This will increase the traffic on the line and it is important that we look at other proposals so that the Railway Department does not stop at this stage.

We have the developing industrial area of the harbour itself. The Harbour Board owns about 860 ha of land that is still available. In addition, another 500 ha of land is available in the Mt. Bassett area, which is suitable for reclamation. Within the period that we are referring to in this proposal, we will see much further development in that area and a need for additional rail traffic on the line. None of this will be any good if we maintain the existing route through the city area.

There is a need to move quickly on the marshalling yards in the Paget Junction area, which would be tied in with the new southern approach that I have already referred to. This would mean, of course, that the whole of the line that runs through the Mackay city area could then be taken out because the harbour traffic would no longer be disrupted. That is the key. This particular line should be the first of many stages of the re-development of the railway system in the Mackay area.

My final point is that once the new line is built and is operating through to Mackay Harbour I would suggest that the department moves as quickly as possible to remove the old bridge. It is not much good leaving it there as an obstacle in the river to be washed away by a flood. It might as well be removed and sold for scrap. That would be doing a great service to the community of Mackay in lessening future flooding problems in the Pioneer River.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport) (12.16 a.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Mackay for his interesting comments on this proposal. May I say that one of the reasons for this railway proposal is that until it is approved by the Assembly the Railway Department cannot proceed with the resumptions. It is obvious from his comments that he approves of the proposal.

My colleague the Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation also supports the proposal, as does my deputy leader, Mr. Camm, with whom I have had considerable discussion on this matter. This is a very worthwhile alteration to the railway system. It has been brought about because of the need to replace the bridge over the Pioneer River at Mackay Harbour.

I appreciate what the honourable member for Mackay has said, and I will have a talk with my administration to see how quickly what he suggested can happen. He made the point that it is an expensive job for the Railway Department at \$8,000,000 and there is an estimate of \$12,000,000. We were hoping that the harbour board could help us, but that does not seem to be possible. On the figures that the honourable member for Mackay submitted, I can see why it is not possible. Of course, anything to do with railways is a very expensive item, but I believe that this proposal has the full support of the entire area. I think it is an excellent one. Once the proposal is approved it will allow my people to effect a quick settlement of resumptions. I might add that some of these resumptions have been discussed in Cabinet because they do create problems for some people more than others. However, I do not anticipate much trouble with these. We realised that problems would come up, and they were well discussed.

**Mr. Casey:** There has been a recent land-use study in the area.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** That is right, so I do not see many problems there. The honourable member for Mackay also mentioned an environmental impact study. I am informed that this was included in the study of the consulting engineers, Messrs. Ullman & Nolan, and consequently no further study has been required by our authorities.

I believe that they are the only points I have to reply to. The proposal has been well supported all along the line. I say again that it is a very expensive proposal to proceed with, but nevertheless it is something which the Government and my department have to face up to. I believe it will do a lot of good for the Mackay area generally.

Motion (Mr. Tomkins) agreed to.

Resolution reported and agreed to.

## RAILWAY CONNECTION, MIDGEE TO GRACEMERE

### INITIATION

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport): I move—

“That the Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution—

‘That the House approves of plan and section and book of reference of a proposed railway connection from Midgee to Gracemere and southern rail approach to Rockhampton.’”

Motion agreed to.

### COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport) (12.21 a.m.): I move—

“That the House approves of plan and section and book of reference of a proposed railway connection from Midgee to Gracemere and southern rail approach to Rockhampton.”

These proposals involve the construction of a direct link between the North Coast Line at Midgee and the Central Line at Gracemere and deviation of the North Coast Line from Midgee through a locality known as Egan's Hill to Port Curtis.

Expenditure of an estimated \$2,400,000 would be necessary to eliminate timber bridges in the vicinity of Yeppen on the Central Line in order to handle increasing tonnages of Central Queensland coal, and impetus was thus given to a scheme to provide a more direct and less flood-prone link.

The Department of Railways and the Department of Main Roads commissioned the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education to investigate the feasibility of constructing an approach to Rockhampton from the south by road and rail, which would give a higher degree of immunity from flooding than is presently available, and it was determined that it was desirable to move the Port Curtis-Gracemere link to the south on to higher ground and deviate the North Coast Line from Midgee to Egan's Hill and to provide a single combined crossing of the flood plain for both road and rail between Egan's Hill and Yeppen. There will be positive community benefit through the greater immunity from flooding than the existing access facilities provide.

Work is proposed in three stages—single line Midgee to Gracemere, with loop siding at Egan's Hill; duplication Midgee to Egan's Hill; and construct section Egan's Hill to Yeppen. Total cost of the project, including resumptions, is \$6,630,000.

I commend the proposal for the consideration of honourable members.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (12.23 a.m.): I welcome this move by the Government to finally do something about the communication problems in terms of the rail and road link we have in the central region, especially in what is known as the Yeppen. For many years, people have been unable to commute from the Gracemere region to Rockhampton at certain times of the year. This has been a major problem not only to residents in the Gracemere area, but also to those people who live in the central region—those travelling from Emerald and Blackwater to Rockhampton.

In more recent times, as the coal industry has developed, there has been what one might call an overloading on the Central Line. The flooding difficulties and the wash-outs that we often experience have created serious problems in the Railway Department.

I am pleased that we are making this move here tonight because the relocation, if one might call it that, of the line through Port Curtis and then back towards Gladstone is a prerequisite to any development that will take place in the Yeppen.

As the Minister said, a study was carried out by the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education, and points were well made during that study. Many of the problems concerning the flooding of the Yeppen have been brought about by the existing rail line backing up the water. This has created greater problems than there would have been had there been a free flow. There is no chance that we will ever overcome the Yeppen problem until we relocate the line. Nothing can be done in that area unless there is a combined effort, and this point was well made by the Minister for Main Roads when I personally spoke to him on the matter, and also in correspondence. It has to be a dual project. This point has again been made by the Minister for Transport.

I am pleased to see that the money is being allocated for this project. It is a massive amount of money when one starts to think of the small area involved. It involves only some 16.69 ha, 15 ha of which is freehold land, with 1.5 ha being road closures.

I am told that the line is about 15½ km long. It traverses some grazing land, some medium-timbered areas, gravel tracks and a lot of swampy, low land.

Irrespective of the type of land, most of it is freehold; therefore, the Government will be dealing with the people who own it. As the honourable member for Mackay said, when we begin talking about resumptions for railways or anything else, we have to come back to the people who own the land, and I hope that the compensation paid will be adequate and that we do not have the same sort of problems that we had with resumptions for the Rockhampton Railway

Station, when people had to make a last-ditch stand to get a reasonable amount of money. I thank the local Railway Department officers for the part they played in arriving at that settlement. I note that some 13 landholders are involved in this instance, and I hope that the negotiations will be amicable and also expeditious.

I mentioned earlier the problems that have arisen because of flooding. However, there are other problems. There has been a bottleneck in the area, and it was going to continue as a result of the increased traffic in the region. I have not had a chance to delve very deeply into the project, but it seems to me that it will overcome the problems in the Port Curtis region. As I said, there will be continuing development; therefore, we must look to the future, which means that more money must be spent.

I would hope, too, that there would be a quick move on the Yeppen roadway, because the hinterland will not develop unless people can move freely from Gracemere to Rockhampton. It is vitally important that this work does not extend over six or seven years. The Minister mentioned a three-stage plan, and I hope that it will be done as quickly as possible.

It is necessary, too, to look at some of the other rail traffic problems in the area, and these are all bound up with the overall rail situation. There is a need to consider the provision of a new rail bridge over the Fitzroy River. When the former general manager was in Rockhampton, the question was debated at some length. There was talk of putting it down Stanley Street and removing the Denison Street railway line. I would again advocate that, and I would hope that when this project is well under way we will see a further stage of the development of railway facilities in Central Queensland.

**Mr. PREST** (Port Curtis) (12.27 a.m.): As the member for Port Curtis and one who has been involved in train movements in the area over a long period, I am very pleased to see this proposal introduced. It will improve the movement of trains between the Central Highlands and Gladstone.

A link of this type has been spoken of for some years. There was talk of a link between Midgee and the main line to Gracemere or to Kabra on the western line, and the link now proposed will have definite advantages. One will be the elimination of the busy Port Curtis Junction area, which has been a bottleneck for some considerable time and has become worse with the increasing length of trains. Great inconvenience was caused to road traffic while long coal trains passed across the main highway to where the points had been changed for the changing of crews. Whether the trains were drawn by four engines or three engines, at times they stood and idled, thus causing

a fair amount of noise nuisance and fume nuisance to residents of the area. Those problems will be eliminated by taking trains direct from Gracemere to Midgee.

During a very wet season—I think it was in the 1974 flood—another problem arose. At the peak of the flood, it was frightening to see whole trains of “VO” wagons tipped over at Port Curtis Junction. This was caused by water washing away the ballast. When I saw the mess, I thought it would take some weeks to clean it up. However, as usual, the railway workers, under the direction of their senior officers, did a wonderful job. They had it cleaned up in no time. Fortunately, we have not had a problem of that magnitude since then. By diverting the trains directly across, we will be keeping the long trains with three or four locomotives out of danger from such flooding.

I should like to know whether the connecting link between Midgee and Gracemere will have any bearing on the working of crews in the area. Over the years, there have been plenty of discussions on working through depots, working long trips on a mileage basis and other things. I sincerely hope that this link will not mean that crews from Gladstone will bypass Rockhampton. The men at Rockhampton must retain their working and those at Gladstone must retain theirs.

Will the Gladstone men be asked to work to a further point on the western line and change with The Bluff crews? Or will The Bluff crews come in and change with the Gladstone crews? These matters cause concern. On the other hand, the Gladstone crews could change at Gracemere or Midgee. If so, will accommodation for trainmen be built at those stations, or will the crews be conveyed by taxi or by Railway Department motor vehicle to Rockhampton and wait for a return?

This connecting link could result in better returns to depots for crews. This would be a good thing. It could effect a saving in relation to the 10-hour relief. It is a wonderful provision. It is great for a trainman to be relieved and get home. Perhaps his relief does not arrive until shortly before his train, but at least he is relieved after being on duty for 10 hours. He knows that he will be home within an hour or so.

Since the introduction of C.T.C., a lot of small stations such as Midgee have been unattended. If trains go directly across to Gracemere, will these stations be manned by night officers or station-masters? Or will they just come under the C.T.C.?

This week I was informed that Raglan is another small station that will be unattended. It used to have a station-mistress in charge. I believe that there is on the drawing board a plan to close the station as from 31 January next year. It will then

be unattended. A station-mistress, besides being a railway worker who does her job, is someone to whom rural people seem to turn when they want something done. A country person drew this matter to my attention. I sincerely hope that the Minister will consider keeping Raglan Station open.

Other minor advantages are encompassed in the motion before us. The first is the connecting link, which will save a small distance; it will not be much, but it will be a saving. One of the major matters is the elimination of problems in the Port Curtis region. The honourable members for Rockhampton and Rockhampton South and I are very pleased that action is at last to be taken to eliminate flood problems in the Rockhampton and Port Curtis areas.

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport) (12.36 a.m.), in reply: I thank both the member for Rockhampton and the member for Port Curtis for their ready support of this proposal. The arguments advanced were much the same as those submitted on the earlier proposal. Resumptions have been discussed with many people along the line. I believe that when the motion is carried there will not be a great deal of delay.

The honourable member for Rockhampton asked me how long I thought the first section would take. I take it that he means the section from Gracemere to Egan's Hill and back to Midgee. We think that it will be completed by the end of next year. The other connection to Yeppen will be the second stage. I believe that this proposal will do a lot for the honourable member's area. It ties in with the development in the coal-field area. It will also mean that the honourable member's area will be served by an improved railway system.

The honourable member for Port Curtis spoke of a few problems concerning the railways that I do not propose to answer tonight. I do not think he expects me to do so. We will be thinking about these matters. I think we can handle them. The Railway Department is administered very sympathetically.

I am very pleased that both of these proposals have been well accepted. Opposition members are behind what we are doing. Because there is no argument, there is no need for me to discuss them further.

Motion (Mr. Tomkins) agreed to.

Resolution reported and agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.39 a.m. (Wednesday).