

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 30 AUGUST 1979**

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. S. J. Muller, Fassifern) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

**PAPER**

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed—

Report of the Commissioner of Land Tax for 1978-79.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT****TRAVELLING EXPENSES**

**Hon. W. D. LICKISS** (Mt. Coot-tha—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.2 a.m.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to correct a gravely anomalous impression concerning ministerial expenses that has been created, and indeed promulgated, by members of the Opposition.

This snide operation was started recently when Opposition members, obviously unable to understand the simplest of financial statements, misread and misinterpreted a statement relating to my own travel commitments that had been tabled earlier in this House as part of an overall document relating to ministerial travel. That report, tabled in Parliament on 7 December 1978, included a sum of \$15,933 as my "incidentals".

There is a clear notation on the statement saying that an amount of \$15,117 was advanced for an overseas visit not completed by 30 June 1978. The notation added that that amount would be apportioned in the 1978-1979 statement of travelling expenses.

Mr. Speaker, the plain facts are that the sum of \$15,117 was credited on the return for the financial year of 1978-1979. The disposition of the advance was—moneys refunded \$9,610, and expenses \$5,507. These expenses appear under the appropriate heading in the 1978-1979 return. Against the credit of \$15,117 on the current return appear actual expenses incurred in the period for "incidentals", being \$2,405, leaving a net credit of \$12,712 for that period under that heading.

The mischief that has been deliberately perpetrated by the A.L.P. would not have arisen if honourable members from the other side of the House had demonstrated a juvenile ability to interpret a simple financial statement. If any honourable member over there is wondering why such a large amount was returned by me at the end of my overseas trip, it is because some of the expenses were met initially by the Agent-General's Office and the Canadian portion of my tour was curtailed substantially.

I would again like to point out that my incidental expenses for the financial year 1978-1979 total \$2,405—a long way short of the \$15,000 figure maliciously plucked out of the air by those honourable gentlemen opposite. In fact, total expenses under the heading of "incidentals" for the two periods, 1977-1978 and 1978-1979, are \$3,221, being the difference between the charge of \$15,933 and the credit of \$12,712.

This is the type of vilification used so frequently by members of the A.L.P. to unjustly denigrate members of this Government in a bid for cheap political gain. By contrast, I will always remember the pitiful silence from the other side of this House when it was shown that the A.L.P. had used the poor old Australian Pensioners League for its own financial gain.

Finally, may I say to the honourable member for Sandgate (Mr. Warburton) and his class-mates that it is high time that they undertook an elementary course in accounting before they continue to misconstrue any issue where figures are involved and thereby wilfully mislead the public.

### PETITION

#### PROPOSED DISSOLUTION OF LIVINGSTONE SHIRE COUNCIL

**Mr. HARTWIG** (Callide) presented a petition from 2,250 electors of the Livingstone Shire, praying that the Parliament of Queensland will dissolve the council of the Shire of Livingstone, appoint an independent administrator and shortly thereafter elect a new council.

Petition read.

**Mr. HARTWIG** (Callide) (11.7 a.m.): Before moving that the petition be received, let me say that the petition was presented in a very serious atmosphere, and signed by people—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is permitted only to move a formal motion.

Petition received.

### DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

#### PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I am pleased to welcome on your behalf a

parliamentary delegation from the Solomon Islands led by the Honourable Dr. Francis Kikolo, M.P.

I am sure that we all wish the delegation a very pleasant and informative tour throughout Southern Queensland.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

#### 1. STATE SERVICE SUPERANNUATION FUND

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

With reference to the State Service Superannuation Fund, what payments did the State Government make into the fund in relation to (a) subsidy on contributions of members and (b) interest on investments, what amount was invested by members in new contributions, and what was the total amount of capital currently lodged in investments during 1978-79?

*Answer:—*

The figures for 1978-79, including those for the State Service Superannuation Fund, are in the course of being finalised for publication in September.

I would not wish to quote unofficial unaudited figures at this stage, but, should the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition be unable to ascertain the figures he requires from the published documents when they become available, I would be happy to supply them to him.

#### 2. CIGUATERA POISONING

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

(1) Is ciguatera poisoning confined to Queensland's coastal waters or can it occur in reef fish in other parts of the world?

(2) Is there a particular season during which the poisoning occurs?

(3) Is the poisoning serious?

(4) Should there be some form of warning to fish eaters that they may contract the poisoning at certain times?

*Answers:—*

(1) This poisoning is not confined to Queensland waters and it can occur world wide, mainly from eating fish from tropical waters.

(2) Due to cold storage of fish for sale, ciguatera poisoning can occur at any time, but toxin formation in fish occurs more frequently in autumn and winter.

(3) The victims are distressed to varying degrees according to the amount of toxin ingested. Some are severely distressed. No proven fatalities are known to have occurred here in the experience of departmental officers.

(4) The overall problem related to the public health aspect of ciguatera poisoning is under active consideration by my department and this will be further considered by an inter-departmental committee, which will investigate the overall management of this problem, including the desirability and nature of any warnings to be issued to the public.

### 3. NAVIGATION AIDS, URANGAN BOAT HARBOUR

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

(1) Will he have officers of his department investigate as a matter of urgency the intensity of the warning beacons and lead lights on Moon Bank and Woody Island and of those associated with the Urangan small-boat harbour?

(2) If the intensity of these lights is found to be unsuitable for the craft using this area, will he take steps to have them upgraded?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) Moon Point Bank carries a Simplex light fitted with a large-capacity lamp giving a visible range of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 miles. Woody Island has a lighthouse with a sectored light of 21 miles range. To the north of Woody Island, Datum Rock is marked with a Seagull light with a range of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 miles. Between Datum Rock light and Round Island the point of the bank is marked with a Simplex light with a range of 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The breakwater extremities at the entrance to Urangan Boat Harbour both carry a Seagull light with visibility of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 miles.

This area is used entirely by small craft, and between Moon Point Bank and the boat harbour at least two lights should be visible at all times. The ever-increasing background lighting in harbours has posed a very difficult problem for navigation authorities throughout the world. It is agreed that at Urangan this problem is acute. Upon assessment of a solar-powered navigation light test programme now being undertaken in the Whitsunday Islands, and the availability of funds, some improvement in the power output of existing facilities may be possible. However, there is no way that the problem can be completely overcome.

The Maryborough area has more navigation lights than any other port in Queensland outside of Brisbane. These lights are practically all for the benefit of small craft. In view of the higher priorities for work in other areas, it is considered that further expenditure in this port is not warranted at this stage.

### 4. MATERNITY SECTION, BUNDABERG BASE HOSPITAL

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

(1) What stage has been reached in the planning for the new maternity section of the Bundaberg Base Hospital?

(2) As the existing operating theatres are fully committed, is it planned to include an operating theatre in the new facility?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) The preparation of the planning brief for the new maternity section of the Bundaberg Hospital and consideration of the need for the provision of an operating theatre in that section are nearing completion.

### 5. EFFECT OF A.L.P. RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT POLICY

**Mr. Austin** for **Mr. Scassola**, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Is he aware that State ownership of high-risk resource development projects is A.L.P. policy, as expressed in its 1979 policy, which is binding on the Leader of the Opposition and the Parliamentary Labor Party?

(2) Will the implementation of such a policy involve the commitment of huge amounts of taxpayers' money and, in particular, will it mean the imposition of massive increases in taxation on the Queensland community?

*Answers:—*

(1) In answer to the honourable member's question on the A.L.P.'s policy on the State ownership of high-risk resource development projects in Queensland, and also on whether the implementation of such a policy would involve huge commitments of taxpayers' money—I think the A.L.P. policy is a clear warning to all businessmen in the community and to all taxpayers that the A.L.P. is totally committed to the destruction of the free-enterprise system.

On page 26 of its policy document it is clearly stated—

“That committees be formed to examine the social and economic advantages of forming statutory bodies to become involved in mining and secondary manufacturing industries in Queensland.”

In other words, the A.L.P. policy is to replace private enterprise in the manufacturing and mining industries with Government-controlled statutory bodies. Of course, it is to be expected that the A.L.P. would have such a platform. It is completely in accordance with the socialist

doctrine of that party, a doctrine which, like so many others that it has, would never be acceptable to the majority of thinking Queenslanders who live in and cherish the free-enterprise system which has been developed, encouraged and nurtured by successive Governments in Queensland for over 20 years.

This particular policy of the A.L.P. is not only philosophically unacceptable; it also ignores the practicalities associated with resource development, both physical and financial. I am sure that the policy-makers of the A.L.P. must be aware of this and the one big consolation that the Leader of the Opposition and his stalwarts here in this House must have is that it is extremely unlikely that they will ever be put in a position of having to put the policies of their masters, the Trades Hall, into effect.

(2) In answer to the second part of the question, the financial and economic implications of implementing the A.L.P. policy are, to say the least, mind-boggling. There is absolutely no way in which the State by itself could find the necessary capital, physical resources or expertise within its own boundaries to embark on this sort of exercise, even with massive tax increases, which, as the honourable member implies, would be an option that would have to be considered.

There is only one way in which the best resources of this State can be developed successfully and in an orderly fashion to the benefit of all Queenslanders. That is by a close and understanding partnership between Government and industry. Industry supplies the capital resources necessary for the actual development of the resource itself and takes whatever risks are associated with it. The Government, in co-operation with industry, facilitates the provision of the basic infrastructure. It is a joint venture in which neither party can succeed in its objectives without mutual co-operation, goodwill and understanding. The success of this approach is evident in the results that have been achieved and I am sure that Queenslanders would not readily accept the alternative offered by the A.L.P.

The A.L.P. policy document is full of anti-business and anti-free-enterprise sentiment. My assessment of the document is that it is full of high-sounding policies that would cost the earth to provide and would raise the taxes of all Queenslanders. With policies like that, it is no wonder that Mr. Hayden told the State A.L.P. conference in Rockhampton that the Queensland Branch had the worst electoral record of any branch in Australia. The Federal President of the A.L.P., Mr. Batt, also told delegates that the conference and its policies were not representative of the people and out of touch with the wishes of most Queenslanders.

I hope that all businessmen, small and large, will take the time to seriously examine and contemplate the A.L.P. policies.

#### 6. COONARR CREEK WEIR

Mr. Blake, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism—

(1) With reference to requests made by the Bundaberg branch of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, arising from a public meeting of 250 concerned citizens, will he ensure that the dam or weir across Coonarr Creek is breached sufficiently to restore tidal flow and protect the creek's ecology?

(2) Will he make available for public scrutiny all available documents relating to the granting of approval for the weir, including the report that local officers of the Department of Harbours and Marine would have made of this area and the advice that led to the granting of approval?

(3) Will he instruct his department to re-investigate the matter and reconsider the advisability or not of extending a permit that has now expired, and consider the Act of proposals dealing with environmental matters and guide-lines the Government introduced in 1975?

(4) Will he consider the land use study the Government undertook in 1976 of the area from Maryborough to the Elliot River, giving particular consideration to that part of the report proposing a national park for almost all of the land from Coonarr Creek to Theodolite Creek, with fishing as one of the recreations to be enjoyed?

(5) Will he ensure that a full inquiry into matters leading to the granting of approval for the weir is carried out and that no backdating or gazettal of an extension of the expired approval is made pending publication of the results of such an inquiry?

Answer:—

(1 to 5) Firstly I must say that I have already received appropriate representations from the member for the area (Hon. C. A. Wharton) and also from the member for Isis (Mr. Powell) in relation to this matter. Through them I have arranged to meet a deputation this week from the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland.

The granting of approval, as the honourable member well knows, for the construction of the weir across Coonarr Creek was given only after consideration of the views of the relevant authorities in 1973.

In considering the application for construction, my department of Harbours and Marine took into consideration not only its own views but the views of the then Fisheries Branch of the Department of

Primary Industries, the Land Administration Commission, and the Woongarra Shire Council, none of which raised any objections to its construction, and the approval of the Governor in Council was subsequently granted. An extension of the time for construction of the weir was approved by the Governor in Council in 1977 and a further extension is necessary in view of the fact that construction was not completed within the time then granted.

Since the matter became an issue in the area, as to its effect on fisheries, I initiated further inquiries and it has been reported to me by departmental experts that the matter is seen in the same light as when the approval was initially granted, that is, that the construction of the weir will have minimal effect on fishing in the area. However, as the honourable member is aware, I have agreed to meet a deputation from persons interested in the effects of the weir so that their views can be fully considered.

#### 7. COMMONWEALTH FUNDS FOR WOOL PROMOTION

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

As the Budget announcement of a \$7,300,000 reduction in wool promotion funds to \$14,000,000 represents another broken promise by the Fraser Government, what action is intended to induce the Commonwealth Government to restore its wool promotion contribution to at least the \$19,000,000 level promised, with restitution for any interim period of default?

*Answer:—*

I understand that the Federal Minister for Primary Industry, Mr. Sinclair, has indicated that the wool industry promotion allocation would be increased in 12 months' time. As the Federal Minister has already indicated his attitude towards this matter, I feel that it would be inappropriate, at the moment, to press for a restoration of the wool promotion contribution to previous levels.

It should also be pointed out that, because of higher wool prices, the contribution by the wool industry to promotion has increased significantly. This situation should continue during the current financial year and the funds thus generated should help to overcome any shortfall brought about by the action of the Commonwealth Government.

#### 8. MONOPOLISTIC CONTROL OF BEEF INDUSTRY

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

With reference to the great concern prevailing among the majority of beef

producers because of continuing acquisition of large aggregations of land by foreigners and meat-exporting companies and the resultant ability of those aggregated interests to influence or manipulate market prices at killing centres, what action has he taken or does he intend to take to influence the Government against its present practice of allowing eventual monopolistic control of the beef industry to proceed unchecked?

*Answer:—*

The honourable member's question relates to a hypothetical situation which he implies could occur some time in the future. I am aware of an interest in this matter, confined, I think, to North Queensland. A committee which recently investigated the situation came to the conclusion that the turn-off of cattle by even the largest aggregation was far too small to unduly influence the market. Honourable members would be aware that beef producers have a choice of where, when and how they sell their stock.

Questions regarding land aggregation should be addressed to the Honourable the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources.

#### 9. IMPLEMENTATION OF SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL DECISIONS

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

(1) Is he aware that some companies and individuals are refusing to abide by the decision of the referee of the Small Claims Tribunal?

(2) What action will he take to ensure satisfactory settlement is reached on the tribunal's decisions?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) The Justice Department has produced a book on the functions and operation of the Small Claims Tribunal and, in part, it refers to the procedures involved in giving effect to a referee's order. And that is: When an order made by a Small Claims Tribunal is not satisfied by a trader, the consumer may file, without cost, the order in a Magistrates Court. The order may then be enforced in the same way as a judgment made in a Magistrates Court.

Queensland's Small Claims Tribunal was the first in Australia and has been the model for similar tribunals in every other mainland State and in New Zealand. The tribunal has enabled many consumers to have their grievances examined and, where possible, rectified.

I am sure it is widely accepted that the tribunal serves a most useful purpose in resolving grievances which may have

remained unsolved in other circumstances. However, the honourable member would be aware that no method of debt collection is perfect within our democratic society. In other words, if a man has no assets, obviously nothing can be extracted from him regardless of whether a judgment is obtained in a tribunal or a court.

I will, however, repeat a message I have made on many previous occasions. It is this: consumers should take all possible measures at all times to ensure they are dealing with reputable and substantial traders. If they deal with men of straw, the risk is obviously going to be high.

10. CHILD RESTRAINTS IN MOTOR VEHICLES

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

(1) As the Victorian Government introduced legislation in 1975 for the prohibition of unrestrained children in the front compartments of motor vehicles, and the New South Wales Government did likewise in 1977, when will he introduce legislation similar to that introduced in New South Wales?

(2) What has been the delay in introducing similar legislation in Queensland, as the New South Wales Traffic Accident Research Unit found that the New South Wales law is providing satisfactory protection for children that may not otherwise have been provided without the legislation?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) As the honourable member will appreciate, any legislation which is not enforced, or is unenforceable, generally creates more problems than the one which it is intended to solve. On the information available to me, the legislation in New South Wales and Victoria is being implemented in an advisory way only.

On this basis, the Queensland Road Safety Council is actively pursuing a programme of public education on the use of child restraints through the media, distribution of pamphlets, defensive driving courses and, more recently, through its public display at the Brisbane Exhibition.

As a matter of interest, a media report this month indicates that over the next few months the New South Wales Government will mount an advertising campaign to reduce road accidents involving children, with particular emphasis on the use of child restraints. I am not aware of the particular report the honourable member is referring to, but Traffic Accident Research Unit Report No. 8/77 of August 1977 had this to say at page 86—

“There are times when even a very safety conscious parent or driver may be forced to transgress under a law making

use of an available restraint mandatory for a young child. It may happen that at times, the child’s well-being and that of other occupants, in particular the driver—and in fact the primary safety of the vehicle—may be best served by allowing a child to ride unrestrained. The present survey has identified a number of important restraint usage problems which are commonly encountered and can cause very real distress to the child and/or concern to his mother.

“A distressed child, or one who undoes his restraint, is likely to severely interfere with a driver’s concentration, especially if mother and child are alone in the car.

“It should be recognised that until many of the restraint usage problems can be overcome, there may be times when compliance with a mandatory use law for a child may in fact not be the best or safest thing to do. It is important that parents or drivers genuinely concerned for the safety of their children be allowed some discretion in the choice of how a child should be carried in a car and not be victimised by unduly repressive legislation.”

As I have indicated publicly, when I am convinced that the only way of effectively dealing with this problem is by legislation rather than by education, then the legislative course will be pursued.

I might also add that this matter has not been discussed in Cabinet in recent times, but it is proposed to make a submission to Cabinet in the near future.

11. S.E.Q.E.B. SECURITY DEPOSITS AND LOANS

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

(1) With reference to security deposits held by S.E.Q.E.B. in accordance with the regulation, what is the total amount of money lodged with the Commonwealth Savings Bank on behalf of consumers?

(2) Does S.E.Q.E.B. have loans from the Commonwealth Savings Bank or Commonwealth Trading Bank and, if so, what is the amount of the loans and what is the interest paid thereon?

*Answers:—*

(1) The South East Queensland Electricity Board has approximately \$100,000 in security deposits lodged with the Commonwealth Trading Bank of Australia on behalf of electricity consumers.

(2) Yes. An amount of \$2,000,000 has been lent to the South East Queensland Electricity Board by the Commonwealth Savings Bank of Australia. The interest paid by the board on these loans to date is \$210,608.

## 12. GLADSTONE POLICE DISTRICT

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

(1) As the Police Commissioner requires more police because of increases in crime and drug usage and as all sections of the community are concerned and are protesting strongly at the decision to eliminate the Gladstone Police District and have the area absorbed into the Rockhampton District, what is the reason for the elimination of this district?

(2) How does he compare Gladstone with Gatton, Livingstone and other places, as reported in the Press, when the Government has, on many occasions, referred to the Gladstone-Calliope area as the major developing industrial centre, with a further 3,600 jobs becoming available from such development in the near future?

(3) In view of this development and the need for an increase in police personnel in that area, will he reconsider his previous decision to eliminate the Gladstone Police District as from 1 September 1979?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) The elimination of Gladstone as a police district and its absorption into the Rockhampton Police District was decided after a careful and painstaking needs assessment study by the Planning and Research Branch of the Police Department and, at this stage, it is not intended to reconsider this decision. This action simply transfers the administrative functions from Gladstone to Rockhampton and in reality effects a saving in administrative staff.

From an operational viewpoint, the staff at Gladstone has in fact been increased by two uniformed constables. As with all other police stations within the State, the growth and development of Gladstone will be reviewed from time to time.

## 13. SAFE ROAD CROSSING, CLINTON PARK

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

(1) As Main Roads work is presently being carried out on the highway in the area of Chapman Drive and Harvey Road, Clinton Park, where hundreds of school-children cross each day, will he ensure that adequate protection is provided for the safety of pedestrians during this construction period?

(2) Will he investigate whether there is an urgent need for traffic lights at this point of the highway, where Clinton State School children should be able to cross safely?

(3) If traffic lights are not to be installed, what form of safe crossing is assured for these children when crossing this highway?

*Answers:—*

(1) Children will continue to cross the existing road via the zebra crossing, which should provide adequate protection during the period of construction. Arrangements will be made for job personnel to be specially detailed to control pedestrian movements across the new works. The school principal will be advised of these arrangements. I would point out that whereas departmental officers can provide safe facilities, it is not always possible for them to ensure that they are used. I therefore request the honourable member to assist as best he can by advising his constituents to exercise care during the construction period and use the facilities provided.

(2 & 3) As the need to ensure a safe crossing in this vicinity is fully recognised, investigations are currently in hand to determine the feasibility of constructing a pedestrian underpass in preference to providing pedestrian-actuated signals.

## 14. HOSPITAL FEES FOR PENSIONER PATIENTS

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

(1) Has notice been given to the public that pensioner patients in Queensland hospitals with long-term illnesses not requiring daily medical attention will be charged a fee?

(2) When does this fee come into effect?

(3) What will be the total cost to these pensioner patients?

(4) Why have these changes been made in our public hospitals for pensioner patients?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) In view of the fact that long-stay patients, who ordinarily would be admitted to nursing home units, are occupying beds in the State's acute public hospitals, the Government is proposing to introduce a scheme whereby such long-stay patients may, on examination by a medical practitioner, be classified as a nursing home type patient and, as such, would contribute towards his accommodation whilst in the acute hospital the same amount as that patient would ordinarily pay if he were accommodated in a State-controlled nursing home. Hospitals boards have been advised of this proposal and have been asked to submit certain details to the department.

## 15. HOSPITAL BOARDS

**Mr. D'Arcy**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to his Press release on 28 June wherein he stated that the future of all 57 hospital boards in Queensland

is under consideration and suggested that community involvement may be the price of more Government control in hospital management, when will he make a decision, and is he also considering dispensing with service on the boards by the elected council representatives?

*Answer:—*

There is no intention of the Government, at the present time, to abandon the principle of hospitals board administration of the public hospital system in Queensland or to remove local authority representation from hospitals boards. The honourable member would be aware that on 1 July 1979 the Governor in Council appointed a person to carry on, for the period on and from the first day of July 1979 up to and including the thirtieth day of September 1979, the functions of the North Brisbane Hospitals Board and to that end to exercise, perform and be subject to the powers, authorities, duties and responsibilities of a board prescribed by the Hospitals Act 1936-1979.

16. LOCAL AUTHORITY BUDGETS

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

(1) What date is set for the introduction of the shire budgets?

(2) Have the Beaudesert, Albert and Logan Shires applied for extensions of time and, if so, has this been granted, and what reasons were given by the shires for their failure to comply with the Act?

*Answers:—*

(1) 31 August in each year, unless the time for adoption of the Budget is extended by the Governor in Council by Order in Council made pursuant to the Local Government Act.

(2) In the case of the Beaudesert Shire Council, an Order in Council has been made extending to 30 September 1979 the period of time within which the council may adopt its budget for the current financial year and an Order in Council approving a similar extension of time for the Logan Shire Council is being submitted for consideration by the Governor in Council today.

The extension of time in each case was sought primarily because of the need to finalise certain financial adjustments as a result of the coming into force of the new Shire of Logan as from 1 July 1979.

No extension of time of the period for adoption of its Budget for the current financial year was sought by the Albert Shire Council and I am informed that the council adopted the Budget on 28 August 1979.

17. RAILWAY EXTENSION AND ELECTRIFICATION PROJECTS

**Mr. D'Arcy**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) With reference to the State Government's commitment to a fully operational rail link to Redcliffe by 1982, as promised by the Premier in the Redcliffe by-election campaign, what is (a) the original proposed completion date and (b) the dates now anticipated when each of these promised State Government rail links and improvements will open for public use in the (aa) electrification of the lines to (a) Ipswich, (b) Shorncliffe, (c) Lota, (d) Beenleigh and (e) Ferny Grove, (bb) line to the Gold Coast, (cc) extension line from Lota to Thornside or Cleveland, (dd) Samford line, (ee) electrification of the line to Rockhampton and (ff) Inala rail link?

(2) As all of these proposals have been the subject of firm promises by the Premier at election-times, will he now provide a list of priorities in the Government's rail programme and the estimated total cost of the Premier's rail promises?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) In pursuance of its aim of improving the standard of metropolitan transport services, the Government has been actively prosecuting a programme for the electrification of the Brisbane suburban railway system and the significant progress made in this regard is evidenced by the completion of overhead wiring and associated trackwork between Ferny Grove and Darra and even beyond Darra, the recent delivery of the first group of electric cars and the commissioning last week-end of a new signal control centre at Mayne, which also involved extensive track and signal rearrangements within the Mayne complex.

On the basis of present planning and the Government's confident expectancy of continued funding, the following programme has been set for the introduction of electrified services:—

- Ferny Grove to Darra—17 November 1979
- Darra to Ipswich—October/November 1980
- Roma Street to Kingston—April/May 1982
- Mayne to Shorncliffe—September 1982
- Park Road to Lota—May 1984

In the context of this overall scheme for the improvement of metropolitan services and subject to the enactment of the necessary enabling legislation, an extension of the railway from Lota to Thornside, in co-operation with the Redland Shire Council, is planned for construction within the next three years. Furthermore, as indicated in my letter published in "The Courier-Mail" this morning, I shall be

making a submission to Cabinet with respect to the construction of a railway line from Petrie to Redcliffe.

A study instituted by the Government into the feasibility of constructing a railway from Brisbane to the Gold Coast, also referred to by the honourable member, has been completed and the consultants' report is under consideration.

There has been no commitment on the part of the Government to the construction of a railway to Inala or to Samford, but any proposals for this or other suburban rail connections will be thoroughly examined by the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

In the broader context of upgrading main line services and in the light of possible future difficulties in the matter of availability of liquid fuel supplies, a feasibility study of electrification of main lines, including the line from Brisbane to Toowoomba, was commissioned in 1978, and this study is due for completion next month.

#### 18. AID FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SOLAR TRACKING SYSTEM

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

When will a decision be reached on the application for financial assistance for development of the Little brothers' solar-tracking system?

*Answer:—*

Solar Tracking Systems Pty. Ltd. of Mt. Isa, the company formed to manufacture the solar-tracking hotwater system developed by the Little brothers, has applied to the Treasurer for financial assistance to enable it to purchase raw materials and engage staff so that the unit can be brought into production.

The Department of Commercial and Industrial Development has been investigating the matter for the Treasurer. In this regard, I arranged for one of the department's engineers to visit Mt. Isa and discuss the project and its needs with the Little brothers. The department is now finalising its report on the company's application, and I expect to forward this for the consideration of the Treasurer shortly.

#### 19. FRAUD SQUAD MARKET INVESTIGATIONS

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

Has the Fraud Squad completed its investigations into various matters at the Brisbane markets in regard to alleged malpractices by certain agents?

*Answer:—*

Members of the Fraud Squad, in conjunction with inspectors from the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, are conducting investigations into complaints concerning the manner of dealing with certain proceeds of the sale of farm produce consigned to Brisbane markets. It is anticipated that these investigations will be finalised by the end of the year.

#### 20. DRYING OF GRAIN AND VEGETABLES

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

(1) Is he aware of a new method of drying grain and dehydrating vegetables by mixing the material to be dried or dehydrated with powdered aluminosilicates?

(2) Will he ask the Economic Services Section of his department to investigate the practicability and the economics of this operation?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) The term "aluminosilicates" describes a complex group of clay minerals, some of which are highly water absorbent. They have various industrial uses.

Materials of this type have been tested as insect control agents in stored grain on the principle that they can abrade the skin of insects and then dry them out. They are capable of exerting some insect control in this way but are not considered to have any practical potential. Unfortunately, when used as a grain treatment they abrade the bearings in the handling machinery and also create an industrial dust hazard. For these reasons, they are not acceptable to bulk-handling authorities.

My department is not aware of the use of aluminosilicates in dehydrating grain or vegetables, and it is difficult to envisage their application for this purpose. However, if the honourable member wishes to supply any additional information to my department, the matter will be pursued further.

#### 21. CONTRACT CATTLE FREIGHT RATE NEGOTIATIONS

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

(1) What progress has been made in negotiations between the Railway Department and the cattle industry on that industry's desire to negotiate a contract freight rate for the cartage of cattle?

(2) When will these negotiations be completed?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) Negotiations on this matter have reached an advanced stage, and it is hoped that a contract freighting arrangement

acceptable to the Government and the grazing industry will be finalised within two weeks.

22. ASSISTANCE TO BUS COMPANIES

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

For 1978-79, what assistance was given under the Urban Passenger Service Proprietors Assistance Act 1975-1978 to the bus companies operating between (a) Brisbane and Redcliffe and (b) Sandgate Railway Station and Redcliffe?

*Answer:—*

Financial assistance under the Urban Passenger Service Proprietors Assistance Act 1975-1978 in respect of the Brisbane to Redcliffe and the Sandgate Railway Station to Redcliffe urban bus services amounted to \$315,244.01 for the 12 months ended 30 June 1979.

**Mr. Davis:** It is a fair whack, isn't it? \$315,000 isn't chicken-feed, is it?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! There will be no debate on the reply to a question.

**Mr. Davis:** No, Mr. Speaker. I just asked a question.

23. DIESEL FUEL SUPPLIES FOR PRIMARY PRODUCERS

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

(1) Is he aware of the desperate shortage of diesel fuel in many rural areas?

(2) As vast areas of South-west Queensland have been declared drought-stricken and graziers have started, or are preparing, to push mulga for drought fodder, what action will be taken to ensure a continuity of diesel fuel supply to these producers?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) The tight supply situation relating to liquid fuels is primarily a result of the inability of Australian oil refineries to obtain additional crude oil stocks from overseas countries to meet the general increase in demand for petroleum that has taken place over recent months.

Production of crude oil by the O.P.E.C. members, particularly Iran, has been reduced. While there has been a slight increase in local crude oil production, this has meant that Australian refineries are only getting crude oil supplies approximately equal to those received last year. However, throughout Australia, and particularly in Queensland, there has been a significant increase in demand for petroleum products due to improved rural conditions and increased output in the mining, manufacturing and service industries. This, with consumer stockpiling, has resulted in

the current demand for diesel distillate being some 20 per cent above that for last year.

Provided that supplies of overseas crude oils are not curtailed further, there should be sufficient supplies of most fuels to enable oil companies to provide customers with supplies equal to their average use over the last year. In addition, a number of the oil companies have acquired cargoes of finished products from overseas to help overcome local shortfalls in supply. Some of these cargoes, which include diesel distillate, are due into Queensland ports next month and they should help in overcoming the current situation.

24. OIL DRILLING

**Mr. Ahern** for **Mr. Turner**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police—

In view of the Federal Government's often stated policy of giving incentives to oil companies to induce them to explore for oil, how many wells are currently being drilled off shore and on shore in Queensland at the present time, and how many were drilled during the previous 10 years?

*Answer:—*

The main thrust of the present Federal Government's policy in stimulating petroleum exploration has been to increase the return to domestic oil producers by the gradual increase of prices to parity with O.P.E.C. prices. This has benefited Queensland producers and has assisted the production of a number of small oil fields and has led to expenditure to improve recovery on existing fields.

Six onshore wells have been drilled to date this year in Queensland and another three wells are currently being drilled, but there is no offshore drilling activity. Another onshore well is expected to spud in in the next few days, and it is anticipated that some 20 wells will have been drilled by the end of the year, all on shore.

The numbers of onshore wells drilled over the previous 10 years are as follows—

Year	Wells Drilled
1969	52
1970	57
1971	19
1972	23
1973	12
1974	12
1975	4
1976	17
1977	None
1978	20

The Whitlam-Connor policies of the Federal Labor Government discouraged petroleum exploration during the period 1972 to 1975 to the extent that recovery due to the loss of drilling rigs and skilled personnel overseas has been slow.

Offshore exploration has been at a virtual standstill since 1970 following the deliberations of the Royal Commissions on Great Barrier Reef Petroleum Drilling. The Right Honourable the Prime Minister has stated that he does not intend to permit drilling in the region until the results of shorter and longer-term results of experiments on the effect of oil in the marine environment are ascertained at some future date. This follows the minority view of the chairman of the royal commissions.

In the meantime, at my initiative, applications have been called for four exploration permits in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and it is hoped that as a result the resurgence of interest in offshore explorations may contribute to improving the nation's liquid fuel position.

25. SHEARING SCHOOL, CHARLEVILLE/  
CUNNAMULLA AREA

**Mr. Ahern** for **Mr. Turner**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education—

In view of the popularity of recent shearing classes in the Longreach area wherein young men are trained in shearing skills, what is the possibility of establishing a similar school in the Charleville or Cunnamulla area?

*Answer:—*

This Government shares the honourable member's concern at the declining number of skilled shearers in this State, and the Education Department, through its Technical and Further Education Division, is currently planning with the United Graziers' Association and other interested groups to conduct two schools of instruction for learner shearers in the Longreach district in October. The success of these schools will determine whether and to what extent my department will continue to be involved in shearer training.

The recent schools to which the member for Warrego refers would be the short wool-classing courses conducted in the northern and central-western area to upgrade classes holding P1 certificates to P2 level. These were most successful, and my officers are presently considering further such upgrading courses in the south-western districts.

26. APEX CLUB ANNIVERSARY STAMP

**Mr. Lester**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation—

(1) Is he aware of the Apex Club's application for a 50-year anniversary stamp being refused?

(2) As Apex is a truly great Australian organisation, having spent millions of dollars helping people, and as other less

significant organisations have had anniversary stamps, will he make representations to the relevant Federal authorities to reverse this injustice?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) Speaking in both my ministerial capacity and as one who has an extensive knowledge of the activities of service clubs such as Apex, I believe it is most unfortunate that the Commonwealth Government has declined the request for a commemorative stamp to mark 50 years of community service by an outstanding organisation.

While it is recognised that the decision is entirely one for the Commonwealth, the honourable member may rest assured that I will initiate action to have further representations made on behalf of Apex to the Commonwealth at an appropriate level.

In doing so, I should like to commend the honourable member for Peak Downs for his interest in bringing this matter to the notice of the House, and I feel sure Apexians generally will appreciate the representations he has made.

27. PRODUCTION OF TRACTOR FUEL FROM  
GRAIN

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

(1) Is he aware of successful efforts in the United States of America to home-brew tractor fuel from grain and, if so, how successful were these efforts?

(2) Has this practice a potential for motor vehicles?

(3) As there are laws to prohibit this practice in Australia, will pressure be brought to bear to have these laws rescinded?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am aware that ethanol produced from grain and other crops in parts of the U.S.A., and mixed with gasoline, is being developed for use as "Gasohol", a mixture of 90 per cent gasoline and 10 per cent alcohol. The ethanol is used mainly as a motor spirit extender rather than a distillate extender for tractor fuel, but this is also under investigation. I understand that quantities of this substitute fuel are limited, and that production is based only on surplus crops for which there is no other ready market.

(2) Ethanol produced from sugar-cane has already been used as a motor spirit extender in a number of countries, especially Brazil. Ethanol can be added up to 20 per cent to motor spirit without major engine modification. Various aspects of ethanol production are currently being examined by this Government.

(3) The successful use of ethanol for a motor spirit additive in Australia depends

on economic considerations; there are no legal restrictions apart from environmental and other statutory controls on distilleries.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PREMIER'S STATEMENT ON STATE TAXES

**Mr. CASEY:** In asking the Deputy Premier and Treasurer a question without notice, I refer to the misrepresentations promoted by the Premier on television last night that taxes in Queensland are actually going down. I now ask: Is it not a fact that Consolidated Revenue receipts for 1978-79 published in the State Government Gazette last week-end showed that revenue collected from State taxes, licences and permits, land and mining charges, receipts for services and miscellaneous services, far from going down, went up by \$48,400,000, or 8.4 per cent, to a record \$624,500,000? Is it not a fact that revenue collected rose by 21.4 per cent in the case of Government services such as fees from the Titles Office, courts and Valuer-General; by 19 per cent from miscellaneous services; 14 per cent from stamp duties; and 6.5 per cent, to \$225,800,000, from pay-roll tax, which the Government now declares is a bad tax?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** The honourable gentleman's economic instability and incompetence absolutely amaze me. He is the man who claims to be the alternative Premier of Queensland. He is prepared to assess the amount of taxes paid by the people of Queensland on the amount of revenue received by the State. It is incredible that he should quote percentages of revenue received by the State in an attempt to indicate that there is a higher tax structure in this State than anywhere else in Australia. The revenue that comes in is what the honourable gentleman is referring to, and obviously he does not know the difference between the revenue that the Government receives and the rate of taxation involved.

Let me make it quite clear to the Leader of the Opposition for the fourth time in this session that the Queensland Government has the record of imposing the lowest taxes per capita in Australia. The reason why we have an increase in taxation revenue is that the Government has been attracting people to this State and therefore more people are contributing to its income. That is the reason why we are in our present position. The Leader of the Opposition acknowledges by a smile of contentment the way in which the Queensland Government is performing.

The results that we see on Saturday will again indicate that the people of the State support the record of this Government in taxation reform. We as a State have removed four taxes, whereas the honourable gentleman's Labor colleague in New South Wales, Mr. Wran, cannot even find enough revenue in that State to allow him to remove death duties at this stage. He has indicated to the people of New South Wales that he will have

to retain them for a lot longer. He is also considering the imposition of a fuel tax in that State.

**Mr. Davis:** So are you.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I indicate quite clearly that that is not so. It is not being considered by the Government in this State.

**Mr. Davis:** What rubbish!

**Dr. EDWARDS:** The honourable member talks a lot of rubbish at all times, so it is not surprising that he makes such comments.

The Queensland Government's record in relation to taxation is the envy of Australia. I make it quite clear that this Government is determined to implement policies and programmes that will further reduce taxation. If, as the result of increased industrial activity and increased population, the revenue that the State receives is likewise increased, that is to the benefit of this State. The way in which the Government spends this money is also a tribute to the way in which its policies and programmes are being implemented.

INVITATION TO PRIME MINISTER TO PARTICIPATE IN REDCLIFFE BY-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

**Mr. CASEY:** In directing a further question to the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the reports from Canberra that Federal Ministers have been told to get out and sell last week's "tax trick" Budget, and to the Deputy Premier's failure to either invite or attract the Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser—who should be the No. 1 salesman for the Budget—into the Redcliffe or Gympie by-elections, where the Budget will be first tested by the people of Australia on Saturday. As Mr. Fraser, accompanied by his family, will be flying over the Redcliffe Peninsula in his multimillion-dollar V.I.P. jet this Friday on his way to a week's tropical holiday at Palm Cove, just North of Cairns, in order to prepare himself for the Cairns Amateur Races, will the Deputy Premier make a final attempt to get Malcolm Fraser to stop off at Redcliffe at least on his way through to try and show some concern and compassion for those who are going to suffer higher taxes, higher interest rates, increased inflation, increased unemployment and higher petrol charges because of his "tax trick" Budget?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** It appears that, after yesterday's effort by the Leader of the Opposition, when he was stopped on every occasion, and the answer that I was able to give him this morning, he is receiving questions from my staff. They are so much like Dorothy Dixers that I am sure they were given to him by members of my party.

The Prime Minister of Australia is welcome in Queensland at any time, and I make no apology for saying that. When the Leader of the Opposition thought he would gain political capital from challenging me to

invite the Prime Minister to come to Redcliffe, I issued a challenge to the Leader of the Opposition to campaign with Senator Georges and Mr. Uren. He did not accept that challenge. I would like him to accept it.

Let me make it quite clear that the Liberal Party and indeed the National Party are fighting this by-election as it should be fought, that is, on State and local issues. We do not want to confuse the people of this State. We do not try to hide from our policies as is done by the Leader of the Opposition. No wonder he is inviting Mr. Hayden here to try to share the responsibility of the defeat that he will suffer in both electorates on Saturday.

#### USE OF THE GOVERNMENT CREST AND COAT OF ARMS

**Mr. CASEY:** Because the Deputy Premier and Treasurer would apparently like further reference to local issues in the Redcliffe and Gympie by-elections, perhaps he may answer this question: As the television advertising by the National Party for the Redcliffe and Gympie by-elections commenced and concluded with the use of the crest and coat of arms of the Government of Queensland, who within the Government gave authority for the use by a particular political party of a coat of arms granted to the people of Queensland by Her Majesty the Queen?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** The coat of arms is identified with the Government of Queensland. I make no apology for being part of the Government of Queensland.

#### LEGISLATION ON RATING AND VALUATION PROBLEMS

**Mr. HARTWIG:** I direct a question without notice to the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads. Following my presentation to Parliament today of a petition signed by some 2,250 electors representing 36 per cent of the Livingstone Shire residents, who are obviously objecting to excessive rating and valuation of that shire and calling for the appointment of an administrator, will he inform Parliament what legislative action has to be taken by Cabinet to rectify rating and valuation problems in many local government areas throughout Queensland other than the Livingstone Shire? When can such legislation be implemented in this Parliament?

**Mr. HINZE:** While I understand the problems that exist in the Livingstone Shire part of the honourable member's electorate, I doubt whether the removal of the elected council and the appointment of an administrator would be the complete answer. There are a number of rating problems in various local authorities throughout the State at this particular time. Representations have previously been made to alter the system of rating and to allow for a higher rural rate

compared with the urban rate in some areas, following the enormous increase in urban valuations.

This matter, I understand, has been considered again this morning by the Survey and Valuation and Local Government Ministerial Committees. Because of the anomalies that are occurring right throughout the State, I believe that we will make a further submission to Cabinet. After that I will undertake to advise the honourable member when legislation may be introduced into the Parliament.

#### ADVANCES FOR INCIDENTAL EXPENDITURE BY MINISTERS

**Mr. WARBURTON:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: In view of today's admission by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General that many thousands of dollars were advanced to him to cover incidental expenses, some of which was returned (one of the stated reasons being that the Minister's overseas tour was curtailed), why is such a large sum advanced for incidental expenditure and what guide-lines are used when making such advances?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** The activities of Ministers are subject to full consideration by the Auditor-General, as is any expenditure by the Government. I think that the statement to the House this morning by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General answers this question.

#### JOINT PARLIAMENTARY PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

**Mr. WARBURTON:** I ask the Premier: In view of the editorial in today's "Courier-Mail" giving full support to the Labor Opposition's call for the establishment of a joint parliamentary public accounts committee, will he initiate early moves to have such a committee established?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** That is a very easy question to answer. The honourable member already knows the Government's policy on this. He knows it very well. It remains the same.

#### PERSONAL INCOME TAX; REDUCTION BY QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT

**Mr. WARBURTON:** In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to his reference to the successful tax-cutting programmes introduced in the State of California and to his statements about a continuing commitment to reducing taxes. I now ask: Is it correct to say that the Queensland Government has had the power to reduce the amount of personal income tax imposed on Queensland workers since August 1978, when the Federal Government introduced an Act dealing with the income tax arrangements with the States, and, if he is sincere

about reducing personal income tax, why has the Queensland Government not reduced personal income tax for Queensland workers?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The honourable member ought to know, if he is a member of Parliament of any standing—and he obviously cannot be when he asks such a question—that we have no personal income tax collection in this State. The honourable member might be confusing Queensland with New South Wales and South Australia, where additional tax is imposed on the people for petrol, cigarettes and so on. We have no collection of personal income tax in Queensland. The honourable member knows, as the Deputy Premier said yesterday, that Queensland is the lowest taxed State generally in the whole of Australia. If we are not collecting personal income tax, how can we then reduce it?

#### TORRES STRAIT TURTLE-FARMING

**Mr. NEAL:** I ask the Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs: Does he consider that the termination of the Commonwealth Government's turtle-farming programmes in the Torres Strait will affect the Islander people?

**Mr. PORTER:** I think the Commonwealth euphemism here is "phasing out". Of course, it does mean the termination of what I think most people would regard as one of the most extravagant, ridiculous and useless propositions ever foisted on the Australian people. Over \$6,000,000 of taxpayers' funds has been spent—and what is there now left to show for it? Another 20 people out of work, some rotting sheds and tubs left on our islands, and nothing else. Indeed, had that amount been spent on housing, another 170 to 200 houses would have been provided for the islands, which would have had a long-term, worthwhile, beneficial effect. It might have been a real help. I believe that this absurd turtle-farming fiasco is a classic example of the gimmicky approach of the Federal Government and other people to the matter of Aboriginal and Islander affairs. These schemes, of turtle-farming, emu-farming—

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** Too many academics in it.

**Mr. PORTER:** Yes, far too many academics, as my colleague says. There has been a proliferation of training programmes which are dead-end because there is nothing else in sight. This approach was roundly condemned by every Minister at the last meeting of Aboriginal Affairs Ministers from all States, and it is a matter of great regret that the Opposition cannot get used to it.

At 12 noon,

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

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

#### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SECOND ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 28 August (see p. 139) on Mr. Hartwig's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Mr. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon) (12.1 p.m.): I rise to express my loyalty and that of my constituents to Her Majesty the Queen and her representative, His Excellency the Governor. I congratulate the mover and seconder of this motion, and also offer the condolences of my constituents to the family of Earl Mountbatten and the Royal Family.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Row): Order! The Chamber will come to order. There is far too much background noise.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** Today the State of Queensland and the Commonwealth of Australia are in a difficult economic climate. Recently I heard the economic climate of Australia compared to what happens when a house is blown down. If honourable members can picture the buildup to a house being blown down, they can imagine a young family saving for many years to obtain the finance to build their family home. They can also imagine that it takes some time to build that house. Then a cyclone comes along and blows it down. It takes a very long time for the family to recover from that cyclone, and I think the economy of Australia is in just that position.

Over years and years we had, through hard work, built up a sound economy. Then Mr. Whitlam came along and the economy was blown down. Because we have to get over the difficult years that were aggravated by the Whitlam Government, it is going to take years and years to rebuild the economy. Much is said about the deficit in the Federal Budget. We all know that there were very small deficits until Mr. Whitlam came to power. The Fraser Government inherited a very large deficit, and quite frankly I think that Mr. Fraser was very stupid in promising miracles in trying to overcome the problems created by the Whitlam Government. But the facts are that no matter what Government is in power in Canberra today, it has to come to grips with the problem of that deficit.

There are only four traditional ways in which a Government can finance a deficit. Firstly, it can increase taxes. Mr. Fraser promised not to do that, but he ended up doing it. This is where I think he was rather foolish in promising miracles. Be that as it may, he put the interests of the country first and had to find ways and means of getting the economy going.

The second way in which a deficit can be reduced is to decrease Government spending, and to that many of us say, "Hear, hear!" But what happens when the decreases hit us personally? We all scream and growl. But that is the second way in which a Government can reduce a deficit.

The third way is for a Government to print money. Members know what happens when Governments print money. It just does not work. It breeds uncontrolled inflation.

The fourth method by which a Federal Government can cut the deficit is to borrow money. Of course, in our businesses and personal spending we all know what happens if we borrow beyond our means, so that is also self-defeating if it is done to excess. As well, when a Federal Government borrows money to the extent that it is forced to borrow today, interest rates are forced up. So we have to come to grips with the problem. The options open to the Federal Government, regardless of which party is in power, are to increase tax, reduce Government spending, print money or borrow money.

I would like to suggest a new and exciting way in which the Federal Government could reduce the deficit, and that is by cutting taxes. It has been proved in California, where taxes have been cut, that although there is some lost revenue there is also an increase in activity, and that increase in activity results in the payment of more taxes. People and businesses are taxed less as individuals but the Government still gets as much, if not more, money.

**Mr. Frawley:** Will you send a copy of this to Mr. Malcolm Fraser?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I thank the honourable member for the suggestion.

To illustrate what I am saying, I think that the Queensland Government has proved that it is possible to cut taxes and still obtain more revenue. Opposition members must admit that this Government has got rid of the road maintenance tax, and it has said that it will not introduce a fuel tax in its stead. It has got rid of death duties and gift duties and has the most generous pay-roll tax exemptions in Australia. We still have a balanced Budget.

People say that we get more money from Canberra through the personal income-tax-sharing arrangements. So we do. But we get fewer tied grants from the Commonwealth. So the increased personal income-tax-sharing arrangement is not nearly as rosy as it sounds, and the percentage increase in the revenue that we have received from the Commonwealth has been less than the rate of inflation. In actual terms, we have received less money from the Commonwealth.

**Mr. Houston:** But you said that you did not want money from the Commonwealth.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I did not say that at all.

**Mr. Houston:** You did.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The honourable member does not know what he is talking about.

**Mr. Houston:** A few moments ago you said that we want less taxation, less money,

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The honourable member stated that I said we did not want more money. I said that we need more money and that the way to get it is to cut taxes so that people will invest in Queensland. The economy will improve. More people will be paying tax, but each individual will be paying less tax. The State will get enough money to run its business.

An example of the advantage to be gained from cutting taxes can be found in my own electorate. Honourable members will remember that not too long ago we amended the Wine Industry Act. The tax on wine was dramatically reduced. In the long term, more people will enter the wine industry, it will expand and this Government will collect more revenue. This proposal was put forward by the industry itself. It said, "Give us a break for a few years. In the long term, there will be many more people producing wine in Queensland and you will get more revenue." The industry asked for that.

**Mr. Vaughan:** The restaurants, not the wine producers, are making money out of the wine industry.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** Of course the restaurants are making money out of the wine industry. I agree that some of their charges are excessive. But the fact remains that, because of our action, there is an expanding wine industry on the Granite Belt. New wineries are being established all the time. Tourism has increased to the extent that the Stanthorpe Shire Council is employing a tourist officer to handle the increased activity. This sort of development can be encouraged if the Government faces up to its responsibility of cutting taxes, rather than adopting the old socialist method of saying, "We have to get more money and therefore we have to increase taxes."

In speaking about cutting charges, I should like to advocate a cut in the charges levied on irrigators. The total revenue from irrigation farmers in Queensland this year will be between \$3,000,000 and \$4,000,000. I acknowledge the co-operation that I have received from the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources in trying to solve the problem created by irrigation charges. I think that his help has been wonderful.

When the Government gets on with the business of cutting pay-roll tax, as it will, I think it should give equal thought and consideration to charges, particularly those in rural areas. At present, irrigation farmers are being hurt more than most people in the community by the increases in fuel charges. Not only do they have to drive tractors round their paddocks; they also have to pump water. In some areas, farmers do not find it economical to use electricity for pumping. Years ago they installed diesel-fuel plants because the cost of diesel fuel was lower than the cost of electricity, and it would now cost a great deal of money to change over to electricity. Therefore, I

believe that irrigation farmers have a special case to receive some consideration from the Government by way of reduced charges.

Another way in which an attempt could be made to find more money to encourage development and perhaps cut some Government charges would be to carry out a thorough review of the Public Service. I know that the Government has a committee to review priorities, and it does a fairly good job. However, I should like to see an inquiry into the activities of ordinary public servants at a lower level. I am not criticising those public servants, but I am saying that the system is wrong. There is a lack of incentive in the Public Service, and by some means or other that incentive must be brought back.

I think it is now widely acknowledged that the committee set up to inquire into education in Queensland has done an excellent job, and even most schoolteachers admit that. When the committee was set up originally, there was a feeling that it would carry out a witch-hunt, and I can remember members of the Opposition and the Queensland Teachers' Union saying that. However, they now acknowledge that the committee has done a good job.

In my opinion, public servants generally would welcome a thorough inquiry into the Public Service to ascertain whether or not present policies could be changed to give them greater job satisfaction and, at the same time, give the public a better deal. It certainly is unreasonable that a person who applies to the Public Service for permission to do something should have to wait six months before receiving an answer.

**An Opposition Member:** You are knocking the Public Service.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** No; I am knocking the system. I believe that it is time there was a thorough investigation into the system.

The Government should also consider seriously cutting out some Acts of Parliament and some of the regulations made under them. The Public Service might run much more efficiently if that were done. The Government can always find a good reason for introducing another Act of Parliament or bringing down another regulation; but if a regulation is brought down to correct an anomaly, almost invariably another regulation has to be brought down later to amend that, and so it goes on down the line.

It is time that the Government decided that people might well be left to look after themselves a little more. In the field of consumer protection, for example, the public could be educated to look after themselves, instead of the Government's having inspectors of various types running round the country and looking after people as they do now. Perhaps the Government should change its thinking and provide more opportunities for consumer education and

fewer rules and regulations that create red tape and lead to the system's becoming bogged down.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The Public Service is much more efficient today than it was 20 years ago, but one should never be satisfied with less than perfection. Perfection may be impossible to achieve, but we should always be reaching for it. If we do that, the Public Service will be a more worthwhile organisation.

There should also be a reduction in duplication of State Government and Commonwealth Government departments. It is absolutely crazy that there should be Commonwealth departments dealing with education and Aborigines.

We must come to grips with some of the problems caused by Governments that give things away too easily. For instance, it came to my notice recently that there is a reciprocal arrangement between Australia and New Zealand on unemployment benefits. When there are so many Australians out of work, surely to goodness there should not be an agreement under which persons receiving unemployment benefits in New Zealand can come over here and receive unemployment benefits and then try to take the jobs of Australians. It is a national disgrace, and something that the Federal Government should look at. I have already taken steps to bring the matter to its attention.

Initiatives must be given to the private sector if we are going to overcome the unemployment problem in Australia. It is well known that the increase in the number of people in employment in Queensland has been double the Australian average for increased employment in the last 12 months. The pattern in the previous 12 months was probably similar. Because of our actions in abolishing death duties and granting the highest pay-roll tax exemptions in Australia, business has come to Queensland. We do not worry about the knockers in the Opposition, who try to stop development of our natural resources. The fact is that this Government is getting on with the job of creating employment in Queensland. If only the Commonwealth Government and every other State Government (with the exception of Western Australia, which is doing very well, too) would take some notice of the successful policies of the Queensland Government, I am sure the amount of unemployment in Australia would be reduced much quicker.

**Mr. Davis:** You have been talking about unemployment. Can you tell us how to overcome it?

**Mr. Frawley:** If he wasn't in here, he would be unemployed.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** That is probably true. I have just pointed out that, because of the incentives given by the Queensland Government to private enterprise, employment is increasing in this State at double the Australian average. That is the solution to unemployment. The solution is not the socialist dream of the A.L.P. Money is spent on railway lines, roads and similar projects if on investigation they are shown to be worth while. I am all for expenditure of that sort, but not expenditure on some of the other airy-fairy schemes of the A.L.P. We have a great State.

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I wish that my friend opposite—

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Row): Order! The honourable member for Brisbane Central is interjecting from other than his correct seat.

**Mr. Davis:** I am acting leader.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will be acting leading out the door in a moment.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** We have a great State, and I do wish that Opposition members would stop knocking it, when they criticise the Premier, the Treasurer and the Government as a whole as much as they do. They should remember that some people might think that by some miracle one day the A.L.P. might become the Government. When those people hear A.L.P. members criticising some of the good things we do, it makes them think twice whether they should come to Queensland in case the A.L.P. should become the Government. That is holding back a little of the development of Queensland.

Another problem I should like to bring to the attention of the House is that of vermin in rural areas—feral pigs and kangaroos. This year a firm called D. Wild Pty. Ltd. indicated that it wished to establish a factory at Goondiwindi to process feral pigs. That project has the support of the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board, the Department of Primary Industries, the Queensland Government, the Queensland Graingrowers' Association and the United Graziers' Association. However, before it can set up operations it requires minor amendments to the Export Game Regulations. The Commonwealth Government has not seen fit to bring about those changes in the Export Game Regulations. It is time the Commonwealth Government learnt that, if the Queensland Government says that it supports something in Queensland, it can rely on the fact that we have the track record of being able to back up the fact that it would be good for the economy of Australia. I challenge the Commonwealth Government to accept our word and promulgate these regulations.

As to kangaroos—they are lovely animals; no-one denies that. Once the honourable member for Salisbury, who is a very lovely lady, said to me, "What a terrible thing it is to shoot kangaroos." I said to her, "Why don't you let me bring one down to you so that you can have it in your garden?" She replied, "It might eat my flowers." I then said to her, "Well what do you think they do to the farmers' wheat?" Giving credit to the honourable member for Salisbury, I think she now accepts part of our point of view and realises the damage that kangaroos do to crops. Nobody wants to see the last kangaroo shot out.

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** It would be totally impossible to do it, anyway.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** That is completely correct. The Minister is a practical farmer and would know. Some country areas are absolutely impossible to fence against the entry of vermin.

I was enlightened by the change in attitude adopted by the member for Salisbury. Although she does not share my total view, at least she understands our problem. If more conservationists were to get out and see the extent of the problem, we might see the introduction of a more realistic policy and perhaps the Commonwealth would not muck us around as much as it has in the past. At times 100 acres of crops have been completely destroyed on one farm.

**Mr. Davis:** Being a farming person myself, I can quite understand the problem. But the United States has imposed an embargo on kangaroo skins.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I am pleased the honourable member mentioned that.

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** Maybe there would be an improvement if we issued the tags on a three-monthly basis instead of on a 12-monthly basis. They would not be stored and at least people would use them.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I accept the Minister's comment.

To return to the interjection by the honourable member for Brisbane Central—it is a fact that the United States is not continuing to import skins from Australia. However, I am sure that as we have a programme for the control of shooting the United States will accept the fact that the species is not in danger and eventually we will be able to export skins. What I am saying is that the Commonwealth Government should trust the Queensland Government and accept the fact that we are capable of looking after our kangaroo problem. If it did that, we would not have this situation in which we have to wait months and months to get more tags.

I might add that the Commonwealth Government should take our advice not only from an economic but also from a political point of view. The Queensland Government

has been a much more successful Government politically than the Commonwealth Government has been. It is time that the Commonwealth Government realised that it should consult more often with the Queensland Government.

I now want to raise some social aspects concerning my electorate. In Goondiwindi there is a bowls club that is short of ground. Next door is a small area of hospital land. I know that the Minister for Health is giving consideration to this matter, but it is taking too long. It is time that a decision was made so that the social life of the people of Goondiwindi could be improved.

I turn now to cultural needs in Queensland. As recently as last Monday, I attended the opening of a seminar on education in multicultural society, the first of such seminars conducted outside the metropolitan area by the Education Department. It was held at Stanthorpe. One thing that was made very clear at that seminar is that there is no problem in relation to the mixing of the cultures on the Granite Belt. The two cultures, the Italian culture and the traditional Anglo Saxon/Australian culture, have mixed very well together. I want to give the Commonwealth Government another piece of advice. If the mixed cultures in Queensland can live together in harmony, as they are—I have first-hand experience of this with the people who came from Italy and settled in Stanthorpe—there is no need for Al Grassby and his department. Immediately we establish a department to guarantee people civil rights by law, we start to get trouble. It is time that that department was abolished.

**Mr. Davis:** Getting back to that cultural seminar, did you—

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The honourable member takes too long to make his point.

Railway housing in my electorate is a problem. Only the other day I received a letter from Peter Beattie about the need for better railway housing. I strongly support the union in its desire to get better railway housing, but sometimes I do not support the way in which it tries to implement its wishes. I certainly support the union's desire for better railway housing and I have done much to try to improve railway housing, just as I have to improve teacher housing. I admit that a lot remains to be done and I urge the Government to give railway housing higher priority.

Teachers are very keen on the introduction of an incentive transfer scheme. It is interesting to note that Mr. Bunny Pound of the Isolated Children's Association said that the association believes in an incentive transfer scheme, but it has very low priority. When teachers talk about caring for kids, I wish that they would emphasise the main aims of the parents of isolated children rather than this particular one from which they themselves will benefit.

My electorate relies mainly on primary industry but it also has a growing tourist industry. A few minutes ago I spoke of the contribution made by the wine industry to tourism. Visits to apple orchards should be organised. Ted Fitzgerald, the local council tourist promotions officer, is doing a great deal of work along these lines. When people cross the border at Goondiwindi, I do not see why they could not see a sheep shorn at a particular time of day. I believe that that could be organised if a group of volunteers decided that at 4 o'clock every day they would arrange for someone to shear a sheep at the bridge. That is something which people from the city would come to see.

Primary industry is suffering badly from inflation and it is greatly worried by the shortage of fuel. I give Malcolm Fraser credit for trying to beat inflation. The previous Federal Government did not try. Mr. Fraser has not allowed inflation to rise to 19 or 20 per cent, as Mr. Whitlam did.

As to the fuel crisis—

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

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** Mr. Doug Anthony, in one of his—

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Row): Order! Multiple interjections will not be tolerated.

**Mr. Houston:** Well, just take mine.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The honourable member is a lightweight; I will let it go.

New forms of fuel will be developed. Where electricity can replace diesel fuel, the problems will not be so bad. For instance electricity can be used for heating appliances and even irrigation. Cost will be involved in changing over to electricity, but electricity will help overcome the problems. Special help should be available in the change-over period. Developments like the electric car are on the way. They will not be a great help in rural areas but if they are used in Brisbane more fuel will be available for rural areas.

**Mr. Houston:** We had them before the war, you know.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I am talking about having them in quantity.

When I was in Hawaii a couple of years ago, I found that the Government was very excited about what it hoped to do with hydrogen power.

**Mr. Vaughan:** The Premier is very excited about the hydrogen car in Sydney.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** He is. The honourable member may be pleased to know that the Government in Hawaii is very confident that it will make a major contribution in helping to solve the fuel problem.

**Mr. Vaughan:** But when?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** Fairly quickly, we were told.

Another alternative, of course, is L.P.G. In addition, farmers could produce alcohol to solve part of the fuel problem. It is not practical to run tractors on pure alcohol, but it could be mixed with conventional fuel. All of these developments will eventually.

I am one who has been critical of the Federal Government for not giving greater emphasis to exemption from some of its fuel taxes to the transport and primary industries. However, the reality is that alternative forms of energy will not be seriously investigated until it appears that they are close to becoming economic. That, I am afraid, is a fact of life. We can talk about the energy crisis and the fuel crisis; but as long as fuel is cheap there will not be an incentive to produce alternative forms of energy. Therefore, while I do not like the imposition of these heavy fuel taxes, unfortunately their imposition is the only way to encourage development of alternative sources of energy before the days when we have to import the vast majority of our fuels—and they are not far away.

**Mr. Vaughan:** Are you advocating further increases in petrol prices?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** No, I am not. What I said, if the honourable member will hear me out, is that I want exemptions for primary industry and for transport; but unfortunately the reality is that, if primary producers and others do not want to pay \$20 a gallon in the not-too-distant future—and I am talking about 20 years' time—there has to be an incentive to make these alternative forms of energy economically viable.

**Mr. Vaughan:** Do you realise that Malcolm Fraser is going to make \$2,000 million out of the petrol import parity pricing policy this year?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I realise that the Federal Government will make a lot of money out of the fuel tax. However, while I am making it patently clear that that Government should have some scheme of exemption for primary industry and transport, some means have to be found to encourage the production of alternative energy for the majority of fuel users in Australia. The Federal Government has assured us that in respect of fuel supplies primary production will be on the list of essential services.

As to primary production—the formation of the National Farmers Federation is an excitingly new proposition. It will be fraught with great problems; but, if farm leaders adopt an attitude of goodwill, then I am sure that that organisation will be a success and will play a significant part in helping rural members of Parliament, whatever party they belong to, to achieve greater justice for rural people.

I feel, too, that greater priority must be given to the Economic Services Branch of

the Department of Primary Industries. However, I know—I read it in "Queensland Country Life", I think—that some of these reports are taken out of context. A report of Miss Jan Thompson on income equalisation deposits was mentioned in the Federal Parliament. I read that report very carefully. What Miss Thompson said was that in many instances I.E.D.s are not worth using, but that they are worth using if in the future, a primary producer expects to have no taxable income, a loss or an income below \$3,600. I thought that that was the thinking of the Government when it introduced I.E.D.s: that people could put money aside in good years without paying tax on it so that there was money available for use in the event of drought, hailstorms or other natural disasters. Miss Thompson did say that I.E.D.s were useful for this purpose. As far as I am concerned, that is the purpose of I.E.D.s. They were not introduced as a tax dodge.

I notice that the Economic Services Branch of the Department of Primary Industries recently issued a booklet on the cattle and wool futures market. This is the sort of information for which primary producers are looking, and I compliment the department on taking the time and trouble to try to give primary producers the technical information they need to help them run their businesses.

Australian rural exports this year are estimated at \$6,500 million, and Queensland produces 20 per cent of all Australian farm production. Farm production is a very important sector of the Queensland economy. There needs to be more understanding of city and rural problems. All of us heard about the bumper wheat crops last year, but we do not hear much about the people who cannot even plant their wheat this year. I think this is perhaps something about which the Press should be a little bit more aware. Similarly, when we in the country growl about our roads, I think we should understand some of the problems of people in the city who, because of traffic jams, take a long time just to drive a few miles. I think all of us have to work a little bit harder to try to overcome this gap between city and country relations.

The Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board has a very important part to play in trying to overcome some of the problems of rural people. I might mention that national parks in Queensland are quite often a real headache to surrounding landholders, and I think that the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board must conduct serious negotiations with national parks officers on how they are going to control vermin in national parks. I do not think that the National Parks and Wildlife Service should be allowed to open up new parks until it has the personnel to manage them. If any new park is gazetted, it should be handed back to the grazing industry to lease until the personnel are available to

look after it. Similarly, I would say that sections of some of our existing parks should be leased back until sufficient personnel are available to properly manage them. In this way the parks would be preserved for prosperity, but they would not be as much of a headache to adjoining landholders as they are at the moment.

The fruit and vegetable industry is a very important one in my electorate, and I wonder whether members realise that details revealed in the Australian Bureau of Statistics' publication on Queensland commodity production for 1977-78 stated that the fruit and vegetable industry is valued just behind the total Queensland cereal crop. The table in this publication shows that on the gross value of the six major agricultural industries the fruit and vegetable industry is the fourth most valuable.

**Mr. Kruger:** Talk to me some time, and we'll sort out these problems.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I think we must take cognisance of the fact that section 92 is part of the Commonwealth Constitution. There is no doubt in my mind, and I am sure the honourable member for Murrumba would agree with me, that most fruit and vegetable growers would like to see the introduction of some sort of stabilisation scheme. But they cannot tell us, and I am sure the honourable member cannot either, how we can introduce such a scheme when there is free movement of fruit and vegetables across the border.

**Mr. Kruger:** It would need a lengthy discussion.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** It would.

We must find ways in which to help this industry. The Department of Primary Industries provides a good service to it, but before its officers criticise fruit in the market they should perhaps go and talk to the industry leaders. I say this very strongly: officers of the Department of Primary Industries are employed to help primary industry, and I think that if they want to criticise they should at least talk the matter over with the industry leaders before they publish their criticism.

My electorate is very diversified. It has many problems, but I can assure the people in it that I will continue to bring their problems to the attention of the Government. I will do everything I can to try to get justice for some of the greatest people in Queensland.

**Mr. MACKENROTH** (Chatsworth) (12.41 p.m.): After listening to the member for Sherwood on Tuesday of this week give his critical assessment of the Labor Party's policy after he had obtained one of our policy booklets, I tried to obtain a copy of the Liberal Party policy booklet so that I could give an assessment of that party's policy here today. But a member of the Liberal Party said to me, "Really, we don't have a policy booklet. What we have are

draft statements on any issues that arise. What we do basically is make up a policy whenever the need arises. We oppose the Premier whenever we think it is needed and then support him in both the Cabinet and the joint party room." Unfortunately, I will not be able to give a critical assessment of the Liberal Party's policy here today because, as all members know, that party just does not have one.

**Mr. Davis:** That is the National Party policy on the paper in my hand.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Is it?

The main subject on which I should like to speak today is the S.G.I.O. and its involvement in land speculation.

On a number of occasions in this Parliament I have asked questions of the Treasurer regarding the S.G.I.O. financial involvement in the Carindale Housing Estate. On the last occasion, 5 June 1979, the Treasurer stated that the S.G.I.O. did not have \$20,000,000 invested in Meadowlake Pty. Ltd., a subsidiary company of Finance Corporation of Australia. I will concede that point to the Treasurer, that is, that the S.G.I.O. does not have \$20,000,000 invested in Meadowlake. However, I propose to set out here today how the S.G.I.O. will have over \$20,000,000 invested in the Carindale venture.

My original choice of words regarding how the money was invested may have been incorrect. However, my information regarding the S.G.I.O. involvement was not. It is my intention to prove that the S.G.I.O. has stepped in to help salvage the southern-based finance company, F.C.A.

As most members would be aware, F.C.A. is experiencing massive liquidity problems brought about by F.C.A. involvement in land speculation. Their major problems came about in March of this year when they sought approval for a new debenture prospectus. At that stage the N.S.W. Corporate Affairs Commission asked F.C.A. to justify its real estate asset values. This effectively stopped them from raising much-needed funds and, as they needed these funds, they have turned in Queensland to the S.G.I.O.

In Queensland, the S.G.I.O. had already proved a popular milking cow for F.C.A. as, at this stage, the S.G.I.O. has already purchased the Carindale shopping site and then 50 per cent of the Carindale Housing Estate. So it is proving no problem at all for F.C.A. to sell the rest of the estate to the S.G.I.O., no doubt at a handsome profit which will bolster their ailing cash reserves.

To fully understand the intrigue of the Carindale development, one would need to go back to the original owners, Carina Development Pty. Ltd. Carina Development was owned 50 per cent by the Cambridge Credit Corporation Ltd. and 50 per cent by Inter-capital Investments Pty. Ltd. Inter-capital Investments was in turn owned 100

per cent by Cambridge Credit. The acquisition cost of Carindale by Carina Development is set out in that company's balance sheet as at 30 June 1973 as \$1,671,464.

I have a copy of that balance sheet, which I propose to table at the conclusion of my speech along with a number of other documents proving the figures I am quoting.

In December 1973, when Cambridge Credit started having liquidity problems, they sold the land that was to become Carindale to a newly formed company, Meadowlake Pty. Ltd. At that stage, Meadowlake was owned 50 per cent by Finance Corporation of Australia and 50 per cent by Cambridge Credit Corporation. The acquisition cost for Carindale by Meadowlake was \$7,749,376. All of that money was loaned to Meadowlake by F.C.A. When Cambridge Credit went into liquidation, F.C.A. became the 100 per cent owner of Meadowlake.

That exercise shows how finance companies push up the price of land for home buyers. The purchase price had risen in a short period of time by over \$6,000,000 and not one block of land had been subdivided. However, F.C.A. was not to miss out on the big profits as the S.G.I.O. was to step in and provide them with all the money they wanted.

The first purchase by the S.G.I.O. from Meadowlake was on 23 December 1977, an area of 12.69 ha, or 31.35 acres, for a purchase price of \$2,400,000. This is equivalent to \$76,555 per acre—surely an incredible price for undeveloped land. In an answer to a question, the Treasurer refused to tell me the purchase price of the land, claiming that it was not practice to supply details of financial arrangements between the S.G.I.O. and its clients. That land is the site of the new Carindale shopping centre being built by the S.G.I.O. at an estimated cost of \$10,000,000. I suggest that the Treasurer would not answer the question because of the astronomically high price paid for the land.

The next involvement by the S.G.I.O. in the Carindale venture was to purchase, in the period 1 January 1978 to 30 June 1978, a 50 per cent interest in the undeveloped land at Carindale. Because the S.G.I.O. has not adopted the normal practice of changing ownership of the land at this stage, I am unable to provide evidence of the purchase price. However, my informant, who has been accurate with all information regarding this deal, has told me that the purchase price was \$6,000,000. The company records of Meadowlake would tend to substantiate this figure, as the balance sheet for the year ended 30 June 1978 shows an amount of over \$6,000,000 being paid from Meadowlake to F.C.A.

The next involvement is even more intriguing, as I claimed on Channel O on Monday of this week that the S.G.I.O. had now purchased the whole of the Carindale

estate. This claim was denied by a spokesman for the S.G.I.O., who stated that the S.G.I.O. had a 50 per cent interest and was having discussions with Meadowlake regarding the purchase of the remaining 50 per cent.

If that statement by the spokesman for the S.G.I.O. is correct, some misleading information has been given to the Brisbane City Council, resulting in a bond of \$3,091,293 being returned to Finance Corporation of Australia. At the council meeting when the aldermen made the decision to return the bond, the following information was supplied to aldermen, and I am quoting from the council agenda for that meeting—

“By letter dated 26th June, 1979, the State Government Insurance Office (Queensland) advised that it has acquired a 50 per cent interest in the residential subdivision known as Carindale, and is now a joint venturer with Meadowlake Pty. Ltd., and because of circumstance, sought Council consent for the assumption of all of Meadowlake Pty. Ltd.'s rights and obligations under the rezoning agreement, in order to release Finance Corporation of Australia Limited from its bond, and if necessary, substitute its own bond therefor.

“It has subsequently been advised that the State Government Insurance Office (Queensland) will become the registered proprietor of the balance of the lands, the subject of the rezoning agreement, which have not been developed or sold.”

Further to that, when the chairman of the Planning Committee of the council, Alderman Ardill, was questioned as to the S.G.I.O. involvement in the Carindale estate, he informed the council that the S.G.I.O. had purchased the whole of the estate. So the Brisbane City Council made the decision to return a bond of \$3,091,293 believing that the S.G.I.O. completely owned the Carindale estate. Now we are informed by the S.G.I.O. that it owns only 50 per cent and is negotiating for the other 50 per cent.

Whilst I have no doubt that the council will not lose anything financially from the decision to return the bond, as the S.G.I.O. has guaranteed the performance of the development, it is indeed very disturbing that the Brisbane City Council, as it appears, has been given misleading information on which to make a decision.

I said earlier that I would set out to prove that the S.G.I.O. will have over \$20,000,000 invested in the Carindale venture. From the information that I have supplied, and the documents that I will table, you will see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the shopping centre is to cost \$10,000,000. A 50 per cent interest in the residential land cost \$6,000,000, and one would assume that the remaining 50 per cent interest will cost at least an equivalent amount, which will give the S.G.I.O. an investment of at least \$22,000,000.

I challenge the Treasurer to refute the claims that I have made here today, and I challenge him also to provide Parliament with full details of the S.G.I.O. involvement in Carindale. If the purchase of this land is a good investment, the Treasurer would have nothing to lose by providing these details. The details that I am asking for should not be secret, as any public company in a similar position would have to supply details to the Queensland Commissioner for Corporate Affairs. These details would be then available to the public. Therefore I can see no reason why the S.G.I.O. should be in a privileged position in Queensland.

In my opinion, what the S.G.I.O. has done is pay an excessive amount of money for the purchase of this land, which can result only in higher land prices for purchasers. I have completed an exercise based on the purchase price of \$6,000,000 for 50 per cent of the estate. I have estimated from the plan of the estate that, at the time the S.G.I.O. purchased a 50 per cent interest in the undeveloped land, a further 1,800 blocks were to be subdivided. This works out at a purchase price of \$6,666 per undeveloped block.

Add to this development costs, which at the present time in the city of Brisbane average out at \$8,000 per block, and the average cost to the developer, before marketing the land, will be in excess of \$14,500 per block. Is it any wonder that at the present time land on this estate is being quoted at \$13,000 to \$23,000 per block, when similar blocks at Eastland View, Greenmeadows or Belmont Heights are priced at \$11,000 to \$14,000 per block? That exercise is complete justification for asking the Treasurer to release all the details of this deal.

On the evidence I have, it would not appear that the purchase of the Carindale development is a competitive business deal. In the past the president of the National Party, Sir Robert Sparkes, has been quoted as calling the S.G.I.O. a hydra, a many-headed monster, competing on privileged terms with private enterprise. I wonder if Sir Robert would still go along with his comments about the S.G.I.O. competing on privileged terms after he looked closely at the details surrounding the Carindale deal. From my observations of the deal, no private enterprise company would have entered into the project at the prices I have outlined, or become involved in a venture which has seen one company—Cambridge Credit—go bankrupt because of its over-speculation in real estate, and a second company—F.C.A.—experience financial difficulties owing to its involvement in development land.

The S.G.I.O. is favoured in its investment in real estate speculation. Firstly, it is Government guaranteed, a guarantee which no other developer has; secondly, it has massive investments in fields of commercial ventures, and therefore is in a position to transfer

profit to any unprofitable aspect of its business. Only time will tell if the S.G.I.O. can make a profit from the Carindale venture. However, if it does, it will have made it to the detriment of many thousands of Queenslanders by being part of a deal which will push the cost of land way beyond the price of many people. That will apply to land not only at Carindale; the higher prices at Carindale will lead to higher prices on other estates throughout Brisbane. What I am saying is that it is immoral for this Government to allow the S.G.I.O. to be a part of a deal which will support private speculative land developers in pushing their prices higher. As well, the glamour boy of the National Party, Mike Evans, was quoted in "The Courier-Mail" of 13 May 1977 as saying—

"The S.G.I.O. should provide much more information to policy-holders—just as private companies did.

"Private insurance companies made public a full list of investments, including the shares held.

"Policy-holders were entitled to know how much was paid for shares and from whom they were bought.

"The policy-holders would want to know whether the shares were a good investment".

Perhaps this will be the only time I will agree whole-heartedly with Mr. Evans.

The S.G.I.O. should provide details to its policy-holders. More importantly, full details of the S.G.I.O. operations should be made available to this Parliament. As all contracts entered into by the S.G.I.O. are Government guaranteed, the Parliament of Queensland should be in a position of knowing where S.G.I.O. money is invested and be able to debate the merit of these investments.

Later in my speech I shall outline how the Education Department has cancelled the proposed purchase of the Carina South State School on the Carindale Estate. However, Meadowlake did not miss out completely in obtaining money from the Queensland Government for education purposes. The Works Department has purchased 1.519 ha, or 3.75 acres, adjoining the Carina State School for \$98,500. This is equivalent to \$26,264 per acre.

I have been informed by local real estate agents that the average price for a 2½ acre block close to Carindale is \$20,000 to \$30,000 per block, or \$8,000 to \$12,000 per acre. A recent sale of 10 acres, approximately a mile from Carindale, was for \$76,000 or \$7,600 per acre.

I hope that from the evidence that I will provide here today two things will happen: firstly, the Treasurer will stop hiding behind the cloak of secrecy surrounding the S.G.I.O. and provide this Parliament with not only details of the Carindale deal, but all business dealings of the S.G.I.O. as well and, secondly, the Brisbane City Council will have a close

look at how a situation developed allowing it to make a decision on false and misleading information.

I table the relevant documents to prove the point that I have been making.

*Whereupon the honourable member laid on the table the documents referred to.*

At this stage, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take the opportunity to congratulate Mr. Speaker on his election to his high office. This is the first opportunity I have had to offer my congratulations to him. I want to say, however, that I was deeply concerned at some of his remarks upon his election as Speaker.

Among other things he said—

“May I say at this juncture that in the House this morning one of the members of the Opposition appeared not completely attired, nor did he conform with the Standing Orders of this Parliament. I can give you a complete assurance that that will be his last appearance if he continues with that attitude.”

I have read Standing Orders very closely and nowhere in them can I see any reference to how a member of Parliament should be dressed. Our dress is covered by a rule of this Parliament, a rule made by the Speaker. That rule concerns the wearing of ties and coats.

When I made the decision to enter this Chamber without wearing a tie I knew that, because at that time there was no Speaker, I could not be asked to leave. As there was no Speaker, there was at that time no rule applying to our dress.

Knowing that the Government had the numbers, I realised that Selwyn Muller would be elected as Speaker. Before his election I approached him in the lobby and told him that I would put my tie on before he was elected Speaker so that he would not be put in the embarrassing position of having to eject me from the Chamber after his election.

The member for Windsor (Mr. Moore) and the member for Merthyr (Mr. Lane) expressed concern at my dress. Surely it is the responsibility of a member of Parliament to look after his electorate.

**Mr. Kruger:** Some people have said that they would sooner see your hairy chest than bald heads.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** That is quite correct.

I am surprised at the extreme conservatism that pervades this Chamber. In Canberra, members of the House of Representatives are allowed to enter that House in safari suits and without ties. In South Australia, because of the hot conditions, members are allowed into Parliament in shorts. Yet in sunny Queensland we are faced with having to wear ties and long-sleeved coats. But the matter does not stop there.

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

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Before the luncheon recess I was speaking about the conservative attitude of Queenslanders and I was about to refer to a statement by Mr. Justice Kelly on Monday of this week in which he told male jurors that they should wear ties and coats. Surely we should not expect jurors to wear ties in Queensland.

**An Honourable Member:** Or anywhere.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Or anywhere, for that matter.

We ask jurors to perform a duty and give them a paltry \$20 a day to do so, and we are now telling them how to dress. Men working as labourers on building sites or elsewhere in the community could be wearing a tie for the first time in their lives. We expect them to sit in court all day, pay attention to what is going on and not feel uncomfortable. If jurors want to attend court in short-sleeved shirts, they should be allowed to do so. The only thing that matters is that they should perform their duty and make sure that justice is done.

**Mr. Scott:** Are you saying that clothes don't maketh the man?

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Clothes do not make the man, and that is very much so in this Parliament. I do not think it is necessary for members to wear ties in Parliament.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Row):** Order! I trust that the honourable member for Chatsworth is not reflecting upon the authority of the Speaker in this Parliament. The Speaker has the authority to make certain recommendations concerning mode of dress. That authority has been vested in the Speaker and he has made certain recommendations. Those recommendations will be adhered to in this Assembly. If the honourable member wants to make general comments about the House, that is one thing, but if he is reflecting on the authority of the Speaker, I will have to disallow it.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am saying that it should not be necessary, in my opinion, for members of Parliament to wear ties.

**An Opposition Member:** You have one on now.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Yes, I am wearing a tie.

Before the luncheon recess I said that members of Parliament are required by the rules of this Parliament—and the rules are made by the Speaker—to wear ties. But I do not think that it is a proper rule. I believe that I have every right as a member of the Legislative Assembly in Queensland to stand here and put forward my views on the rules of this Parliament. That is what I am doing today. I have not reflected in any way on the Speaker. I even prefaced my remarks by congratulating Mr. Speaker on his election.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I suggest, then, that the honourable member is advising the House that he is not reflecting on the authority of the Speaker; that he is merely commenting on dress in the Chamber.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** I am not reflecting on Mr. Speaker in any way at all. I am saying that it is about time we changed our rules.

On his election, Mr. Speaker congratulated the parliamentary staff on the work that they have done and concluded his remarks by assuring them that he would reciprocate their loyalty. The low wages paid to parliamentary attendants have been brought to my attention. I have been informed by the accounts section that married men working here receive only \$146.80 a week gross, and that 19-year-olds working as attendants receive \$85.50 a week gross. Our parliamentary attendants do a tremendous job. I have no complaints against any of them. They have done anything I have asked them to do for me, and have done it very quickly. I ask honourable members to support me in trying to get an increased wage for them because the paltry sum they are paid is insufficient for anybody to live on.

**Mr. Scott:** The Premier has tried to damage the integrity of the staff of this Parliament.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** He has done many things.

**Mr. Frawley:** Do you know that I got only £67s. 6d. a week when I worked here as an electrician?

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** I have it on fairly good authority that the honourable member has so much money that the National Party asked him for \$8,000 for the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. That is what I have been told, and I usually get fairly good information.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I rise to a point of order. I ask that the honourable member withdraw that statement. I have not been asked to donate \$8,000 to anyone.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** I withdraw my statement that he was asked. The point is that, because of a sum of money he did not donate, we all know we will never see the member for Caboolture on the front benches opposite.

I now turn to the arsenic contamination at Carindale. I hope it is the last time I speak on the subject in this Parliament. I have received a lot of criticism from members of Parliament for the stand I have taken. The laughs now coming from members on the other side show what they think about that stand. However, I have a copy of a report that vindicates my stand. It reveals that everything I have ever said about the arsenic contamination is true. Therefore, today I

will talk about it briefly so that members are aware that the stand I took was a correct one.

**Mr. Powell:** We wouldn't doubt your integrity.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** I would hope not.

**Mr. FRAWLEY (Caboolture):** I move—  
“That the report be tabled.”

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** I have already spoken to Mr. Speaker about seeking leave of the Parliament to have the report incorporated in “Hansard”. He has stated that, as the report is not lengthy, he will approve of its incorporation if Parliament gives me leave. I will get to it later and will then ask leave of the House.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Row):** Order! Does the honourable member seek leave of the House?

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Not at this stage. I will later in my speech.

This is the type of material that I received from Meadowlake. They sent me a letter, part of which stated—

“Progressive assessments have been made by these consultants and, in March last, they were able to confirm that a minor area of the estate shows residual deposits of arsenic above the levels which have been accepted by the World Health Organisation.”

It goes on to state that it is one area only and that it comprises less than 1 per cent of the total estate.

On 24 November 1978 I received a letter from a firm of solicitors, Henderson & Lahey, telling me the same thing—that it was one area only, comprising 1 per cent of the estate. They suggested that perhaps I should keep quiet or they would take legal action against me.

On 21 February this year I received a letter from Meadowlake. I will read the first three paragraphs—

“Further to our letter of 8th January, 1979, we wish to report further developments in respect of arsenic contamination on the Carindale Estate.

“Recently, a further 193 samples have been taken in and adjacent to the well defined liquid effluent disposal trenches because it appears that some of our earlier work in sampling this area misled us and we want to clearly define the area.”

That is exactly what I have been saying all along—that their claims were untrue. However, by 21 February they had found out that what they had been saying was untrue and that my statements were correct. The letter continues—

“We are also pleased to report that a Government Committee has been formed by Dr. P. G. Livingstone, Director-General

of Health and Medical Services, to consider this whole problem and the developer's representatives have attended some of the discussions."

We ought to look closely at the date of that letter—21 February 1979. The point is that the committee was set up, I believe, at the end of January this year. With that in mind, we need to consider what happened at the end of last year. The Liberal Party saw fit to depose its then leader, after which Sir William Knox became the Health Minister. The only reason that committee was set up was that Sir William Knox, instead of Dr. Edwards, was the Health Minister. I had asked Dr. Edwards on numerous occasions to set up a committee and to find out exactly how bad the problem of arsenic contamination was. However, every time I asked, he refused my request. I asked Sir William Knox once to set up this committee, and he did so.

I am pleased to report that he has sent me a copy of the committee's report. It completely vindicates the stand I took on the arsenic contamination, as it states that everything I said is true. It states that there are three areas of arsenic contamination and the developers of Carindale have been ordered to remove the contaminated soil before any development is allowed. I lay on the table the letter I have referred to and ask that it be incorporated in "Hansard".

(Leave granted.)

Whereupon the honourable member laid on the table the following document:—

"Office: Administration Building  
"George Street  
"Brisbane  
"Telephone: 21 7403

"Minister for Health  
"14th August, 1979.

"T. Mackenroth, Esq., M.L.A.,  
"Member for Chatsworth,  
"860 Old Cleveland Road,  
"Carina, Qld. 4152.  
"Dear Mr. Mackenroth,

"I refer to your enquiry regarding arsenic contamination in the Carindale area.

"The Committee to investigate this matter has reported that the potential risk to the public can be reduced to insignificant levels if the following actions are taken:—

1. In Area C

- (i) The undergrowth is cleared;
- (ii) Any collections of metal containers are removed and disposed of safely according to well established refuse management principles applicable to potentially dangerous chemical containers.
- (iii) Soil is removed from around grid points B8 and G13 to a radius of at least 10 metres and depth of 400 mm.

- (iv) The whole area is ploughed or rotary-hoed to a depth of 300 mm, leaving the trees undisturbed, but ensuring that any buried containers are detected and that any "pockets" of arsenic are disturbed and mixed with uncontaminated soil.

2. In Area B

- (i) Soil is removed from corridors of land, centred on the effluent irrigation furrows, 4 metres in width and 400 mm. in depth (below the surface of the bottom of the furrows).
- (ii) The closed pipeline ascending from Bulimba Creek to the commencement of the effluent irrigation furrows is removed with the soil immediately adjacent to it.

3. In Area A

- (i) All soil in and immediately adjacent to all of the old building sites is removed to a depth of 500 mm.
- (ii) Soil over the whole area is ploughed or rotary-hoed to distribute evenly any remaining arsenic so that the area contains a final arsenic concentration (to be determined by analysis) of less than 50 ppm.

4. Soil removed from all areas is transported to the foundations of a road which is to be constructed across Area A, the contaminated material to constitute the central core of the roadway with "uncontaminated" soil enclosing the sides and upper surface. The roadway must be built on high ground with its foundations above ground water level.

5. The work recommended in Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4 to be completed by the developers of the land (Meadowlake Pty. Ltd.) at their expense, and supervised by officers of the Division of Public Health Supervision and Brisbane City Council.

"The Director-General of Health and Medical Services has been advised that the Brisbane City Council is in agreement with the proposals as outlined above but the agreement is conditional upon the road location and standard of construction being satisfactory to the appropriate authority, that the performance of the work is adequately monitored and that there are no services laid within the Zone of influence of the contaminated soil.

"Yours sincerely,

"W. E. Knox,

"Minister for Health."

Mr. Frawley: Do you say you should take all the credit for that?

Mr. MACKENROTH: Definitely, and I will also take credit for having the Education Department decide not to purchase a block

of land it had intended to buy in the area. I have a letter from the Minister for Education that states—

“After comprehensive investigations by officers of my Department and the Departments of Health, Works, Primary Industries and the Brisbane City Council, it has been decided to retain the original site, Portion 463, Parish of Bulimba, at Weekes Road, Carina for the proposed Carina South State School.

“An alternative site is not now being considered.”

The honourable member for Caboolture would well remember that I raised the subject of the Education Department's buying a site that was contaminated by arsenic, and it is now going to build—

Mr. Austin interjected.

Mr. MACKENROTH: What I have done is ensure the continued good health of the Liberal voters at Carindale, and those people, with everyone else in my electorate, will still be alive to vote on election day in 1980. I would also like at this stage to thank “Sunday Sun” and Channel O, the only two media groups that had faith in the things I was saying and were prepared to report them. I thank them for the coverage and assistance they gave me in getting the Health Department to set up an inquiry which showed that there was arsenic contamination. The department then ordered the developers to do something about it.

The last matter I would like to raise today concerns rental rebates for Housing Commission tenants. I would like to thank the Minister for Works and Housing for the statement that I saw in “The Courier-Mail” about two weeks ago that the Queensland Housing Commission is currently investigating a new rent rebate system. Since entering this Parliament, I have taken every opportunity to put forward my views on the need to change the rent rebate system for Housing Commission tenants and I hope the Minister will take notice of the views I have put forward when he finally makes his decision.

Housing Commission tenants in my electorate have held protest meetings. After a number of months the Minister was good enough to receive a delegation of Housing Commission tenants and discuss their problems with them. They had reached the stage of holding a meeting outside the Minister's office asking for signatures on a petition. The petition asked the Minister to do something about the situation urgently. I also took a delegation to see the Federal Housing Minister. I have prepared a submission on changing the rent rebate system and I sent it to the Federal Housing Minister and the State Minister for Works and Housing. I would like now to briefly outline that system in an endeavour once again to get the Minister to accept my proposed changes to the system. Because evictions of Housing Commission tenants are at

present at possibly the highest level ever, as the Minister would know, I hope that changes will be made very quickly. This situation has arisen because of the high rents and the fact that a lot of people just cannot afford—

Mr. Wharton: You must be out of date.

Mr. MACKENROTH: We will see about that when the Minister answers a question from me on the subject—if I ever get the opportunity to ask him a question. We have already come to the end of the second week of this session and I have estimated that perhaps by the end of the fourth week it will be my turn to ask a question under the system presently operating.

Under the present rent rebate system, a tenant on a low income can obtain a rebate after the Housing Commission has assessed his income. The unfortunate thing is that the Queensland system is based on the formula that was set out in the 1945 Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. Briefly, that formula takes into account the highest income that is coming into a home, two-thirds of the second income and one-third of any other income. Queensland is the only State in Australia that still uses that system, and I think it is about time that we thought about changing it. At present, because of this system, many tenants in Queensland are facing severe financial hardship.

The average weekly rent in my electorate has increased from \$7.15 in 1965 to \$39 at present. The full extent of the rise is best seen in a table that I have prepared. I lay on the table the document I have referred to and ask that it be incorporated in “Hansard”.

(Leave granted.)

Whereupon the honourable member laid on the table the following document:—

	“Gross weighted Minimum Weekly Wage	Rent	Rent as a % of Wage
1965	\$ c 40.70	\$ c 7.15	% 17.5
1970	53.86	8.78	16.3
1975	117.95	18.60	15.7
1979	161.29	39.00	24.1”

From that scale it can be seen that a tenant in the Chatsworth electorate on the minimum weekly wage is paying 6.6 per cent more of his wages in rent than a tenant in 1965. A tenant on the weekly minimum wage, with a rent of \$39 per week, would not qualify for a rebate.

A second example would be a tenant on a widow's pension. At present, if she has a dependant income earner living with her, she would not qualify for a rebate if that dependant earned over \$110 per week.

The system that I would like to see adopted by the Queensland Housing Commission takes into account two main factors. The first is that the rent to a person on average weekly earnings would be no higher than 22½ per cent of his wages. The second is that a dependant's income would not be taken fully into account until he reached the age of 25 years. I have here a table incorporating my proposed system. I lay on the table the document I have referred to and ask that it be incorporated in "Hansard".

(Leave granted.)

Whereupon the honourable member laid on the table the following document:—

"Proposed Scale:

Income	Proposed Rent	% of Income	Current Rent	% of Income
\$	\$ c	%	\$ c	%
60	9.00	15.0	10.85	18.0
70	10.50	15.0	13.35	19.0
80	12.50	15.6	15.85	19.8
90	14.50	16.1	18.00	20.0
100	16.50	16.5	22.25	22.2
110	18.50	16.8	25.60	23.2
120	20.50	17.0	28.90	24.0
130	23.00	17.6	32.25	24.8
140	25.50	18.2	35.60	25.4
150	28.00	18.6	38.90	25.9
160	30.50	19.0	42.25	26.4"

From this level, to obtain further figures one increases rent rates until, at average weekly earnings, the rent is 22½ per cent.

Assessed income is to be based on a tenant's income. If a tenant has a dependant working, one adds \$4 per week to rent if under 21, or \$6 per week if over 21 and under 25, provided rent does not exceed market rent.

I think that after a dependant reaches 25 years of age he should start to accept a greater responsibility. We could then start to look at the formula that was set down in the 1945 agreement. My system does not take into account the income of a dependant under 25 years, except for the addition of a nominal sum to the rent. This would then allow the dependant to provide for himself and also to save for the future. The proposed system also takes a smaller percentage of wages, shown by a drop of 7.4 per cent from 26.4 per cent to 19 per cent of the minimum wage of approximately \$160. This percentage is higher than that charged between 1965 and 1975 but is a great relief from the present charge.

I should like to see the Housing Commission adopt the system that I have proposed today and in the past to both the State and Federal Housing Ministers. I should like to see the present system changed as quickly as possible. Because of the policies of the Queensland Housing Commission, many tenants in my electorate are facing severe financial hardship. Those policies have been forcing up rents. In the last two years, rents in my electorate have risen by more than 100 per cent. Tenants in other electorates

are facing greater difficulties. Their rents are higher than they are even in my electorate. Frankly, I cannot see how these people can survive.

The Housing Commission was set up in 1945 to provide cheap housing for workers. Today, it has lost sight of that objective. It has adopted a system based on market value and is competing with the private landlord or the "slum" landlord. It is trying to get the highest rent possible. By reason of the system that the Queensland Housing Commission has adopted over the last 2½ years, I think that it is guilty of forcing up rents in Brisbane and in Queensland generally.

**Mr. Underwood:** Housing Commission rents are higher than private rents.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** Yes, and we must remember that Housing Commission houses do not have floor coverings or curtains or any of the facilities provided in a private house. The only advantage in having a Housing Commission house is that a rent rebate is provided. That is why we must change the present system as quickly as possible.

**Mr. POWELL (Isis) (2.35 p.m.):** I am happy to take part in this debate, and I begin by reaffirming my allegiance and that of the people of the Isis electorate to Her Majesty the Queen.

I congratulate the Honourable Selwyn Muller on his election to the high office of Speaker of this Parliament. In common with other honourable members, I am sure that he will carry himself in an exemplary manner and will at all times carry out the duties of Speaker in the best possible way.

I also congratulate my two colleagues who have been elevated to the Ministry in the last couple of weeks, the honourable member for Albert (Mr. Gibbs) and the honourable member for Townsville West (Mr. Max Hooper). I am certain that each of those gentlemen will acquit himself well and play a very important role as a member of the Ministry.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs** interjected.

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

**Mr. POWELL:** I am sure that they will be able to carry forward the policies of the Government in a very positive manner.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** Do you agree—

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I agree that the honourable member for Wolston is making too much noise.

**Mr. POWELL:** I pay tribute to the two Ministers who resigned to allow two back-bench members to become Ministers. The Honourable A. M. Hodges, who was lately the member for Gympie, was a very close friend of mine, and in many ways I am sad

to see him resign from this Chamber. In fact, it was Max Hodges who convinced me that I should become a member of the National Party. He performed his duty very well and served the State in a marvellous fashion in the 22 years that he was a member of this Assembly.

I also pay tribute to the Honourable Tom Newbery, who recently stood down as Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation to allow a younger person to come into Cabinet. That is something that many people have been saying should occur. However, I do not think that a person should have to resign or change his position, no matter what it is, simply because of age. Surely the ability of the person concerned should be taken into consideration. Comments now being made, usually by the A.L.P. Opposition in trying to justify its position, that the Cabinet is too old or that Government members are too old are absolute nonsense. People who are doing a job well should be allowed to continue to do it until their performance deteriorates.

**Mr. Frawley:** The Opposition will never have the opportunity to become the Government.

**Mr. POWELL:** That is quite true.

The motion to which I am speaking was capably moved by my colleague from Callide and seconded by the honourable member for Ithaca, and I would certainly pay tribute to them for the way in which they moved and seconded it.

In his Opening Speech, His Excellency the Governor made a number of statements on which I would like to comment. In the second paragraph of that speech he said—

“Following the severe drought during the 1977-78 summer, came a period of recovery for most affected areas.”

That might give people the idea that the drought is over. In fact, it is still being experienced, and there is a very severe drought indeed in a large portion of Queensland at the moment.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. POWELL:** The only drought that does not occur, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is in the ranks of the Opposition, where the usual amount of garbage is still pouring forth. As I said, there is an extremely bad drought in country areas of the State, and I should like once again to put forward a proposal on behalf of both the rural producers and the town dwellers in my electorate to overcome problems of water supply.

In five of the last seven years the Bundaberg/Isis district has suffered below-average rainfall. In fact, the first eight months of 1979, which finish tomorrow, have yielded only 301 mm of rain. That is roughly 12 in., which is less than one-quarter of the total average annual rainfall for the district. In 1978 the district received only two-thirds of its average annual rainfall; in 1977 it

received less than half. 1976 was the last year in which the average annual rainfall was received in the district. The position is serious to the extent that for the last three years we have received disastrously below-average rainfall. People who have been in this place for a number of years know that I have spoken very seriously about the problem of sugar-cane production in the Isis area, and the need for water to be supplied to the Isis electorate.

We all know that the Bundaberg/Isis scheme has been given top priority by this Government. The scheme was started in the early '70s with the idea of the State Government putting in \$8,000,000 and the Federal Government putting in \$12,000,000, but the people of the area are very grateful for the fact that it has reached the stage where the State Government has contributed over \$55,000,000 and the Federal Government about \$20,000,000. The scheme is one of great importance to the area. The district has a fairly large, closely knit population, but some people will have to leave if water is not brought to the cane-growing areas. No doubt in the years to come the wheel will turn and we will get normal rainfall once again in that area. Meanwhile it has problems. It is important to remember that it is a high production area, and naturally water is needed for high production.

If I can make only one plea here today, it is that the State Treasurer does all he can do to advance funds to take water to the Givelda area, which is a small farming community on the south side of the Burnett River that is desperately in need of water reticulation and irrigation. That water is important to the whole of the Isis Mill area, an area capable of producing 1 000 000 tonnes of cane annually, but which last year produced only 40 per cent of that amount. It is important that these irrigation works continue.

**Mr. R. J. GIBBS:** I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the state of the House.

(Quorum formed.)

**Mr. POWELL:** Obviously the member of the Opposition who interrupted me thought that my speech was of such worth that there ought to be more members in the Chamber listening to me.

Recently in Bundaberg the Leader of the Opposition made great play about the Burnett/Isis scheme, and said what an important scheme it was. Of course, we would agree with that. He tried to castigate the Queensland Government because of some slowness in the provision of funds for this very important scheme. Once again the record disproves what the Leader of the Opposition had to say. Obviously the honourable gentleman does not think that local newspapers carry news items from all over the State. While in Townsville he made big play about the importance of the proposed Burdekin scheme,

and spoke about how his party in Government would give that scheme No. 1 place on the priority list. In Bundaberg he said that the Burnett/Isis scheme would be No. 1 on the list. I do not know how many No. 1's he has, but it is quite clear that the deceit of this man is practised throughout Queensland, and very often.

The towns in my electorate also face some problems in relation to their water supply. The ratepayers in the city of Bundaberg are charged high water rates now that they receive their water from the Burnett River, a scheme that necessitated the establishment of large treatment works. I suppose that, if they were allowed to water their lawns as often as they liked, they would be prepared to accept those high rates. However, the watering of lawns is a bone of contention in the city of Bundaberg.

The chief problem arises in relation to the town of Woodgate. Honourable members would have heard me speak on earlier occasions about the stupidity of the scheme to supply water to the people of Woodgate. It is a scheme that they did not want in the first place, one that was devised by some engineers who did not do their homework and one that was approved for some obscure reason by the Local Government Department and implemented.

Previously the ratepayers in Woodgate paid \$52 a year by way of water rates to be able to get a bit of mud through their taps. I invite any honourable members who think I am overstating the case to look at some of the water that comes through the taps in Woodgate. The ratepayers were reasonably happy to accept that situation. However, the Isis Shire Council, in its latest budget, and after saying that it would not increase the water rates in Woodgate, has in fact increased them to \$63 a year. That is an intolerable situation. Fancy charging people water rates for water that they cannot even get! Fancy having the hide to later increase the water rates! Yet that has occurred.

The town of Childers, too, is in dire straits. At present, the Isis Shire Council is having investigations made in an attempt to obtain more water for Childers and Woodgate. Probably the most logical thing to do will be to pump water from the Burnett River and reticulate it to Childers and Woodgate. I hope that some sort of investigation will be conducted along those lines. However, it seems that at present the only investigation carried out entails the drilling of holes in the ground in an attempt to find water in areas that are well known for not having any.

I would be derelict in my duty if I did not refer to the latest Grants Commission distribution to local authorities in my area. In last year's Budget debate I pointed to the anomalies that exist. Again I do so. How on earth the Grants Commission could decide that the cities of Bundaberg and

Maryborough should receive the same amount of money from the commission is totally beyond my comprehension and that of the people in my electorate. I would not have thought it possible that that could happen. The population of Bundaberg is 50 per cent greater than that of Maryborough, and Bundaberg encounters much greater problems with regard to the reticulation of water. Furthermore, it is a growing area. In spite of that, Bundaberg is given the same amount of money as Maryborough. That is ridiculous in the extreme.

I turn now to the Isis Shire. This year it received a total grant of \$103,000, giving an Element B amount of \$83,455, which I suppose is reasonable. Over the past year the Isis Shire Council has provided for its residents a very modern cultural centre, which is the pride of the district. In contrast, the area covered by the Hervey Bay Town Council, an area that has a considerable part of Fraser Island in it—it should have more, of course—and a population of 12,000, has an Element B amount of only \$81,000. I have no idea how the Grants Commission could come to such a decision.

Why Hervey Bay should receive a lower amount than Gympie, a town of similar size and population, yet a town of much smaller area, is beyond me. Why Hervey Bay should receive a lower amount than Warwick, another town of similar size and population but nowhere near the area, is beyond me. Something must be done by this Government to make sure that there is a more equitable distribution of moneys from the Commonwealth Grants Commission. The present policy is completely unsatisfactory. The town of Hervey Bay has a 20 per cent pensioner population and the council tries to do the right thing by the pensioners and all other residents. I do not know how on earth the council will be able to finance the town if this type of Grants Commission policy is continued. It must be stopped and a far more equitable system devised.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I rise to a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I draw your attention to the state of the House.

(Quorum formed.)

**Mr. POWELL:** Local authorities obtain most of their finance from rates levied on valuations arrived at by the Department of Survey and Valuation. Obviously the system used to arrive at land valuations must be changed. The present state of affairs is nothing short of scandalous. In my electorate new valuations have been struck and the council is levying rates on the new valuations. I cannot accept—and the people of my electorate will not accept—the proposition that the valuation of an area of land that has been rated for many, many years should be increased simply because of the value of land in a new subdivision nearby. I put that to the Minister for Survey and

Valuation. While he probably agrees privately, doubtless his department will not accept it.

The block of land on which I live is an older block in the city of Bundaberg. It has been rated for many, many years. In that time a bitumen road, kerbing, channelling and sewerage have been provided from the rates paid on the blocks of land in the area. A new subdivision has been established nearby. Bitumen roads, kerbing, channelling and sewerage were provided in the subdivision. The people buying blocks of land in that subdivision pay for those services when they buy a block of land. Yet the Department of Survey and Valuation has the hide to make me pay higher rates in line with the rates paid by people who have paid a high price for land. That is totally and completely wrong. The system must be changed. Until the Government takes its head out of the sand and comes to a realisation of these problems, we will be continually overtaxed at a local government level.

In recent years land valuations in seaside areas have increased. Rates are supposed to be levied on the unimproved value of the land. That is absolute nonsense; it does not happen. Coastal land values have increased and so, too, have the rates. We get the ridiculous consequence that people on a small block of coastal land—and frequently they are people who have retired to the coast—are paying higher rates than people living on a large block of land used for rural production. I have previously made representations to the Minister for Local Government to break the nexus so that a local authority, if it so desires, will have the right to levy a lower rate in the dollar on urban land than on rural land. I do not think this Government should be legislating to force them to do otherwise.

Within my electorate a problem has resulted from the closure of the Burgowan colliery, caused by the major customer (the Queensland Electricity Generating Board) deciding to close the Howard Power Station from 30 June next year. The fact has been well known for some time. However, if one looks at the total overall fuel requirements of this country, the closing down of a mine with reserves of about 1 000 000 tonnes of steaming coal is just stark raving mad. That is what has occurred. After many representations to the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police, the Government has given Burgowan colliery an order for 4 500 tonnes of coal to carry it through to the end of this year, allowing the mine to remain open until new orders are found.

Let us think about this sensibly. Australia imports approximately 30 per cent of its fuel requirements. That 30 per cent is largely furnace oil; yet oil and oil products are in short supply in Australia artificially—and I emphasise the artificiality of it. If the Federal Government had been fair dinkum three years ago when it spoke about

fuel shortages, it would have advised industry using furnace oil to convert to steaming coal. But, no, it didn't. It prattled on and continued to make fuel an income earner for itself. We are still importing 30 per cent of our total fuel needs, most of which is furnace fuel, when we have in the ground countless millions of tonnes of steaming coal that ought to be used. Certainly many industries in the area are converting from oil to coal.

**Mr. Hansen:** Furnace oil is again doubling in price.

**Mr. POWELL:** Yes, and that ought to be enough to make those in the boardrooms of this country think sensibly and change now from oil to steaming coal. Then small mines such as Howard, which produces first-class steaming coal, will be able to project themselves further and become not only revenue-earners for the Federal Government through taxes but also employers of labour—as they ought to be.

Therefore, I hope that companies will see sense—and that the Federal Government will help them to see sense—by changing from furnace oil to steaming coal so that we can use our resources in the best possible way. Some people claim that we do not have sufficient coal. They do not know the truth of the matter. They ought to read the Coal Board's report, in which they will see that we have something like 9 000 million tonnes in known reserves at the moment—over 200 years' supply.

As I said earlier, it is my belief that the Federal Government is using fuel purely as a revenue earner, and it ought to be exposed for doing it. It ought not to be putting up the price of fuel as it is at the moment. I cannot agree with the type of policy it is putting forward. It is ridiculous in the extreme for it to be forcing up the price of fuel in the manner in which it is, particularly for the country people. My colleague the member for Peak Downs gave figures yesterday showing that people in country areas use their personal motor cars about four times as much as people in provincial and city areas. Of course, that stands to reason. It is their only means of communication and transport. So people in country areas are being overburdened by this ridiculous taxing policy of the Federal Government. Certainly, from 1 December income tax will be lowered—and so it ought to be. However, there is no excuse for the Federal Government to recoup that loss of income tax by bumping up the price of petrol when people in country areas are at such a disadvantage in their transportation costs.

A lot of publicity has emanated lately from various people who, I suggest, have not done their homework, claiming that because of the cost of petrol, people should be buying and driving cars with smaller engines. What they are ignoring is the cost of maintenance. Those of us who live in country areas

and do very high mileages know that the 8-cylinder motor car is probably cheaper to run over a period of time than is a 4-cylinder or 6-cylinder car, simply because the engine is understressed and the repairs required are far fewer.

**Mr. Simpson:** Often more economical, too.

**Mr. POWELL:** As the member for Cooroora says, they are often more economical. That has certainly been my experience.

In his Speech the Governor mentioned education. One-third of this State's Budget is spent on education. This Government has always accorded education a very high priority, and the current campaigns being conducted by various Opposition members about education are untrue. As I said, one-third of the State Budget is spent on education and a revolution has occurred in education in this State within the life of this Government. I was a teacher under the previous Labor Government, and what has happened in the 20-odd years since then in the education field has indeed been remarkable. The Government now provides excellent facilities for education. Opposition members keep harping on the fact that our expenditure per head on education is less than that in other States, but it is obvious when one looks at the cost of building in Queensland as compared with that in other States that we need to spend less on education than they do.

A new primary school is being built in my electorate ready for the opening of the 1980 school year. This is an absolute necessity if we are to continue to educate primary-school children in the West Bundaberg area as well as we have done in the past. Because another high school will be absolutely necessary in the near future, there is a need for the Education Department to purchase land at Hervey Bay for it. The Education Department needs to plan in conjunction with local authorities so that it knows in advance where the larger areas of population will be situated. So I am hopeful that in the near future the Education Department will purchase land for a new high school at the Urangan end of Hervey Bay.

The Isis District and Kepnock High Schools are also desperately in need of extra class-room accommodation. They still have stuck in their yards some outmoded demountable buildings that ought not to be there.

Unfortunately we face a philosophical problem in that there are people in the Education Department who believe that the only buildings erected in the future should be of the single-storey open-area type, in spite of the fact that a recent Western Australian survey showed that open-area education was no better than normal class-room education and, in some cases, worse. I believe that it is high time the Education Department took notice of what teachers are saying and erected the type of buildings

they want. I can assure members that most teachers would prefer single-storey high-set buildings, so that there would be shelter for children during inclement weather.

There has been a considerable amount of controversy in East Bundaberg over the replacement of the East Bundaberg State School. The time must shortly arrive when the Education Department, together with the Works Department, will do something about this problem because the South Bundaberg and Kalkie State Schools are both becoming overloaded with pupils. This is occurring because parents refuse to send their children to the East Bundaberg State School. It seems only logical that there must be some move to solve this problem in the near future.

In his Speech the Governor also made reference to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education, of which I am proud to be a member. I believe it has been one of the better select committees in Queensland. There is a great need for the establishment of other select committees. I would like to draw attention to Standing Orders which refer to reports of select committees. Standing Order 203 is headed "Proceedings on Consideration of Draft Report". The last sentence reads—

"A Member disagreeing with the Report may require a statement of the reasons of his disagreement to be appended to the Report."

I do not believe that the Standing Orders cater fully for minority reports. I had a disagreement with the other members of the select committee in respect of one of the reports, but, because the Standing Orders do not allow for it, I was not able to present a minority report. I believe that if the Parliament is to be served in the best interests of everyone by select committees—and I think that the case for select committees is very strong—there should be adequate provisions in the Standing Orders for the presentation of a minority report in conjunction with the majority report. As I say, at present the Standing Orders do not provide for this, and I hope that, when Mr. Speaker calls the Standing Orders Committee together in the near future, that situation will be rectified as soon as possible.

The Governor also referred to health and the amount of money spent in that area in this State. In my electorate there are four hospitals of great importance administered by three hospitals boards. The Bundaberg Base Hospital is about to be extended with the erection of a new maternity section. Of course, that is long overdue. At the moment, there is an argument about whether or not an operating theatre should be included in the new maternity section. I am sure honourable members would appreciate the ridiculousness of the situation if an operating theatre were not included in the maternity section, which is geographically a fair distance from the general area of the hospital. An emergency could arise in the

maternity section and an operating theatre might not be available in the general area of the hospital.

The Health Department has to see reason in this matter. Like so many other honourable members, I am sick and tired of seeing clerks in Brisbane making decisions about country areas without either going to the areas concerned or appreciating the problems involved. It is certainly pleasing that members of the forward-planning committee of the Bundaberg Hospitals Board have been able to come to Brisbane occasionally to discuss this matter. It is important that sense should prevail in this matter.

The Leader of the Opposition, when he was in Bundaberg recently, made great play about hospital boards and said that the Queensland Government was derelict in its duty because it does not appoint women to hospital boards. He chose a very bad place in which to make that statement, because there are women on each of the hospitals boards at Bundaberg, Isis and Maryborough. Perhaps he should have made that statement in one of his Central or Southern Queensland Press releases.

The Hervey Bay Hospital is in great need of a physiotherapist. A number of people from Hervey Bay have to travel to Maryborough two or three times a week for physiotherapy treatment. This should not be necessary. The Maryborough Hospitals Board has agreed that this is bad and is to apply to the Health Department for funds to enable it to appoint a part-time physiotherapist at Hervey Bay. This is needed, and it is about time again that the Health Department had a sensible look at the matter. I will be listening carefully to the Minister for Health, when he makes his speech on the Health Department Estimates, to ensure that provision is made for a physiotherapist at Hervey Bay.

This morning I asked the Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism a question about navigation lights in Hervey Bay, especially in association with the Urangan Boat Harbour. Probably everybody knows the details that he gave in his answer. I think that his inexperience was shown in the last paragraph of the answer, which read—

“The Maryborough area has more navigation lights than any other port in Queensland outside of Brisbane.”

Of course that is true, and that is how it should be, because there are so many sandbanks and little reefs in the area. But the point I make is that the driver of a boat coming towards the Urangan Harbour, who is not familiar with the area, cannot see the lead lights or the beacons because of the lights on the mainland at Urangan and Torquay. I would like to suggest that, where navigation channels are involved, the Department of Harbours and Marine should liaise far more often with local authorities in the placement of street lights and other warning

lights on the mainland. Lights that, according to the Minister's answer this morning, have a range of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 miles or  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 miles probably are adequate for a boat travelling at 6 knots. However, the Minister said that virtually all these lights are for the benefit of small craft, and as most small craft travel at about 20 knots a visibility of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 miles is totally inadequate. Anyone who has travelled in a small boat with a planing hull will know that that is true.

Hervey Bay is a major tourist area and an incredibly large number of boats use the Urangan Boat Harbour. The Department of Harbours and Marine is to be congratulated for providing a new parking area for use in association with the Urangan Boat Harbour. However, at the same time, the Department should also have the sense to look towards increasing the intensity of the lights in the leads so that incoming boats, particularly visiting boats, will have a definite and clear indication where the channels are and be able to enter the harbour without any problems and without running on to sandbanks, rocks, and other obstructions.

It is very important that the Department of Harbours and Marine and the Minister should be made aware of this problem, and I am hoping that very shortly the Honourable Max Hooper will see his way clear to visit the delightful area of Hervey Bay, where he will find that the climate is more pleasant than in his home town or in Brisbane, and see for himself the problems associated with these lights.

As I mentioned earlier, cultural activities in my area are alive and well. I am pleased to see that the new Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation is in the House at the moment, and I remind him of the very enjoyable time that he had while he was in Bundaberg recently for the National Party State Conference. He listened to the Bundaberg Concert Band and the Bundaberg Youth Orchestra, both of which are top-line musical groups, and we are looking to the department for its assistance for these groups of young people. Those who train them do so entirely voluntarily and it is very important that they should be supported as much as possible.

Briefly, I should like to commend the Forestry Department for the way in which it goes about its work. On Fraser Island, the Forestry Department has come under extreme criticism from a very few narrow-minded people who seem to believe that the department's work is not good enough. As has been stated in this Chamber many times before, the department has been on Fraser Island for 100 years and no part of the island has been logged more than twice. Anybody who looks carefully at the island will know that that is true.

The department should also be congratulated for the open days that it conducts. Recently the Elliott River forestry officers in my electorate conducted a family day and invited people from the town to come

to the forest and look at the work they are doing and show them over the area. I assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and members of this Assembly that that offer by the people concerned, in their own time, was very much appreciated by the people who took advantage of that offer. I hope that the Forestry Department will make it an annual event. I think it is a worthwhile policy and one that should be advanced, because it is important that the people of Queensland understand the work of the Forestry Department and know that it is using techniques that are recognised and appreciated world wide.

In the couple of minutes left to me, I wish to comment on the employment situation in my electorate. Fortunately, the latest figures that have been issued show an increase in employment and a decrease in unemployment; but I cannot see any major increase in employment occurring until the Federal Government adopts a far more positive attitude to taxation policies. The Federal Leader of the Opposition recently condemned out of his own mouth the former Labor Government. When criticising the latest Federal Budget, all he had to say was, "The Government has had three years to rectify the matter." The question that must remain in the minds of the Australian electorate is, "Why did the present Government have to rectify anything?" If Mr. Hayden says that the Government had three years to rectify the matter, it is quite clear that Labor in its tenure of occupation of the Treasury benches made a great mess of things.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. WHITE** (Southport) (3.15 p.m.): First of all, I congratulate His Excellency the Governor on his Opening Speech, and assure him of the loyalty of those in my electorate whom I represent in this House.

I offer my personal congratulations to Mr. Speaker on his election. He has my confidence; I know that he will carry out his duties in an excellent manner.

Today I would like to cover three subjects. Members of the Opposition who were a little vocal a few minutes ago will at least have the benefit of knowing that I intend to be fairly brief.

The first subject I should like to deal with is the lack of a Public Accounts Committee in this Parliament. At the outset, I would like to correct an impression that may have been given earlier this week by the technical aspect of the introduction in the House of a motion that the Liberal Party, or certain members of the Government, were opposed to the setting up of a Public Accounts Committee. Let me make the point that the opposition from certain members of the Government, including the leader of the Liberal Party, came on a technicality. The leader of the Liberal Party is not opposed to the introduction of a Public Accounts Committee in

this House, and there are many members of both parties on the Government side who would like to see it.

I have spoken on this subject before. I spoke about it at some length last year. I remember the Government Whip speaking about it at some length last year, as did the leader of the Liberal Party both here and publicly outside. There is great support for the introduction of a Public Accounts Committee. I intend to raise this subject periodically until we get a Public Accounts Committee. I realise the subject has been raised many times before, and it will continue to be raised until such a committee is set up.

Basically the purpose of any Government is to raise and distribute finance. We have a very good system in this House covering the raising and allocation of finance. Under that sound system, the money is allocated by Ministers. The allocation of the money is one thing, but public scrutiny of its spending is another. That is something that a Public Accounts Committee should be empowered to do. As far as I know, this is the only Parliament in the Commonwealth that does not have a parliamentary Public Accounts Committee. Of course, that raises the question: Why?

It is no use saying, as some people do, that the Auditor-General presents an annual report. As most members know, all the Auditor-General is empowered to do is to make sure that the money has not been spent improperly. He does that very well. However, we do not have any supervision of the spending of the money to ensure that it is spent by the departments in the most economical way to achieve the best possible results. The function of a Public Accounts Committee is to examine public accounts and report on them to Parliament. That committee should be invested with all the powers of a royal commission. It should be able to call witnesses; it should be able to direct that evidence be taken on oath; it should be able to take action against unco-operative witnesses; it should be able to investigate any accounts it wishes to, or any matter that is referred to it. I am not criticising Ministers or departments when I say that the problem at the moment is that back-benchers and the public do not have access to accounts to see how the money is being spent.

What is more, the knowledge that a Minister or a public servant in a department could be called before this committee at any time would encourage a certain amount of concentration of effort and, at the very least, the very best of housekeeping within departments. Furthermore, a Public Accounts Committee would allow parliamentarians, and back-benchers in particular, direct contact with public servants. At the moment, this direct contact is not very great at all. I believe that it is to the detriment of back-benchers and public servants that there is not more communication between the two.

Greater communication would allow back-benchers to understand the somewhat mysterious workings of various departments and public servants who, by the nature of their task, are isolated from the problems that confront the elected representatives would be exposed to those problems and allowed to understand them more fully. So greater communication between back-benchers and public servants could only be for the benefit of both sides.

I repeat what I said earlier—what I am saying is not a criticism of Ministers, the system or public servants. I believe that the Ministers in the Queensland Government and the public servants who support them are doing a great job. What I would like to see is some exposure to back-benchers and to the public of the way in which that job is done. They have nothing to hide. I believe that most of them would welcome such a system. To use a cliché, justice must be seen to be done.

Ministers in Queensland have nothing to hide. I have spoken to Ministers from other Parliaments, including the Federal Parliament, and most of them welcome such a system because it ensures not only supervision by the Ministers over their departments but also outside supervision, and this keeps those departments on their toes. There is no doubt that some outside scrutiny by a parliamentary Public Accounts Committee does lead to economies and improvements in various departments. There is no doubt that the Federal Ministers at least welcome the system.

In this Parliament, the back-benchers are not involved sufficiently in the process of government. Various proposals to have assistant Ministers and so on have been put forward but they have not been accepted. Perhaps they should not be accepted. However, the committee system is not effective enough. How are we ever going to get the most effective and experienced Ministers in this Parliament if the back-benchers are not involved in the process of government as they learn their trade on the back benches? Apart from all the other reasons I have given, the appointment of a Public Accounts Committee would allow greater involvement by back-benchers.

This is just another call for a Public Accounts Committee. As I said in reply to an interjection from the member for Brisbane Central, the call will continue to be made by me, and I suspect by other people as well, until such time as the system is introduced.

**Mr. Davis:** You had your chance to debate that one point yesterday, in relation to the Government aircraft.

**Mr. WHITE:** If I had been here, I probably would have done.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** Oh, come on. Don't try the sleight-of-hand trick here.

**Mr. WHITE:** Instead of criticising, Opposition members should be grateful that someone is saying this.

I now turn to a subject that I believe is of even greater importance to the Parliament of this State than the appointment of a Public Accounts Committee. I refer to the system of parliamentary travel allowances that is applicable to members of this Parliament. Over the past two years there has been, to put it mildly, a certain amount of discussion about this subject. It is unfortunate that during the discussions that took place in the last 18 months the opportunity was not taken to revise the system completely rather than patch it up and leave it basically as it was. The current system is keeping members of this Parliament in ignorance of what is happening in Queensland.

We all know that the present system allows a member five trips within the State in any one year (three of them with his wife), and three trips interstate (one of them with his wife). Today I do not intend to pursue whether or not we should be allowed to go outside Australia. Suffice it to say that the time is coming when a trip to New Zealand or New Guinea, rather than to Perth, must be considered reasonable if a member is to broaden his mind and see what is going on in other places. I am not discussing travel outside Australia at present.

For those five trips within the State to reasonable destinations such as Thursday Island, Townsville, Mt. Isa, Charleville and Longreach, and three trips interstate to Perth, Adelaide and Hobart, with a member's wife accompanying him on the appropriate number of times, at the rates applying about two weeks ago—probably it would be more expensive now—the cost would have been something over \$4,000.

The problem arises in that members can travel only by scheduled services. That is the nub of the problem. To me, it is not sensible to require a politician, particularly in Queensland with its vast areas and dispersed population, to travel only by scheduled air, bus or train services, because in practical terms we are all short of time. Most of us can afford only the time it takes to go by air. In Queensland, according to the figures I have—I hope they are reasonably accurate—some 251 towns have a population in excess of 200, but only 50 of them are serviced by scheduled aircraft. Most of the schedules operate only once or twice a week.

I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, honourable members and the people who make decisions on parliamentary travel, how any member can be expected to understand what is going on in the State if he can visit only some 50 towns by scheduled aircraft while the rest of the State is virtually precluded from his attention because of his inability to travel to those areas. Under the present system, a member cannot hire a car or charter an aircraft. In the circumstances, many areas

in Queensland where so much is happening are areas of total ignorance to the vast majority of members in the House.

**Mr. Austin:** Why do you think that is?

**Mr. WHITE:** I intended to answer that at the end of my submissions on this matter, but seeing that the question has been raised I will answer it now. I must ask why the current system is not changed. Without answering the question myself, however, it certainly occurs to me and others that the current system is being maintained in order to keep urban members out of the country.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** I could not agree more. In other words, you are implying that the Premier, deliberately, does not want us campaigning in areas that he holds.

**Mr. Simpson:** Campaigning?

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** That is right—campaigning and investigating. It would not be hard to campaign in the electorate of Cooroora.

**Mr. Simpson:** You would not even know where it was.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Row):** Order! Cross-firing will not be tolerated. Interjections will be made through the Chair to the member speaking.

**Mr. WHITE:** The current system would not be so bad if the committee system in this Parliament was working more successfully than it is. I referred to it briefly earlier. However, the only way that members can easily get to areas that they would like to see is for Ministers to take their committees round the State more frequently than they do. I do not want to dwell on this, except to say that that system is not working.

I am suggesting that an amount of money be allocated to each member. I suggest about \$4,000—the cost of air travel that I mentioned previously.

**Mr. Frawley:** For the Opposition, too?

**Mr. WHITE:** Yes. We have to give Opposition members a fair go.

I suggest that each member could then go to the Clerk of Parliament and say, "I want to do this trip. I want to hire a plane and then hire a car for a week so that I can fly to Longreach and drive down to Dalby to see what is going on in the central coalfields." The Clerk would make the bookings, pay the bills and do all the accounting. I am not suggesting that that money be given to members. It should be accounted for and vouched for in the normal, sensible way. A car can be hired for \$40 a day. How many days' car travel could one get for \$4,000, if one wanted to travel that way? One would certainly see something of the State. An aircraft can be chartered for \$90 an hour.

How many times do we have to go to the same place to use up our travel entitlements, and see nothing? How many times can one productively go to Mt. Isa or Longreach? We

do not want to go there all the time. Some of the places that we want to see are where the action is happening. When there is a problem at Aurukun, members should be able to get there, and get there quickly, by flying to Cairns and chartering an aircraft. How does one get to a place like Duchess, where we had a problem last year, if one cannot charter an aircraft from Mt. Isa? How does one get to Mary Kathleen or Weipa or the Central Queensland coalfields to see what is happening in those places?

**Mr. McKechnie:** Don't you think you're well enough paid to charter an aircraft?

**Mr. WHITE:** I don't. I think the present system leads to a misuse of travel—and it is one that could easily be improved.

How does one get to a place like Rundle, or to Millmerran to see its great coal deposits? How does one get to the Atherton Tableland? How does one get to know what is happening in the cattle industry if one does not have an opportunity to see how the Roma saleyards are operating and the prices being paid there?

How many members of this House really understand the State that we are representing and legislating for? How many members can say that they have travelled—and travelled recently and frequently—to all of these places to understand what is going on? Most come to Southport, and I can understand why they do that. However, it is a long time since I have been to the Millmerran area or to Stanthorpe to see what is happening in the fruit-growing industry. It is some time since I have been up to Cairns.

The reason that I am so concerned about this is that one of my responsibilities within my own party is chairmanship of the rural committee. In the last six months I have travelled a great deal throughout Queensland, but it is a very difficult operation.

**Mr. Davis:** Could I give you a bit of advice? I wouldn't keep on this if I were you; otherwise you will get your allocation cut to a quarter.

**Mr. WHITE:** If that is so, I will be up on my feet next week saying a few other things.

The only way I have been able to discharge my responsibilities and understand what is happening in the primary industries of this State is to hitch-hike my way around. I must say—and I have a great deal of pleasure in saying it—that the people who have been most helpful to me in gaining an understanding of what is happening in primary industries and have helped me get from A to B in their cars have been very staunch members of the National Party. That is true coalition friendship. It may well be that some of them have since been discharged from the National Party, so I would like to record my appreciation of their efforts.

Travel is a problem, but one that is easily solved. I believe that there are too many members voting on legislation the effects of which they do not understand; but they will never understand and will be voting in ignorance until the travel system is changed to one that will produce well-informed politicians, and therefore better legislation.

I wish to discuss one other contentious subject, and that is casinos. They have been discussed in the party room on many occasions, and I regret to say that on the latest occasion the matter was raised it received less support than it did the previous time. But the fact remains that whatever feelings people might have about gambling, there is probably more gambling in this State per head of population than in any other part of Australia. No logical argument can be put forward that one form of gambling is all right but that another form of gambling is bad just because it takes place in a casino.

Casinos have become a way of life all over the world. Many people like to gamble in them, and if it is not causing any harm to anyone else why should people be prevented from doing so while other people play bingo, go to the T.A.B. or take part in other forms of gambling. Just to prove my point, I mention that Queensland is about to be ringed by casinos. A second casino will shortly be established in Launceston in Tasmania. It is not a large town, but people believe the casino will have a future. Without the introduction of the Wrest Point casino some years ago, the Tasmanian tourist industry would be non-existent and the Tasmanian economy would be in a very sad state indeed. Very shortly two casinos will be established in the Northern Territory. In fact, I think one is already in operation in Darwin and the second will be established in Alice Springs. A casino will also be established in Melbourne in the near future and I understand that several are to be established in New South Wales, with one probably situated just across our border. I see from an article in today's paper that it will probably not be very long before a casino is established in the Australian Capital Territory. So Queensland will be ringed by casinos and there is no doubt that the Queensland tourist industry will suffer.

I would like to make the point (although opponents of casinos will never accept it) that there are different types of casinos. I am talking about European-type casinos established on one or two floors of first-class hotels. By that I mean hotels that offer all the other facilities of a hotel such as floor shows, decent restaurants, saunas, swimming-pools and so on, with a casino established in the middle of the whole tourist complex.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Any call girls?

**Mr. WHITE:** That is up to the individual. It is a waste of time to try to legislate against them.

I am not talking about poker machines; that is a different subject. It is not necessary to have poker machines in a casino. I am talking not about the Las Vegas-type of gambling, but the sort of casino that has been established at Wrest Point. I went to see it just before Christmas and was very impressed.

**Mr. Mackenroth:** Did you win or lose?

**Mr. WHITE:** To show the honourable member how much personal involvement I have in the gambling industry, I mention that I did not have a bet; betting just does not interest me. I am not pursuing the argument on personal grounds.

The argument that is advanced against the establishment of casinos is that they attract crime. I do not think that, under investigation, this argument can be sustained. The police in Hobart say that that is not the case.

The effect of not having casinos in Queensland is that many tourists are going elsewhere, and they are doing so in increasing numbers. All the natural attractions of our State, many of which are daytime attractions, will not sustain a viable tourist industry unless tourists can do as they wish at night. Increasing numbers of people like to have dinner and then spend a few hours in a casino.

The other loss that we are sustaining in this State by not having casinos is that a lot of the revenue that could be coming to the Government from casinos is going elsewhere. I believe that that revenue should not come only to the Government. If casinos were licensed in Queensland and if, by chance, one was licensed for the Gold Coast, it could be licensed in such a way that some of the money from that casino could go directly to the local authority so that it could have some money, which does not come from the taxpayers, with which to provide tourist attractions and tourist protection.

One of the things that come readily to mind is the setting up of a regular beach surveillance and patrol system, which we do not have at the moment. There are problems on the Gold Coast in maintaining surveillance on our beaches, and there are drownings from time to time. Just recently, some of the high-rise operators provided money to employ two life-savers on the beach between Main Beach and Surfers Paradise. It has proved to be a tremendous success. The council will now be asked to make this beach a permanently patrolled area, but it has its monetary problems. Also, there is no way in the world in which the present resources of the life-saving system can be extended to provide this protection. If there was a casino on the Gold Coast and if some of the money from it went to the local council, that protection could be provided. That would be a good way in which to attract the tourist and to encourage him

to return. As I have said, I am not talking about poker machines; that is a separate issue.

I say in conclusion that I would like to see a select committee established to look into the whole question of casinos in Queensland. If it was decided to extend the terms of reference of that select committee to enable it to look at the poker-machine problem, that would be all right with me. But what I am calling for now is the establishment of a select committee to look into the question of the licensing of casinos in Queensland. This issue will be raised time and time again, and I think that the best way to deal with it is to establish a select committee to look at the question, in the same way as a select committee was set up to look at education. All the issues were aired, everybody had his say, and the committee came down with some firm recommendations. That is what I believe should happen with this vexed question of the establishment of casinos in this State.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Sit down now and you will get a run in the Press.

**Mr. WHITE:** I am very grateful for the honourable member's interjection.

**Mr. BLAKE (Bundaberg)** (3.44 p.m.): In entering this Address-in-Reply debate, I wish to express my loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and also my appreciation, and that of the electorate of Bundaberg, of His Excellency's visits to Bundaberg and his personal interest in our city and district.

I should also like to congratulate Mr. Speaker on his election to his high and honourable office.

I have never before entered an Address-in-Reply debate with a feeling of such great concern for the welfare of my constituents and the State of Queensland in general. Never before in my parliamentary career have the depressed circumstances and the high unemployment of my constituents merited such concern. Those conditions exist as a result of gross incompetence by this State Government and by the present Federal Government. The Federal Government continues to pose and posture, duck and weave around broken promises like a brogla in a mating dance, accompanied by Mr. Anthony, the Premier and the National Party making mating noises to the multinationals in the background. Until now, the Liberal-National Party Government in Canberra has maintained a one-leg stance, claiming it was necessary to let unemployment rise to get inflation down or, on the alternative leg, let inflation rise to get unemployment down. It was not possible, it said, to do both. Now, in its latest—and I hope last—Budget, it has withdrawn both legs and fallen flat on its face and admitted that neither employment nor inflation will decrease but that both will rise together.

One would still expect to find in this State the spirit of co-operation and goodwill that once prevailed to overcome such adversities

as we are suffering today. Instead, the National Party has initiated and forged a climate of confrontation and disunity unheard of hitherto in this State and still foreign to the Australian way of life in the rest of this nation. This confrontation, this disunity and this attempted suppression has been condoned, aided and abetted by the Liberals in coalition with the National Party.

When an individual or an organisation is continually blaming others for its own failures and shortcomings, it is a sure indication of its own incompetence. The Premier and his Government are a prime example of that. When Whitlam was in power, they claimed that Queensland's ills were the fault of the Labor Party. Now that their own lot are in power in Canberra, they claim that it is Fraser's fault—not in any way Anthony's fault or the National Party's fault, but, according to the gospel of the book of Joh, just the fault of Fraser and the Liberals.

I grant that there is much more justification for complaint with the Fraser-Anthony Government than there ever was with the Whitlam Labor Government. It was Fraser and Anthony in Opposition who deadlocked the Senate, with the assistance, of course, of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen and his infamous appointment of Senator Field.

**An Opposition Member:** What happened to him?

**Mr. BLAKE:** I do not know what happened to him; but I could guess what justifiably happened to him.

They blocked supply to a Labor Government because, they claimed, the Budget deficit was too high and unemployment was too high. Therefore, they reasoned, the Labor Party was unfit to govern. The present Federal Government has produced much higher unemployment and higher deficits, and, judged by their own criteria, Fraser and Anthony are unfit to govern and should resign. They will not, of course; they will have to be forced out. In fact, the only policy they have for shortening the dole queues is to ask the unemployed to stand closer together. Remember—and remember it well—that until recently the Premier was claiming all the credit for having the Fraser-Anthony Government elected to power in Canberra. Remember his saying, "I put them there." Now he is busily throwing political back-somersaults in a desperate attempt to disown them and save his own political hide.

In these times of rocketing fuel prices and short fuel supplies, it is timely to remember the abuse hurled by Fraser, Anthony and Bjelke-Petersen at the former Whitlam Government for attempting to borrow \$2,000 million to keep control of and develop our own natural resources, to connect our national gas fields by a national pipeline system to Australia's main consumer centres. This would have greatly lessened our dependence on costly imported oil. By comparison, the Premier's Federal mates

have so mismanaged the economy that already they have borrowed over \$2,000 million just in an effort to stabilise the Australian dollar. Even so, the Australian dollar has lost 23 per cent or thereabouts of its previous value on the world's money markets. On top of that, foreign ownership of this nation's natural assets has strengthened and tightened. If this transfer of our nation's assets continues at the present rate, in the course of one generation our children and grandchildren will become simply the manipulated work-force for foreign employers, instead of being joint owners or joint partners in their own heritage and destiny.

To cap this unholy mess, we are paying prohibitive Arab oil prices for our own locally produced oil which, incidentally, represents 70 per cent of our present needs. Of course, the chief initiatives for imposing these Arab oil prices on local oil came from Doug Anthony and the National Party, the darlings of the multinationals.

**Mr. Jones:** Back in 1973 he was advocating it.

**Mr. BLAKE:** Yes. He was advocating it then, and when it eventually did come his major justification for imposing Arab or O.P.E.C. oil prices on our locally produced oil, which represents 70 per cent of our needs, was, "We would have had to do it sooner or later." That was his justification for doing it. Just look at the present scurry by the Federal Government and the Queensland State Government to try to get hooked up to those natural gas fields! A Labor Government would have had that half or fully done now had it been given time and allowed to do so.

Where does the major benefit of this rip-off from your pocket and mine, Mr. Deputy Speaker, go? Some of the rip-off goes to the oil companies, but most of it goes to the Fraser Government as revenue to subsidise its unequalled mismanagement of the national economy. The blame for its inescapable and highly inflationary effect on the economy and on the average household goes, by Government direction as usual, unfairly to the unwitting and unsuspecting unions. The meagre efforts by the Queensland and Federal Governments to fund research into alternative fuel sources indicate that they will hasten slowly in this direction as long as the present rate of over \$2,000 million (\$2,057 million last year) of annual rip-off from locally produced oil goes to the Government and the oil companies. Meanwhile its inflationary effect on food prices will be blamed on the alleged inefficiencies of primary industry and other essential users who are involved.

Incidentally, when we look at the excuse that it is necessary to pay Arab oil prices to stimulate oil exploration in Australia to give us self-sufficiency, it is an interesting fact that for the first six months of this year, as compared with the last six months of last year, the number of exploration holes

drilled fell very dramatically, because those companies are transferring the bulk of their activities from Australian waters to other areas overseas.

**Mr. Jones:** That puts the lie to Camm's blaming the Federal Labor Government in the old days.

**Mr. BLAKE:** It certainly does. It shows that it is only one of the excuses why we must, as Mr. Anthony says, charge O.P.E.C. or Arab oil prices for our locally produced oil.

**Mr. Davis:** When we raised this last year, not one National Party person supported it.

**Mr. BLAKE:** Not one. I would have expected some of the National Party chaps with rural connections to support it. They would have known the implications in imposing the Arab oil prices on our economy. Even if they were not interested in the effect of the inflation rate on the economy, surely they were interested in the effect on their own business enterprises and on primary industry as well as on the cost of food on the table.

**Mr. Booth:** You would have sold the country to the Arabs at one stage.

**Honourable Members interjected.**

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Row):** Order! The Chair will not tolerate multiple interjections.

**Mr. BLAKE:** The honourable member said that the Labor Party would have sold the country to the Arabs. Of course, he is totally wrong. It was going to borrow money to keep control of our assets in Australia. What his party is doing is selling the country. The honourable member may be on his last legs, but he should think of the generations who follow him.

**Mr. Casey:** They are interested only in today's dollar.

**Mr. BLAKE:** Definitely. As I said, the sum of \$2,000 million in oil levies is all that is helping the Liberal and National Country Parties keep afloat under their shocking mismanagement of the economy. Without that sum of money, they would be sunk.

It is absolutely ridiculous to put forward the argument that we must have dearer fuel because it will induce less usage and conserve fuel. What a stupid argument that is when it comes to essential industry! Essential industry can reduce the use of fuel only by reducing production. Even if the price of fuel is up, essential industry has to use it just the same and either take the kick itself or pass the increase on in the price of the product. The idea that essential industry will use less fuel is absolutely ridiculous and I refute it as an excuse for dearer oil prices to any essential user, whoever he may be.

The Government provides millions of dollars by way of export incentives. It spends about \$4,000,000 on a publicity campaign to

boost national pride and to inspire our youth to hoe in and work harder at non-existent jobs. At the same time it espouses a "dearer fuel and less use" philosophy for essential users, who can use less fuel only by producing less. What humbug! And the Federal Government talks about export incentives. Apparently it does not realise the past and present export record of our primary industries.

Opinion polls show that the public have fully realised that the Federal team for which the Premier claims the credit for installing in Canberra is incapable of managing the economy. The same polls show that the people would sack that team at the ballot-box if they had the chance. If Government members need any further convincing of the mess that the present Federal Government has made of the economy, they need only read the official statistics just released showing that in the first month of this financial year—I repeat "the first month"—the Fraser/Anthony Government has run up a Budget deficit of \$1,046 million. That does not augur very well for a Government that has estimated its deficit for the whole 12 months at approximately \$2,500 million.

His Excellency, in his Opening Speech, referred to what his Government is doing and what it intends to do. I am referring to that also, and this is relevant to the Address-in-Reply debate. The Government is busily engaged in a programme of trying to disown the Canberra son for whom Premier Joh previously claimed credit for fathering. This Government obviously intends, of necessity, to more vigorously deny its once-proud claim to paternity of its Federal counterparts. Whether Fraser and Anthony will accept the mantle of illegitimacy or pass it back to Daddy is immaterial.

It is relevant that in 1974 the Premier called on the people of Queensland to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the Whitlam Government in Canberra by voting against its State counterpart in Queensland. They did that. The Premier no longer thinks that that is logical, valid or desirable. But the people of Queensland do and they will show their disillusionment by turning out the National-Liberal lights at the next State election. In fact they have never been turned on anywhere by the Canberra Government.

His Excellency referred to the challenge presented to his Government by cut-backs indicated already by the Commonwealth Government in the fields of education, health, hospitals and agricultural programmes. Since His Excellency's address the Federal Budget has been presented and we know for a fact what the cut-backs are. The Premier, the Deputy Premier and virtually all Cabinet Ministers have always bemoaned any cut-backs in funds by the Commonwealth. They insist that they need more, not less funds to carry on essential programmes and services. The Treasurer stated that the mini Budget meant increasing State taxes or

rationalising services. In plain language that means more taxes or fewer services. Cut-backs in the Federal Budget introduced recently mean the same thing.

Because taxes are naturally unpopular, the Premier paints himself as the no-tax hero giving out the boiled lollies, while he himself puts the bite on the Federal authorities for more money. No wonder a new Bundaberg East State School, promised by this Government since 1973, has not materialised, allegedly because of unavailability of funds. No wonder the death-dealing traffic hazards at the Walker Street railway crossing and the Barolin-Walker Streets intersection have not been attended to in my electorate of Bundaberg. The excuse for inaction is always lack of funds or "subject to availability of funds". I will have more to say about these issues later.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Are you of the opinion that Labor electorates are being discriminated against by the Government?

**Mr. BLAKE:** I believe that is so. I think the evidence is indisputable. One would have to be non compos mentis not to accept the evidence put forward previously.

This is the fourth year in a row that the Liberals and Nationals have predicted a fall in unemployment. In contrast, it is the fourth year in a row when the unemployment figures have been much higher than at the same time in previous years. For most of the time Queensland has had the highest per capita unemployment in Australia. If, as the Premier claims, Queensland is the richest State, it must also be the worst governed State in terms of Queenslanders sharing in its prosperity and employment. According to the latest official figures, 25 unemployed Australians are listed for every job vacancy. In Queensland, 34 unemployed people are listed for every job vacancy. That does not count the unemployed who have given up in disgust and despair and are not listed. Fewer vacancies are listed than at any time since 1963. That is the result of the twice-promised turn-on-the-lights programme of the Fraser-Anthony Government and the Queensland Government in partnership.

The outlook for the young unemployed is immeasurably worse. An alarming increase has occurred in junior female unemployment. There are 38 unemployed Australians under the age of 21 for each job vacancy listed. Yet Government members talk about dole bludgers and try to hang that description on all of the unemployed. Unemployment is a human tragedy at any age. Unemployment during the formative years of our young people is both a human and national tragedy. What is the point in allocating massive sums for education and job training if the policies of the Government deny the opportunity to exercise those skills and to give the satisfaction and dignity of work and service that is a person's right?

**Mr. Scott:** They have even cut retraining funds. That is how cynical they are.

**Mr. BLAKE:** That is right, and they are quite proud of their management of the economy in doing so!

There could not be a more grievous crime than training young people for jobs and then telling them there are none available. What a bitter harvest we will reap in the future from those young people whom we promised work and on whom this Government has defaulted. What does the future hold for them and for society itself?

**Mr. Jones:** Disillusioned kids.

**Mr. BLAKE:** That is right.

What does the future hold for them and for society itself if they adopt the attitude, "What's the use?" Already we are seeing reflected in rising crime, suicide, broken homes and other social problems what are obviously manifestations of the despair of these unemployed people.

The Melbourne Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research recently estimated that 550,000 people will be out of work in Australia by January. In "The Courier-Mail" of the 17th of this month there was a statement that consumer confidence had reached its lowest ebb for more than six years. Both of those facts are related. They are interrelated.

I am particularly concerned about the depression of consumer confidence and unemployment in rural areas resulting from the depressing effects of the mini-Budget and of last week's Budget introduced by the Bjelke-Petersen-sponsored Fraser Government. The mini-Budget of a short time ago pared some \$62,000,000 from the rural sector. Last week's Budget slugged the rural sector for an additional \$33,000,000. In brief, in a few short months the Fraser/Anthony Government has stripped the rural sector of the economy of nearly \$100,000,000; yet it has handed out an extra \$157,000,000 in subsidies for specifically non-rural export industries. Obviously the great export earnings of the rural industry have been overlooked by the Liberal-National coalition—or else they are just taken for granted, which would explain why incentives are being stripped from one area and put into another.

Naturally, non-rural subsidies favour the great industries of the southern States, and the rip-off of rural funds disadvantages the predominantly rural State of Queensland more than any other. One would expect to hear loud protests from the Queensland Government—and from the Premier in particular—but we hear nothing. I suppose the Premier finds it a bit difficult to attack his old pal Mal about reducing taxes while at the same time asking him to increase assistance to Queensland. Even the Premier would privately realise the difficult mathematics involved, although publicly he would not want to admit it.

Incidentally, the National Party conference in Bundaberg moved for Joh to bring back the Joh Show on T.V. at taxpayers' expense. The taxpayers consider that Joh is making a big enough show of himself as it is without spending more of their money to do it. The only person I have met outside the National Party who appreciates the Premier's use of the Government aircraft for interstate election purposes is Don Day, the New South Wales Minister for Agriculture. He says that his rural vote improves greatly when the Premier goes down there to campaign against him.

The Bundaberg "News-Mail" of 21 July 1978 had this to say—

"Delegates complained that the National Party had been portrayed badly in media reports about its fund-raising programme, the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. Controversial reports often 'belittled' Mr. Bjelke-Petersen or the National Party, they said."

I wonder what these controversial reports are? It is no wonder there are controversial reports about the fund-raising Bjelke-Petersen Foundation when we find that three or four different committees had to be appointed before a certain stevedoring company received a monopoly on the new Port of Brisbane.

No wonder there are what we might call controversial reports when we find donors to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation becoming members of Government boards and authorities, and see well tried and diligent members of the Government passed over for promotion to Cabinet in favour of a person who has spent only a few short years in this Parliament but has given \$5,000 to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. The situation reminds me very much of the book "All the Presidents Men" in which investigative reporters from the "Washington Post" uncovered the illicit activities of the Nixon administration in the United States.

One of the revelations in the book was that the man who was supposedly second in charge of arranging campaign funds for Nixon was charging visitors \$10,000 to talk to him about Government business affairs. No wonder there are these controversial reports that the Nationals themselves have referred to. People are saying, and they have a right to do so, that there is a parallel between what was described in that book and what is taking place in Queensland today with the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. No wonder people are questioning it, and if these activities continue they will, of course, continue to question them.

I now return to the rural sector, on which so many Queenslanders depend either directly or indirectly for employment. I wish to point out to both the State and Federal Governments the inadvisability of stripping the great export earning rural sector in an effort to transfer the stimulus to export manufacturing industries. I have already mentioned this transfer of support from the rural sector to export incentives for industry

by the Federal Government, and the State is too ready to increase freights and other charges at the first sign of some prosperity in the rural sector. Prosperity is often very short lived in primary industry. Many industries depend predominantly on export markets. Prices go up, production goes down, and vice versa. Rarely do we have a run of good production and good prices together, and history has shown that the slump from good to bad is often very quick.

These industries need time to consolidate. Mortgages, repairs, neglected maintenance of plant, etc. have to be seen to. The money that primary industry receives from good markets flows quickly to the community and to the Government, particularly in provisional tax, but it does not flow as quickly into the pockets of the primary producer. His recovery and consolidation takes time, especially if he is to withstand even the normal vagaries of the weather and the market.

Let us look at the heavily export-oriented rural industries on which we depend so much for our overseas balance of payments. Let us look at wheat, other grains, beef, mutton and wool. They are presently solid, but have not been so for long enough to recuperate and consolidate. Their markets, historically uncertain as to oversupply and price, are also subject to the fluctuations of overseas economies and, most importantly, subject to the political expediencies of the countries which form their export markets. As a matter of fact, most of these industries are suffering from drought right now, and draining of all these funds, raising levies (such as the export beef inspection levy) and freights because of short-lived prosperity is a sure way of debilitating these industries and the communities that depend upon them for employment. This is a certain way of ensuring that the heavy cost of resuscitating these industries will arise immediately they fall on hard times through the vagaries of the weather or the market. The inability of the Primary Industry Bank and the Commonwealth Development Bank to cater for the rural sector's needs gives a truer perspective of rural economic health, or ill-health, than the Government-inspired headlines about enormous cash flow to the rural sector.

Before I leave primary industry, I think I should spend some time dealing with the concern of the grazing industry, in particular, about the aggregation of land by foreigners and meat-exporting companies. This is occurring, in particular, in the northern part of the State. Reference has been made in this Chamber, even today, to its influence on marketing and price and the eventual monopoly that will occur if this practice of aggregating properties is allowed to continue.

The Minister for Primary Industries, in answer to a question on this matter from me today, said that it was a hypothetical question. It is not a hypothetical question. It is a very real worry to members on both

sides of the Chamber. One only has to ask the member for Flinders what he thinks about it. It is a very real worry indeed. The Minister for Primary Industries said that I should ask the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources questions about foreign ownership and aggregations. I have asked him questions on this matter in this House and he has told me that there is no register and that he does not intend to prepare any register. It is time that Australia woke up. In particular, it is time that Queenslanders woke up to their Government, which says that it cannot tell them about these matters and that it has no intention of setting up a register to show the state of foreign ownership in this State.

I must pass on to the sugar industry, because so much of Queensland depends directly and indirectly on it. The market indicators at the moment reveal that there is no light at the end of the tunnel for the large section of Queensland that depends on the sugar industry, and that includes my own electorate of Bundaberg. The manufacture of harvesting and other sugar-related machinery takes place in Bundaberg. In fact, it is the harvesting machinery capital of the world. But these industries are related to sugar, and when there is a world-wide sugar slump there is a world-wide slump in the related engineering industries.

The failure of the International Sugar Agreement is a reality. The London daily price today—and I mean today—is £stg.105 a metric tonne, and that is lower than the price prevailing when the International Sugar Agreement was implemented on 1 January 1978. World sugar surpluses on 31 August 1979—that is tomorrow—are estimated to be 31 265 000 tonnes, considerably higher than the surpluses at the inception of the I.S.A. on 1 January 1978. So one can see that prices are lower and stocks are higher than they were at the inception of the I.S.A. nearly two years ago. If that is not a failure of the I.S.A., what is it?

Estimated world production this year to 31 August is 91 570 000 tonnes. Estimated consumption is 89 963 000 tonnes. That is a surplus of production over consumption this year of more than 1 600 000 tonnes. This is despite the fact that Australia and other exporting signatories to the agreement have abided by quota provisions and reduced production.

I am not suggesting that the Queensland Government or the Australian Government can control the operation of the I.S.A., but I am suggesting that both have been less than honest or realistic in their portrayal of the realities of the sugar industry's prospects. In view of the failure of the I.S.A. countries to respond, I am saying that the Queensland and Federal Governments should have come to a realistic home-consumption price for sugar long before they did.

The niggers in the woodpile in regard to the I.S.A. are the European Economic Community and the United States of America. The E.E.C. continues its export of highly subsidised surpluses. No undertaking or visible sign that the E.E.C. will alter that policy is in view. In fact, there is grave concern that it is pursuing, and intends to pursue, a deliberate policy of muscling in on world markets for export-performance entitlements in the future at the expense of those honestly abiding by the quota restrictions of the I.S.A., as Australia is.

I should like to give honourable members some insight into the way in which people in the E.E.C. are thinking. I quote from the "Canelander" supplement to "Queensland Country Life" of 23 August 1979, which says—

"Bleak prospects for sugar in the 1980s emerged from an international conference on Indian Ocean studies in Perth last week.

"French sugar authority Dr. Andre Du Castel told the conference the world sugar market was facing serious threats.

"Competition between sugar exporters for international markets is likely to become very fierce in the 1980s, and could threaten guaranteed price levels under world agreements," Dr. Du Castel said."

He said the threats were—

"Increasing sugar production towards self-sufficiency by many developing Asian and African countries.

"Greater penetration of industrialised markets by new natural and synthetic sweeteners."

And this is the significant part, because he comes from France—

"Stronger competition from beet sugar, and increasing acceptance of it as an alternative which would remove 'political domination' from the world sugar market.

"A rapid fall in 'free market' exports from 60 per cent at the beginning of this century to 29 per cent at present."

Of course, that is a great worry to the industry in Australia because of the percentage of export sugar it has, and particularly because of the amount of free-market exports it has.

Of course, the Australian industry has to carry these low prices, and now it will have to carry the reduced economy of scale by adhering to reduced quota production. In addition to that, as the Leader of the Opposition told the House this morning, there will be 300 000 tonnes stockpiled in Australia by the end of this season. Had the United States of America signed the agreement, the stockpiling provisions of the agreement would have been interest-free to the local industry. As it is, a loan of \$27,500,000 to the sugar industry from the Commonwealth will be needed to finance the stockpiling of that sugar. As the Treasurer

said in reply to the Leader of the Opposition this morning, he cannot indicate what the rate of interest will be.

All these additional costs are being added to the industry at a time when it cannot possibly meet imposts of that type and at a time when agreements are coming up for renegotiation or extension on a much more depressed sugar market than that which prevailed when they were negotiated originally, and in fact at a time when supplies and prices are more depressed than when the International Sugar Agreement came into being. The failure of the I.S.A. is now a fact, and I am worried about the effect that that will have on sugar communities, business communities and employment.

I say here and now that it is time that both the State and Federal Governments did some serious thinking about financing employment schemes in the sugar areas, which have had no part—and I stress "no part"—in the recent high returns to primary industries. I suggest that they consider the type of employment scheme put forward to this Government and to the Federal Government by the Bundaberg City Council, and supported by me in representations, under which, instead of paying the money away to people on the dole and getting no return, the local authority would meet a third of the cost, the State Government a third of the cost and the Commonwealth Government a third, and many worthwhile drainage projects, and so on, could be carried out in the community.

In the brief time left to me I make an appeal to the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads and the Minister for Transport. Instead of writing to tell me that the carrying out of necessary improvements will be subject to funds being available, I ask them to do something about the Walker Street railway intersection, where two more deaths occurred recently, and the Barolin-Walker Streets intersection where a young lady was incinerated recently. All I hear from them is that roundabouts and signs will be provided subject to the availability of funds. Instead of running around making lolly heroes of themselves by saying what they will give away, let them give a little service where it is urgently needed.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. SIMPSON** (Cooroora) (4.26 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I support the motion moved by the honourable member for Callide for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech by His Excellency the Governor in opening this Parliament. I shiver when I think what the Opposition would do if it had its way. It would remove the Crown as the head of Parliament and replace it with a presidency and a republic. We must defend the democratic system we have in Queensland.

I congratulate Mr. Selwyn Muller on his elevation to the high office of Speaker. I also congratulate Mr. Max Hooper and

Mr. Ivan Gibbs on their appointment to the ministry. I am sure they will do a very good job for Queensland.

Queensland's potential is immense. In addition to over 200 years' supply of that precious commodity coal, we have another precious commodity that cannot be economically transported around the world at this time—water. Industry knows that power and water are essential to its operations. Queensland has over 40 per cent of the water supply of the whole of Australia, with much of it still undeveloped. Most of our coal reserves are not yet developed. For many years previous Labor Governments in Queensland did nothing to develop those resources. Queensland had to wait for the present coalition Government to develop them, and bring about a higher standard of living for people in this State and, indeed, Australia. The net gain to Queensland is an example of the prosperity and productivity of this State.

When we develop our water resources and tap their potential for ready power, we will clearly be the premier State of Australia. Already we have been able to reduce taxes in Queensland to a lower level than applies anywhere else in Australia. State taxes could be cut even further if we were allowed to have returned to this State the tax revenue that is earned here.

**Mr. D'Arcy** interjected.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Miller): Order! The honourable member is well aware that he cannot interject from other than his usual seat.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** Because of its potential Queensland is going to progress. It is already attracting people from other States who want jobs here.

**Mr. Prest:** You should have seen the "Gold Coast Bulletin" last week.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** Well, why do they keep coming here?

**Mr. Prest:** Because they are thrown out of other States. They are white-collar crooks. This is a haven for white-collar crime.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** Is that what the honourable member really thinks?

**Mr. Prest:** Of course it is.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** The honourable member would regard as a crook anyone who makes a profit. But, of course, that is a typical socialist reply. "Profit" is a dirty word to a socialist. All he wants to do is reduce everyone to a common denominator.

**Mr. Armstrong:** It's not a dirty word when he is getting a profit, but only when somebody else is getting a profit.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** That is right. If somebody else does a little better, he says "Get back into line. You are only showing the rest of the boys up." That is his philosophy, and it is a bad one.

Quite often I hear members on this side of the House refer to "honourable members opposite". Unfortunately, because of the number of Government members, we also have some members sitting "opposite". Members on this side of the House should refer not to "members opposite" but to "the socialist Labor members opposite". If they did that they would make the position clear to anyone who attends this forum but does not know what the seating arrangements are.

I want to indicate why we have a good Government and one that brings prosperity and development to Queensland. We recognise one vote, one value and equal representation. I emphasise "equal representation". In a democracy the important thing is that the people make the rules under which they are governed. As all the people are not able to gather in one place to make those rules, they send their representatives to do so. It is important that they should be equally represented.

This vast State of Queensland has a population that is not evenly distributed and not all people have ready access to communications either in physical terms or in cost terms. In the majority of electorates in the South-eastern Division a local member is as far away as a local phone call. In fact, if such a member cared to ride a push-bike he could travel around his electorate in a morning.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** I rise to a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Miller): Order! Earlier today attention was drawn to the state of the House. I am aware of that fact and also the fact that committees are meeting in the vicinity of the House. It has already been proved that members are present.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** In some city electorates the housewives pass the office of their local State member every day. In some country electorates the housewives are several days' travel from their local member. Their only means of contact is a trunk call or a letter. However, in some instances a letter takes a week to reach its destination and the reply takes a week to reach the local resident. So there is what is referred to as the weighting of electorates whereby compensation is endeavoured to be made—I say "endeavoured" to be made—for the difficulty encountered in representing sparsely populated areas.

This system is common throughout the democratic countries of the world. In Australia, it does not apply only in Queensland. It applies more effectively in Western Australia where the number of electors, because of the difficulties of communication and access to members, varies up to 7 to 1. The sparseness of population, largeness of the State and difficulties of communication in Queensland are very similar to those in

Western Australia. In Queensland, the variation of numbers in electorates is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 1. In looking at democratic countries in the world that are somewhat similar to Australia, we should look at Canada where the variation, because of remoteness, is as high as 9 to 1 to try to compensate for lack of representation. If honourable members can visualise the vast areas of Northern Canada, they will understand why this endeavour is made.

Unlike many people here who have been brainwashed into thinking that numbers in electorates should be equal in numbers—and of course, that does not give equal representation—the people in Britain accept that numbers should vary by up to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 1. The position is the same in the United States. Both sides of the British and American Parliaments declare that that is the right and only way to endeavour to get equal representation for the people in a democracy.

It is said that there are other ways to compensate for lack of representation. It has been suggested that a member can be paid more. The inference is that he should be paid for his additional travel. How can a member like the honourable member for Gregory, who has to spend several days driving to the farthest town in his electorate, buy time? No-one can buy time. If anyone could, he would make a fortune. No-one would grow old if he could buy time. It is impossible. The argument about paying extra to compensate for lack of time and lack of ability to get around an electorate to meet people, and for people to communicate and be properly represented, cannot be solved with money.

In this equation in Queensland we have to take into consideration that we do not sufficiently acknowledge equal representation. However, an endeavour is made. For a number of years the cry has been heard for one vote one value, meaning equal numbers in each electorate. It is suggested that as that system does not apply we must be counting the fence posts or something like that. I submit that in Australia today we are ripping representation off everyone outside the metropolitan areas, both in the State and Federal spheres. Yet there is a move to escalate what has happened not only in Queensland but in other parts of Australia. That is quite wrong.

Tremendous progress has been made in Queensland in setting aside national park areas for the enjoyment of people who, in the main, live in the metropolitan or urban areas, people who find overpowering the hassles of living closely together in concrete jungles. They become suitably relieved and enjoy their leisure in the natural outdoors. We have now in Queensland nearly 3 000 000 ha of national park. If fauna reserves and environmental parks are taken into consideration, nearly 2 per cent of Queensland is set aside for recreation. When one considers the vastness of Queensland and its

relatively small population, that is an immense area. Related to Victoria, it could be expressed as 5 per cent.

In addition to its vastness, Queensland has the richest variation of land forms in the world, as is recognised by world authorities. Furthermore, it is contained in a State that is for the most part pristine by world standards. The tourist is motivated by its dramatic land forms and by its rain forests—and it is the latter category that appears to appeal to the majority of people the world over. It is accessible and, even in small aggregations, lends itself to enjoyment. Rain forests are found close to cities. They are found on the seaboard, where the majority of people—Australians and overseas visitors alike—tend to congregate. As a result, accommodation and transport facilities are available, allowing people to enjoy their beauty. Rain forests represent a vast resource for the tourist industry of Queensland and the film-making industry of Queensland to tap. I believe that in the future our rain forests will be a great money-spinner for the State.

National parks must be managed properly if they are to give the maximum benefit. In that regard we are learning from the mistakes made in other parts of the world. We are aware that the pressure of tourism in certain areas can change their character and endanger their beauty and attractiveness. These points are being managed, controlled and monitored. In Australia we are confronted with the problem of controlling fires, pests and vermin in our national parks. Control of those factors requires special management and consideration.

Further vast areas of Queensland are being considered for recreational purposes. I believe that they should be put into a separate category so that the maximum recreational use can be made of them without major detriment being effected. They should not be tied up under the national parks legislation and their use made so restrictive that multiple use cannot be considered in the future. As legislators and decision makers, we must realise that we should not today tie the hands of decision makers and legislators in the future. That is a very important matter to consider.

At the moment we have something of a fuel and energy crisis on our hands. Because of the fear of running out of liquid fuel, the matter is probably overdramatised. Most people do not like to walk. They are concerned that they may not retain their present mobility. It has been made evident in America that a country that does not meet the world parity and whose balance of payments does not enable it to purchase fuel on the world market soon finds itself faced with a shortage, with its people queued up at fuel pumps. So the problem is two-fold: fuel shortages and increased costs. Following fuel price increases, in the energy-absorbing industries that have an option we will find a shift to solid fuel such as coal.

With that conversion, the shortage of liquid fuel will ease. However, it is a complex situation over which we have no control. This has occurred because of the pressures on the world market by other countries that are in a far worse situation than Australia. They are buying up the precious fuel reserves that we still need to make up our shortfall. So I believe it is essential that we pursue a policy of self-sufficiency in fuel.

This will require the development of our reserves on the North-west Shelf. We will have to encourage, preferably by taxation incentives, the exploration for oil within Australia and on the Continental Shelf and explore the possibilities of alternative forms of energy such as tidal and wind energy and fuel alternatives distilled from grain, sugar or cassava. When discussing power alcohol we must remember that the majority of engines that run on petrol will take only a maximum of 20 per cent power alcohol mixed with petrol before major changes have to be made in their design.

**Dr. Lockwood:** I thought it was 10 per cent.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** With a 10 per cent mixture the carburettor jets do not have to be altered, but if the mixture is increased from 10 to 20 per cent the carburation system has to be altered.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Speak to the Chair!

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

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** I was trying to help you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I need no help from the honourable member for Archerfield.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** To answer the query of the honourable member for Toowoomba North—if the power alcohol content of petrol is increased, problems are encountered with carburation. The alloys in the engine deteriorate, and this needs to be compensated for.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Oh, round off!

**Mr. SIMPSON:** The honourable member for Archerfield looks as though he has been steamed up by somebody's exhaust pipe.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You look as if a car ran over you.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** I am sure it was not that that caused the honourable member's ruddy appearance, so it must have been something in another room in the building to which he retired recently.

I believe we should look at the possibility of producing power alcohol from grain rather than sugar. The sugar industry is a complex one that requires a large throughput of material. Sugar is grown in assigned areas that do not lend themselves to excess

production for the manufacture of power alcohol. There is also the problem of the limited area available in which to produce the quantity of sugar which would be required for power alcohol production if legislation was introduced requiring petrol to be sold with a mixture of 10 per cent power alcohol.

The main problem inhibiting the production of power alcohol from sugar is in the polluting by-products that would have to be dealt with. Not only do they make soil sterile when released in large quantities but they also pollute streams. The production of power alcohol already causes problems in Queensland and they would be greatly exacerbated if we increased production by the amount required to enable us to sell petrol containing 10 per cent power alcohol. Production of that magnitude would require doubling the area under cane and it would be extremely difficult to find sufficient suitable land.

On the other hand, the situation is quite different when we talk about the production of power alcohol from grain. The by-product is in fact very good for fattening cattle. Beef prices are now returning to a far more realistic level, and this by-product is quite an important commodity in feed-lot production. So I think that we should be moving in that direction if—and I repeat "if"—we decide that this is necessary in the national interest. That 10 per cent could readily be used as liquid fuel for vehicles, but in fact it would be equivalent to only the amount of fuel that is being lost at present through emission controls on vehicles.

It is one thing to find a new fuel, and it is another thing to prevent the loss of fuel that presently occurs because of emission controls on vehicles. The more sensible way to overcome the pollution problem in the major cities of Sydney and Melbourne is to provide that vehicles used in the metropolitan areas in those cities should operate on L.P.G. At the moment, it is economic to operate cars on L.P.G. only in Melbourne. Sydney is the next major city where it will be economic to operate cars on L.P.G. So we should be looking at a situation in which people who use their vehicles in the metropolitan area are compelled to operate them on L.P.G., thus allowing the more transportable fuel, petrol, to be available for the rest of Australia.

Economies in the use of fuel should be pursued in other areas, for example, the insulation of houses. At the moment, fuel oil is used to heat houses in cold cities such as Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. An alternative fuel should be used for this purpose.

We should also look at the use of solar energy, although at this stage it is not economic to use it. In talks that I had recently with some leading scientists from Japan, I was told that the economic use of solar energy is still a long way off.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Did you use an interpreter?

**Mr. SIMPSON:** No. Fortunately, they could speak English better than I could speak Japanese.

I believe that we should look at the establishment in Australia of major projects that would help to overcome our unemployment problem and cater for our future transport needs. One such project would be the construction of an electric Bullet train line from Adelaide to Cairns. Private enterprise could build such a line initially in the areas where traffic would be sufficient to make it an economic operation. The line could run first from Sydney to Newcastle, then be extended to Melbourne and Brisbane. Finally, there could be a line from Adelaide to Cairns.

One of the few railway systems in the world that run at a profit is the Bullet train system in Japan, and that is because the trains travel so swiftly. They travel at an average speed of 100 miles an hour and take many passengers who otherwise would travel by air. Such people provide a very lucrative market. But it must be remembered that Japan has a population eight times that of Australia, and that it is distributed over a number of narrow islands. In turn, we must not forget that most of Australia's population is distributed along the seaboard from Melbourne to Cairns.

It must be pointed out that Bullet trains in Japan are stopped when snow is thick on the line. Earthquakes, which occur several times a year in that country, also cause the line to be completely closed down. The system is electronically operated and it switches off when an earthquake of a certain magnitude occurs. The cost of that equipment would not have to be met in Australia, so that would be a major saving in operating a similar train here.

In my opinion, that is the direction in which we should be going in Australia in the future, not only to provide jobs but also to provide essential transportation of people round Australia. It would bring many people to Queensland and assist in the development of tourist areas along the coast.

I wish now to deal with domestic matters in my electorate. Last week-end the Governor of Queensland was kind enough to come to Noosa and open the Festival of the Waters. We enjoyed having him and his wife there, and he enjoyed travelling on the water-ways.

Because of the rapidly growing population in the area from Peregian through Coolool to Pacific Paradise and Mudjimba, there is an urgent need for a police station. Although 4,000 people live in that area, no police station has been provided. The first time the police came there and carried out a survey, they happened to go to one gentleman who had been apprehended for drink-driving. Of course, he was not really the

person they should have asked, and he said, "No, we don't want the police here." That was very unfortunate.

The second time they came, they did not carry out a proper survey because they said the area was in fact dying. That is absolute rubbish; it is growing. More and more shops are being built, more and more banks are being opened, and the number of children at the school has increased by over 100 per cent in three years. That proves how solid the area is and how much a police station is needed. I suggest that the Police Department have another look at the area and that the Minister give further consideration to the provision of a police station, certainly before another hotel is provided.

Because of the increase in population on the Sunshine Coast, problems arise with hospitals, particularly the base hospital in Nambour. People who cannot be admitted to that hospital are being turned away, and they have to be transported to Brisbane. When they come to Brisbane, on occasions they cannot be admitted to the first hospital to which they are taken and have to go to a second hospital. When one realises that it takes several years to get bed numbers increased and an operating theatre provided, one realises that now is the time to make provision for an adequate health service for the people of the area.

The Noosa Hospital has recently been extended. It is a wonderful community hospital that saves the Health Department and the taxpayers of Queensland, and Australia generally, a considerable amount of money. The local community provides the money needed to finance the operations of that hospital. It is a magnificent team effort, and it generates an awareness in the community of the value of the hospital. It is really appreciated.

A number of people who visit the area—I was going to say at holiday time, but that is nearly all the year now—find themselves caught in rips on the Noosa Bar, or on the Caloundra Bar in the electorate of the honourable member for Landsborough. Those bars are very dangerous. In addition, many people use the beaches. Accidents that happen in such places require a special service that can be provided only with a helicopter. Work has almost been finalised to provide a very adequate co-ordinated service in the area on a continuous basis. It is something that has never been done before. We have been working on it for a long time. It will help the police and the ambulance in their work. It will assist the life-savers to provide an adequate service on the coast. More will be heard about that shortly.

Town planning concerns me. Insufficient provision is made for community involvement. The community feels that the town plan should contain a reference to a limitation in the height of high-rise buildings. Most persons on the Sunshine Coast believe

that the required development and density can be contained amidst the beauty of trees and greenery rather than in monolithic, high-rise, pencil towers. They believe that the Local Government Act should be amended to provide a greenery concept in the town plan. It is the desire of the majority of the people in my area to have a beautiful place in which to live. They believe that can be achieved even with a population in excess of 250,000 persons on the Sunshine Coast.

The roads in my area are of great concern to the people who live there. We do not have a divided road all the way to the Sunshine Coast as is provided to the Gold Coast. Recently the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads said that it would be eight years before we would get that. We are doubling the numbers on the roads every six years. Imagine what it will be like in eight years' time! It will be impossible to get them all on the road. I have fears from the safety angle. The present road is holding up commerce and tourism.

We are fortunate to be getting the new Sunshine Coast Technical and Further Education College. The business study part of that college is already open. It is one that is very much needed in the area to save young people from having to come to Brisbane to get their education.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You have three minutes.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** I thank the honourable member. I hope, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you will point out to Mr. Speaker that the figures on the clock cannot be seen from here.

We have a groundsel problem in my area. There is a need for a joint approach to the problem by land-owners and the Government. We need to find the means of eradicating the pest, not just controlling it. Getting rid of that groundsel would be an excellent job for the unemployed in the area. Skills that cannot be readily taught would not be required. That is the sort of scheme we should be promoting to help relieve unemployment.

As the representative of a vast fruit-growing area, I am concerned about the dumping of products in this State such as fresh fruit pulp. I am also concerned about the introduction of diseases that could jeopardise an industry such as the avocado industry.

The Governor can be proud of the present Government he has in Queensland. It fully upholds his position as the Queen's representative in this State and as the head of this Parliament. It is with pleasure that I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Mr. AKERS (Pine Rivers) (5.5 p.m.):** Like the previous speaker, I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Callide (Mr. Hartwig) and seconded by you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in your capacity as the member for Ithaca. On behalf of the

residents of the Pine Rivers electorate and myself I affirm our loyalty to the Crown, to the Governor, and to our parliamentary system.

I also add our congratulations to those already conveyed to Mr. Speaker on his election to his very high office. His is now the job of resurrecting the reputation of this Parliament from the very low esteem in which it has been held as the result of the actions of a few members and of the misguided and, I believe, overtolerant Speaker who preceded the present Speaker.

I say "a few members" because it is really only the actions of a few members that differentiate this Parliament from any other Parliament in Australia. Those few members have succeeded through publicity in dragging the lot of us down with them. It is the new Speaker's job to control those few members, who come from both sides of the House. They are the ones who brought about the denigration of this place. It is well within the powers of Mr. Speaker to do this, and I urge him to exercise those powers.

In describing the former Speaker I used the word "overtolerant". He was proud of the fact that he went through a full session without any member being ejected, but then he was amazed to see that some members abused that tolerance. I say our new Speaker must not be so tolerant.

In describing the former Speaker I also used the word "misguided". I believe he stood in this Parliament and described the whole of it as a cesspit and used many other unpleasant descriptions. He should have named the individual members who were concerned in this denigration. Those members included a Minister who helped bring Parliament's name down. He should have done that instead of spreading the mire over all of us. The new Speaker must not fall into that same trap. He must deal with the individual culprits and not punish the whole of the group for the actions of a few.

The former Speaker, of course, was not aided by the actions of the leaders of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition. The first thing that happened when we first sat in this brand new Chamber was the moving by the Premier of a motion that stirred up all the mire possible to muddy the then totally unmarked walls.

Since then, the Opposition, under the leadership of Mr. Casey, has maintained that low level. Queensland deserves better than that. I know that the people of Pine Rivers expect better than that, and I look forward to our new Speaker, after overcoming his obvious initial nervousness and few mistakes, making sure that the people of Queensland and those of Pine Rivers do get better than that. I assure him that I will give him my fullest support in dealing with any member—Minister, back-bencher or Opposition member—who warrants discipline.

Anzac Square is a subject that has created a great deal of interest. It has been the result of two opposite decisions by the Government and therefore, unfortunately, by the joint Government parties. I am now assured by everybody that the decision will be reversed again. However, after the duplicity of the Bellevue scandal, I do not trust such assurances. I am afraid that those assurances are probably only an attempt to shut me up until after the by-elections on Saturday and that we will then see the back-hoes and bulldozers move in, the trees tumble, the tranquility of Anzac Square destroyed, the shrine desecrated, a barren expanse of concrete perched high over Adelaide Street and a two-storey-deep canyon down each side.

**Mr. Davis:** What a stupid remark!

**Mr. AKERS:** If the honourable member wants that, he can have it.

With the demolition of the Bellevue and the consequent loss of the very significant historic and architectural complex that formerly existed on the corner of George and Alice Streets, the Anzac Square/G.P.O. precinct is probably the only remaining area of such importance in the heart of Brisbane. Certainly that precinct is the only one used regularly by the general public. Any member who has any thought for the public has only to visit Anzac Square at peak hour in the morning, at lunchtime, or at any time over the week-end, to find it in regular, constant use by members of the general public.

That precinct was built up over a period of nearly 110 years. It started with the construction of the G.P.O., which was commenced in 1871. The Central Railway Station was commenced in 1889. Those two buildings were the start of that precinct, which developed into something unique in Brisbane. It is one of the best examples of its kind in Australia. Since the commencement of the railway station, Anzac Square was created with the Anzac Memorial as the centre-piece of the whole scheme, with the equestrian statue built on the central axis, the line running between the tower of Central Railway Station and the central tower of the G.P.O. The line through there provides a vista that is unique in Brisbane. The demolition of the old buildings between Adelaide and Queen Streets, which were acquired by the Brisbane City Council, has opened up that special relationship across three streets and two city blocks to anyone who has any sensitivity at all about townscape. Judging by the comments made by the honourable member for Brisbane Central—

**Mr. Davis:** I support the Brisbane City Council proposal 100 per cent.

**Mr. AKERS:** The honourable member supports the Brisbane City Council proposal?

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

**Mr. AKERS:** That is a marvellous admission from someone who is supposed to care about Brisbane!

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

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

**Mr. AKERS:** Like many other people, I did not know of the relationship between the G.P.O. and Central Railway Station until those buildings were demolished. It is a credit, therefore, to Clem Jones that they were demolished to open it up. The demolition has shown what is available and what is possible. Obviously that was part of the original design in the minds of the people who sat down to design those buildings as far back as the 1890s. However, it was not obvious until the buildings were removed.

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. AKERS:** The guffaws from the supposed local member are typical of the A.L.P.'s total lack of care about the townscape of Brisbane.

Unfortunately the buildings that were removed to expose that vista were removed to make way for another one of Clem Jones's schemes to ruin what little part there is of the historically significant townscapes in Brisbane. The member for Brisbane Central seems to support that desecration. Clem Jones damaged very seriously the aesthetics of the Brisbane City Hall by constructing the City Square at a much higher level than the original ground level, which the design of the building allowed for. There was a consequent loss of steps leading up to the podium of that building. It lost much of its imposing effect and grandeur. I will repeat those words over and over today. Imposing effect and grandeur are two of the very important concepts in this discussion today.

Clem Jones proposed to raise Anzac Square to the level of the Anzac Square Memorial. That would have destroyed much of the dominance and grandeur of the memorial, as happened with the city hall. That is the major objection by anybody who has any feeling at all for architecture and the environment to the proposal put forward by the Brisbane City Council. The project would also have destroyed the unique landscape within the square, especially the bottle trees that are just not available elsewhere in Brisbane for people to get to them easily and regularly.

The proposed scheme included a link across Adelaide Street, which created a tunnel for the full length of the frontage of the present hole in the ground. That would block any views of the square from Adelaide Street. The street furniture in the area is special as well. The paving that runs the full length of the Adelaide Street frontage, the small street lamps on the frontage to Anzac Square and the stone walls are all important to the character of the area.

After protests from thousands of people, the original Clem Jones scheme was changed twice. The 1975 version retained the large expanse and all of the adverse effects flowing from it, but brought the steps back down close to Adelaide Street on the square. The latest version has again expanded the structure over most of the square, like some great prehistoric monster advancing on the Shrine to destroy it; but, in a pathetic attempt to overcome the major objection to the previous schemes, it is kept back only a few feet from the stairs that lead up to the memorial. That dominance and that grandeur of the memorial created by its height above Anzac Square and the vista of the stairs at the end leading to the podium of the memorial are totally destroyed. It would be absolutely impossible to obtain such a vista by standing right at the foot of the stairs, as one would have to under this new proposal. That vista of the stairs and the podium creates an emotionally uplifting effect in the square, as can be experienced by anyone who stands on the Ann Street side of the memorial on the same level as the memorial and then goes down into the square. Those stairs and the podium make a tremendous difference. That is all entirely lost by the childish compromise of an answer that has now been put up.

Many other criticisms have been made of the proposal, but I will not go into those now. They have been listed in many publications, especially those of the National Trust. All I say is this: unless the Brisbane City Council abandons that scheme—unless the State or Federal Governments stop the project—great harm will be done to Brisbane. The people of Queensland will lose an important and highly significant part of their heritage. I implore anyone in the three tiers of Government who has the power to act to do so, no matter what the cost, before it is too late. I ask all members not to wait until the police are called in in their hundreds again to protect bulldozers while they ravage another beautiful part of Brisbane. We must do some work now.

I know that the Brisbane City Council has outlaid very large sums in the acquisition of the land between Adelaide Street and Queen Street in what is sarcastically termed by the people of Brisbane "the hole in the ground" and over which they hope to see an expansion of the square. I know that parking must be provided for the Bank of New South Wales. There are other legal implications. Therefore, instead of being entirely negative in this speech, I have had prepared by my office a very positive and beneficial scheme for the use of the land, which I will be submitting in a few minutes. Brisbane sorely needs a safe place for commuters to wait for buses. Thousands of people, especially during peak hours, wait on cold, windy and sometimes wet footpaths, crowded together, leaving very little room for other pedestrians, before boarding their buses. I suggest that

excellent use could be made of that hole in the ground by establishing a bus terminal there.

I have had preliminary sketch plans prepared to show that it is physically possible—and I believe economically feasible—to carry out such a scheme. The drawings that I have with me show the scheme that I am proposing. It consists of a three-level complex, with buses entering and leaving the terminal area from the Adelaide Street level. It is envisaged that bus passengers will reach the terminal by escalators from the shopping and plaza levels above the terminal area. Up to 13 buses could use this space at any one time. They would enter and park at an angle to a central island on which the bus passengers could wait in complete safety instead of standing out in the street as they have to at present.

The proposal includes shops, the associated parking area necessary to comply with legal requirements on a central level slightly below Queen Street, and an open plaza with a saluting dais and all the other things that are envisaged in this type of space a fraction above the Queen Street level. There would be a crossing over Adelaide Street only in the form of a pedestrian bridge to allow safe access from Central Railway Station to the bus terminal area.

We are talking about having a pedestrian mall somewhere in Brisbane and I would suggest, although it is not part of this scheme, that that mall be between Edward Street and Creek Street. If it were, it can be seen from these drawings that the pedestrian traffic from the mall would flow very easily into what I have called the proposed Post Office Plaza.

That would provide safe, covered access from Central Railway Station to a very large part of the central area of Brisbane as well as enable passengers to board buses in comfort. It would provide the necessary car-parking space and the open space which would allow views across Anzac Square to both Central Station and the memorial, and back in the other direction towards the G.P.O. This is necessarily only a very preliminary sketch, but it is sufficient to show that such a scheme is physically possible.

A preliminary estimate we have had made puts the cost at approximately \$5,000,000. With some more work I am sure it could be shown that the shopping and car-parking section would provide the return necessary from that sort of expenditure and, in addition, the commuters of Brisbane would be provided with a safe and comfortable bus terminal.

The destruction of the Bellevue, the intended desecration of Anzac Square, the construction of the building we are in now in such a way that it damaged the grandeur of Parliament House and many other actions of the State Government over the years, such as the cold-blooded construction of the piece of concrete spaghetti outside called the

Riverside Expressway, point very clearly to the need for some form of heritage commission in Queensland. I was very sad to see that there was still no proposal for such legislation in the Governor's Opening Speech for this parliamentary session.

Before anybody decries this proposal entirely, I ask him to find out what a heritage commission is all about. It is not necessarily just a bunch of long-haired, no-hoper public servants who have never been involved in the practical world of business and development. The Australian Heritage Commission was established under a Federal Act of Parliament in 1975, and I think that it is one of the good things that came out of the Whitlam era. It consists of a part-time independent chairman and six part-time commissioners who have various skills and abilities.

They are people who are interested in the environment and who know what is going on. Most of them have some involvement—some have a lot—in the practical world of development. They get development going; they get things done. They have a very small professional and clerical staff of, I think, about 12 to provide the research and clerical back-up that they need. They are based in Canberra. When one considers that the Federal Public Service consists of about 250,000 people, a staff of 12 to do such an important job is a very small consideration.

The basic job of the Australian Heritage Commission is to establish and maintain a register of the National Estate. The Act defines the National Estate as those places being components of the natural environment of Australia that have aesthetic, scientific or social significance, or other special value for future generations, as well as for the present community.

The National Estate includes such things as the natural environment, national parks, nature reserves, the coastline and islands, inland water expanses and other wetlands, special land forms, geographical features, caves, forests, woodlands, grasslands and areas of scientific interest in the natural environment. It also includes the man-made or cultural environment, historical buildings and structures—they either stand alone or are in groups, and the Anzac Square-G.P.O. precinct would be one such structure—historic towns and other precincts, urban parks and gardens, Aboriginal art galleries and other sites, and areas of architectural interest of both Aboriginal and European origin. The chief task of the commission is to find and make an inventory of those features.

The second main task of the commission is to advise the Minister for Environment, Housing and Community Development on any matter that might be brought before him. Other tasks of the commission are to educate the public, to carry out research and to administer places that have been given to the commission. The commission's job can be seen to be essentially advisory

and educational, with a small administrative aspect. The commission is not a body that has dominance over all of Australia. I have noticed in this Chamber and outside it that any mention of the National Estate creates a fear in people.

A properly constituted and properly run heritage commission is not a blockade to development. It is not an obstructive, unrealistic Public Service. It is something that identifies places and things that matter, just as a person would do in his own backyard. For example, a person may perhaps have beautiful trees growing in his garden and he may want to build a new garage. He just does not say, "That is where the garage is going" forgetting everything else. He stops, looks and tries to get around the trees. Surely no-one would just accept the first proposition, but I am afraid that at present that is what Government departments are doing. My own experience in the Works Department for several years prior to 1968 illustrated that to me. The effect that the Parliamentary Annexe has on Parliament House indicates that there was some lack of care about what happened to Parliament House.

**Mr. Frawley:** Weren't you on the Buildings Committee?

**Mr. AKERS:** No. I got off the Buildings Committee because it had a totally useless function.

At 5.30 p.m.,

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Miller): Order! Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 17, I propose to permit the honourable member for Pine Rivers to complete his speech.

**Mr. AKERS:** If one had any common sense, one would stop and look at the alternatives before one proceeded with anything. As I said, Government departments and private enterprise are notorious for not stopping and looking. They just charge in and go ahead with whatever is proposed in the first place, without any consideration for the environment, for the surrounding buildings, or for basic good manners in town planning.

As I have already said, the new Parliamentary Annexe is one example of what can happen. The building that we are in and the tower block above us should never have been built so close to the old Parliament House. It has destroyed to a large extent the feeling of the height, the feeling of grandeur and the feeling of dominance of the old Parliament House. This new building should have been a maximum of half its present height, or probably even lower, and all the complaints about the lifts in this building have emphasised in another way that it does not work. However, that is not relevant to what I am saying. This building, with its tower block so close to the old

Parliament House, has damaged that building very significantly and has destroyed a large part of the national heritage.

A heritage commission would have been the Government's stop-and-look procedure before this building was built. A properly administered commission would have said, "You are going to spoil Parliament House by putting that up. Stop and see whether you can get the same accommodation, the same answer, in a different way." If that had been done, we would not have what we have here today. Most things can be done just as efficiently and just as economically in another way without damaging other aspects of the environment.

As I mentioned earlier, everyone complained about the "spaghetti bolognese" outside this building. It would have been very simple to take one or two bridges across the river and build the freeway on the flat area on the other side of the river. That would have kept the whole aspect of the Brisbane River pleasant and a place where one would like to be. When one goes out of this building on this side of the river, one cannot see anything for the jungle of columns and the freeway ducking and diving.

We have destroyed our beautiful river. If one goes to Perth, one sees the way in which a river should be used. The freeway there has been built on the flat so that one cannot see it easily. It does not block one's view of the river as the freeway here does. Even when one is on the freeway, one has difficulty in seeing the fountain on the river. One can hardly see it from the other side; from this side it is lost to view entirely. The only time the freeway looks good is from the top of this building at night when there is a lot of traffic on it. It looks tremendous then.

The heritage commission that I want to see established in Queensland, or the Federal one that I want us to acknowledge, would create an inventory of the spaces, buildings and things of that type around Brisbane that should be on such a list. Before anything was done to those spaces or those buildings, the matter would be referred to the heritage commission for comment, and that comment almost certainly would be, "Stop and look. Make sure we have it right."

The State Government is responsible for the construction of not only the South East Freeway but also all the other freeways in Brisbane. It is responsible for approving the construction of pipelines, large new buildings, and so forth. A heritage commission would have advised the Government on the George Street Precinct, which I am sure is going to be one of the great failures of townscape and town planning.

The whole purpose of a heritage commission is to ensure that a Government or a private developer does not unwittingly damage a place or a thing of great value to the heritage of the nation. "Unwittingly" is the

critical word. If after the stop-and-look procedure is carried out the Government decides to proceed on its original course, or if a private developer also decides to go ahead with his project and the Government still agrees to it and possibly does not believe that it is necessary to take any further protective action, the project should be allowed to proceed.

A heritage commission should not have any power to stop anything in its own right. The Federal commission has no power in itself to make decisions. The decisions are entirely left to the relevant Minister. The record of that commission by way of co-operation and advice is an excellent one. I call very strongly for legislation in Queensland. We need an Act that sets up our own heritage commission or some equivalent body, or an Act to require reference of projects such as this building, the freeways and the Anzac Square development to the Federal Heritage Commission. With such legislation we could take strong action to protect the heritage of Queensland, and future generations would be very thankful to the members of this Parliament for introducing such a scheme.

Turning to another subject, I warn the public against what I see as a dangerous development, namely, the illegal backyard sales of caravans, boats and cars in Brisbane. Anyone who watches the daily newspapers would have seen regular advertisements from individual addresses or telephone numbers by people who are selling all sorts of different things. I have a few of them here. These were taken out in May because I was hoping to bring the matter up in the last session of Parliament, but time beat me.

One advertisement is listed for 19 Coventry Street, Hawthorne. On Friday, 11 May, there was an advertisement for the sale of an aluminium boat—"V12 Brooker on trailer . . . \$890". On Saturday 12 May an advertisement read "1965 18 hp Evinrude outboard motor . . . \$145", and the same address was given. On Tuesday, 15 May there was an advertisement for the sale of a 3.9m aluminium boat in near new condition, and again the same address was given. On the same page there was an advertisement to sell a 1968 9.5 Evinrude outboard motor with tank, and again the same address was given. On Wednesday, 16 May, there was a 13ft. aluminium boat for sale at the same address, and under that there was another advertisement for a 9.5 Evinrude outboard motor at a different price. It sounds like the one that had been advertised before, so perhaps the price had been dropped. On Thursday, 17 May, there was another aluminium boat and another outboard motor for sale at the same address. On the same day a caravan came into the list of things that this person was selling at that address.

Similar advertisements have regularly appeared in "The Courier-Mail" over a long period. There are plenty of other examples of this type of thing going on. Although I want people to be able to act

as freely as possible, I warn them of the danger of buying from backyard dealers. They have no guarantee that the title to that car, caravan or boat is secure. There is nothing to show them that it is not stolen or about to be repossessed. Many people have been caught in this way.

On the road to Redcliffe there is a place where a person has three or four caravans and three or four boats regularly on sale. They keep coming. There is no way in the world that that person is not dealing illegally.

No action is being taken to stop that sort of illegal practice or to protect purchasers. Apart from the lack of security to title, there is no control over such matters as compliance with the gas regulations applicable to caravans. Every licensed second-hand yard must have every caravan checked to ensure that it complies with the gas regulations. There is no control whatever over the backyard dealers. That, of course, gives them another advantage besides the lack of overheads and the fact that they are probably not paying sales tax. They have an unfair advantage over the safe and regular dealers, who have to set up yards, comply with all the regulations and pay their taxes.

**Mr. Davis:** What is wrong with the department? It has done nothing about them.

**Mr. AKERS:** That is a good question. I hope that my comments today might force it to take some action.

There is certainly no guarantee on the mechanical side of things. I warn anyone who goes to a backyard dealer to check thoroughly into the bona fides of the sale and on the title to the car, caravan or boat. Unfortunately, that is almost impossible because there is nothing on the registration certificate to show whether a car, for example, is under mortgage or hire purchase.

Finally, I want to be a little parochial and refer to the Bray Park State School. It is in great danger of becoming one of the worst second-rate schools in Queensland. It is only in its seventh year of operation, and already it has nearly 900 pupils. Next year the enrolment is expected to be 1,060 and in 1981 it is expected to be nearly 1,200.

**Mr. Frawley:** Which school is this?

**Mr. AKERS:** The Bray Park State School.

Very close to it, Bill Bowden has been selling two estates containing 130 blocks. Over the past couple of years he has sold a large number of allotments. Anyone who watches the commercials on T.V. about the Andalucia Estate would be interested to learn that it is right alongside. A number of properties are in the catchment area. D.U.L. had 144 lots that were recently sold. That means that 400 to 500 residential lots have either been sold or are about to be sold in the residential area in the immediate vicinity of the Bray Park School. So it will be seen that the enrolment figures I gave are very conservative. I believe that the numbers will be much higher.

Between July 1977 and December 1978 the shire council approved nearly 500 homes in that same catchment area. Other blocks are going on the market now.

Two things are needed: the upgrading of the school itself, with the provision of a proper library, music area and covered games areas, and a new school in the western area of Strathpine to provide relief for the beautiful little Bray Park State School. I hope that the Minister for Works and Housing is listening. I urge him and the Government to take action as soon as possible to allocate money to the construction of the relief school and before the beginning of next year to provide adequate facilities for the children at the Bray Park State School.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Wharton, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5.44 p.m.