

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 1979

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

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

Port of Brisbane Authority Act Amendment Bill;

Sawmills Licensing Act Amendment Bill.

PAPERS

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

Report on Net Surplus Profits of the State Government Insurance Office (Queensland) for 1978-79.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

Racing and Betting Act 1954-1978.

Harbours Act 1955-1979.

Forestry Act 1959-1979 and the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1976.

Regulations under—

Motor Vehicles Insurance Act 1936-1975.

Queensland Marine Act 1958-1975.

By-law No. 11 of the Queensland Institute of Technology.

Accounts of the State Government Insurance Office (Queensland) for the Financial Year 1978-79.

Report of the State Government Insurance Office (Queensland) for 1978-79.

Statute under the University of Queensland Act 1965-1973.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1978-79

Mr. SPEAKER read a message from His Excellency the Governor transmitting the Supplementary Estimates for the year 1978-79.

Estimates ordered to be printed, and referred to Committee of Supply.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT, 1980-81

Mr. SPEAKER read a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that the following provision be made on account of the services of the year ending 30 June 1981—

From the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland (exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account), the sum of three hundred and fifty million dollars;

From the Trust and Special Funds, the sum of three hundred and seventy million dollars;

From the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account, the sum of fifty million dollars.

Message referred to Committee of Supply.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

OUTBREAK OF CHILD SICKNESS ON PALM ISLAND

Hon. C. R. PORTER (Toowong—Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs) (11.7 a.m.): There has been an alarming outbreak of child sickness, mainly affecting three to nine-year-olds, on Palm Island. Immediately it appeared this was likely to be more than a hot-weather gastric outbreak my department, in conjunction with the Health Department, took action. I cannot speak too highly of the excellent work done by Department of Health Officers, by the Townsville Hospital, and by the Palm Island Hospital itself.

Because the illness manifested itself in vomiting and diarrhoea, with consequent dehydration, it was considered desirable to

take some cases over to Townsville. To date there have been 102 cases, with 49 currently in Townsville Hospital and 13 in Palm Island Hospital. Forty-eight have been discharged and returned to their homes, and it is expected that a further number will be discharged today. There have been no new cases notified since Sunday afternoon.

My colleague the Minister for Health and I have been careful not to make scare statements that might confuse the Palm Island community and make people unnecessarily apprehensive. But we did at the earliest stage take all the steps that modern medical science suggested. Let me say now that even at this point, after extensive micro-biological studies, the experts cannot be positive as to a cause which is a common factor to all cases. These studies are continuing.

I am sure this House will agree that it is a matter of concern to all of us when problems—especially those affecting small children—in Aboriginal communities are exploited for political purposes. My colleague the Minister for Health and I were at pains to show true care and concern by what we did, rather than to merely sound noble. Not so other people, and I think the best commentary on this situation comes in a statement I received, quite unexpectedly, from Mr. Jacob Baira, Chairman of the Palm Island Community Council, and the proper person to speak for his community. It states—

“Chairman of Palm Island Community Council, Mr. Jacob Baira, Jnr., today stated that the island town water supply was in excellent order, this being confirmed by thorough testing by State health authorities during recent weeks.

“He was referring to the mystery illness currently striking at the island’s children. He severely condemned comments being made by the Aboriginal and Islander Community Health Service in Townsville and said that such comments were totally unfounded and were being made by unqualified people who had not visited the island for some months.

“He claimed that their public comments had aggravated the situation and created general confusion among Palm Island residents. He suggested that such unfounded statements were being made for political reasons in an attempt by the Community Health Service to justify its existence.

“Mr. Baira stated that comments by the Community Health Service over recent weeks concerning supposed contamination of the town supply had encouraged residents to open old wells, which had now been proved to be highly polluted and may well be the cause of the illness.

“He claimed that some people and organisations were being too quick to criticise in the current situation, and said that their efforts would be better spent giving positive advice and assistance.

"Mr. Baira praised the staff of Palm Island and Townsville Hospitals in doing a magnificent job despite hardships, and stated that although they have not yet been able to identify the sickness they had the situation well under control.

"He also suggested that people not scoff so openly at recent suggestions that the mystery illness was caused by green mangoes. This theory was one of the very few that actually fitted the pattern of the sickness in that it was striking mostly children aged three to thirteen years who predominantly live in the mango-growing areas of the community.

"Mr. Baira called on all organisations and individuals to act responsibly, particularly when making public statements, so that the present situation was not further aggravated, and to allow State health personnel to complete a number of further tests at present under way."

I think that statement effectively disposes of the unpleasant suggestions and real nonsense that I or any other responsible person in this Government was not deeply concerned, that we were not doing all we should, or that we were failing in our duty. We were in touch with Palm Island three to four times a day, and they are well aware of my continuing concern and action.

But I want to make this point, for it is something to bear in mind: of all those people and organisations who made those attacks in the media, not one bothered to contact Mr. Baira to obtain his view on their points of criticism. Nor did any of the media check with him.

But it goes much further than that. The statement I have just read to this House was issued on Saturday as a press statement by Mr. Baira from Palm Island. It was a complete answer to the reckless accusations of people who should know better. It was issued to all T.V. stations, to the A.B.C., to A.A.P. and to "The Sunday Mail". Not one of those organs of the media saw fit to use any part of it. It is almost as though a conspiracy exists in media circles here to always feature any charge that denigrates the indigenous peoples and this Government's involvement with them, but ignore anything that shows the other side of the coin. It is most regrettable that this impression should be given.

PETITIONS

PROTECTION OF UNBORN QUEENSLANDERS KILLED BY ABORTION

Mr. DAVIS (Brisbane Central) presented a petition from 221 citizens of Queensland, praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take all the necessary measures to protect the lives of unborn Queenslanders being killed by abortion.

Petition read and received.

[A similar petition was presented by Mr. Austin (348 signatories), and this petition was read and received.]

SEX EDUCATION IN STATE SCHOOLS

Hon. V. J. BIRD (Burdekin—Minister for Education) presented a petition from 998 electors of Queensland, praying that the Parliament of Queensland will not introduce any form of sex education into the primary or secondary levels of State schools, but will establish courses of instruction to assist and encourage parents to adequately instruct their children in this matter.

Petition read and received.

RELOCATION OF GIBSON'S TANNERY OR AMENDMENT TO CLEAN AIR ACT

Mr. GYGAR (Stafford) presented a petition from 795 residents of the Stafford area and others, showing that the obnoxious smell which emanates from Gibson's Stafford Road tannery is unacceptable in a residential area, and praying that the Parliament of Queensland will urgently amend the Clean Air Act or take such other steps as are necessary to require the tannery to immediately institute procedures or processes which will eliminate the release of these odours or require the company to relocate its business away from residential areas.

Petition read and received.

ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS TO PROTECT LIVES OF UNBORN HUMAN BEINGS

Hon. C. R. PORTER (Toowong—Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs) presented a petition from 346 citizens of Queensland, praying that the Parliament of Queensland will demand that the present laws be made enforceable to protect the lives of unborn human beings.

Petition read and received.

REMOVAL OF COATS IN CHAMBER

Mr. AKERS: I rise to a point of order. As the air-conditioning unit is not functioning because of the strike by electricity workers, would it be in order today for members to do as every other person in office buildings in Queensland is doing, that is, to remove their coats in the Chamber?

Mr. SPEAKER: This Parliament has always insisted on the maintenance of a certain standard of dress in the Chamber. However, because of the oppressive conditions, it would not be unreasonable for members to remove their coats.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. WARBURTON: I rise to a further point of order. Does that ruling apply to dress in the gallery also?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. GREENVALE NICKEL PROJECT

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

I refer to the announcement that the Greenvale nickel project ran at a profit for the six-month period from April to September this year and the comments by company chairman, Sir Thomas Webb, that current profitability could not be sustained in the face of massive oil price increases, and ask—

(1) As it is predicted that oil prices will increase faster than inflation, what assistance is the Queensland Government offering the Greenvale joint venture for converting from oil to coal?

(2) What talks have been held between the company and the Queensland Government to determine the most satisfactory basis for financing the capital cost of converting from oil to coal?

(3) Does the Government believe that if there is not a satisfactory conversion from oil to coal, a further restructuring of the Greenvale debt will be necessary, with the pending OPEC increases in oil prices?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) Greenvale has very complicated financial arrangements and intricate debt restructuring involving lenders from four continents. In addition, the Queensland Government has provided very substantial financial assistance by way of its guarantee of a sizeable portion of the total debt.

The Greenvale project joint-venture companies, the lenders and the Queensland Government as guarantor are very concerned to reduce the burden to the project of high oil prices, provided, of course, that it proves to be economically feasible to do so. In this regard, consultants engaged by the joint-venture companies have recently completed an engineering and cost study of the possibility of converting treatment plant facilities, which presently consume around half of the project's oil consumption, from an oil-fuel base to a coal-fuel base. It has been indicated that substantial cost savings could be made if such a conversion was to be undertaken. However, very large capital costs are involved. As the project is still unable to meet all of its debt-servicing commitments to lenders, further special arrangements need to be made with lenders and the State Government if the necessary capital is to be obtained for the coal-conversion proposal.

The joint-venture companies have now completed a presentation of their proposal to the various lenders and the State Government and each of the parties is in the early stages of evaluating that proposal. Thorough investigation of the feasibility of the scheme of financing

possibilities and of the relative commitments of all parties is necessary in view of the large amounts involved. It is anticipated that meetings will be held early in the new year between the various lenders and the Queensland Government initially, and then with the joint venturers, to consider these matters.

2. ST. GEORGE POLICE STATION

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

With reference to the transfer of two police officers from St. George in July, and as only one vacancy has been filled, when will the other vacancy be filled to bring the St. George Police Station to full strength?

Answer:—

It was decided, in the interests of efficiency, that a sergeant 2/c position at St. George should be created in place of a position for a constable. The second vacancy for a constable was therefore not filled and a position for a sergeant 2/c was advertised in the Police Gazette. The appointee is expected to arrive at St. George about 17 December 1979.

3. MOONIE STATE SCHOOL

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

When will septic toilets be provided for the Moonie State School?

Answer:—

Plans and estimate of cost are being prepared for the provision of septic toilets at the Moonie State School. It is expected that these documents will be completed in the reasonably near future.

Although no indication can be given at present as to when this project will be approved, the honourable member is assured that the work will be undertaken at the earliest possible date.

4. RAILWAY DEPARTMENT LAND, TARA

Mr. Ahern for Mr. Neal, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

Will he give consideration to a request from the Tara Shire Council for the acquisition of a portion of railway land adjacent to the triangle at Tara for use as residential sites?

Answer:—

Subject to the Tara Shire Council's agreeing to comply with the following conditions, the Commissioner for Railways is prepared to accede to the excision of an area of railway land to enable the council to acquire it for the development of a housing estate:

(1) The council would be required to meet the cost of excision of the area and the amendment to the railway reserve, including survey costs and registration fees.

(2) It would be the responsibility of the council to fence the northern and eastern boundaries of the proposed housing estate to a standard determined by the Railway Department.

(3) The provision of any filling and the carrying out of any earthworks on the area shall not cause flooding of railway land during periods of wet weather.

(4) The council shall provide adequate drainage of the area away from railway property, submitting relevant plans to the department for examination and approval before the work is commenced.

Once the council has indicated that it is willing to comply with these conditions, action will be taken to proceed with the excision of this land.

5. SUPERVISION OF OPERATION OF CRANES

Mr. Bishop, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Labour Relations—

As the huge increase in high-rise construction in Surfers Paradise has resulted in a proliferation of cranes on the construction jobs, resulting in an increase in materials falling from cranes to such an extent that lives are being endangered, what action will he take to more effectively supervise the dangerous loads that are creating hazards to the public, and what recourse do private citizens have to protect themselves and their property from the careless actions of developers?

Answer:—

Whilst I agree that there has been a higher increase in high-rise construction in Surfers Paradise, I have no evidence to support a claim that there has been an increase in material falling from cranes in this area. Apart from the recent incident in Old Burleigh Road, the inspectors of construction work, Southport, have not had cause to investigate any accidents arising from material falling from cranes.

The recent incident in Old Burleigh Road was not the result of material falling from a crane, but was caused by a load suspended from a crane dislodging a timber handrail.

All cranes used on construction sites are required to be regularly inspected, and can be operated only by a person holding the relevant certificate of competency. All crane-chasers and dogmen directing or slinging loads handled by cranes are also required to hold certificates.

Should private citizens have cause to worry about personal safety or property damage as a result of construction work being performed adjacent to their property,

I suggest that they advise the local district office of my department's Division of Occupational Safety of their concern.

6. DRUG SQUAD, GOLD COAST AREA

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

In view of the repeated association of the Gold Coast with drug activity, will he state if and when action will be taken by the Police Department to introduce a drug squad to the Gold Coast as distinct from continuing to rely on the Brisbane Drug Squad?

Answer:—

It is not proposed to form a detachment of the Drug Squad at the Gold Coast. The present Drug Squad is a State squad and, as such, operates throughout the State as required. It is a departmental requirement of members who are transferred to Criminal Investigation Branches outside the metropolitan area to complete six weeks with the Drug Squad before departing on transfer. These men are all experienced officers, and this period of training is considered adequate.

7. EFFECT OF CHANGED SCHOOL HOLIDAYS ON TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

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

With reference to the Government's decision to alter the school holiday breaks in Queensland, will he assure the tourist industry that the Government will encourage the Tourist and Travel Corporation to take advantage of the promotional aspects of the change so that the rest of Australia will be aware of the greater freedom tourists will have in booking accommodation in Queensland?

Answer:—

The Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation welcomes the change in school holiday dates in Queensland and will act to ensure that maximum benefit to the tourist industry is derived therefrom.

8. INSPECTORS APPOINTED TO ENFORCE NOISE ABATEMENT ACT

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

With reference to the Noise Abatement Act 1978, which was assented to in June 1978—

(1) How many inspectors have been appointed (a) for Queensland, and (b) in each division of the State?

(2) Where is each inspector stationed, and on what date was each appointment made?

(3) How is each inspector paid for work done outside his normal hours of duty? Is it by payment by way of normal overtime rates, or it is by way of equivalent time off in lieu of payment for time worked?

(4) Have these inspectors any staff under their control to assist with office procedures and, if so, how many in each district and where are they stationed?

Answers:—

(1 & 2) One inspector and one technical officer have been appointed. The inspector was appointed on 18 June 1979. The technical officer was appointed on 20 August 1979. The positions of two inspectors, three technical officers and Deputy Director of Noise Abatement are currently being advertised.

The staff of the Division of Noise Abatement are stationed in Brisbane but may be required to serve in any part of the State.

(3) The question of recompense to inspectors for work performed outside normal office hours is currently under consideration by the Public Service Board.

(4) The present office staff to service the Noise Abatement Division comprises a secretary to the Noise Abatement Authority and a stenographer, both stationed in Brisbane. Additional staff will be sought as need arises.

9. AIR POLLUTION MONITORING STATIONS

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

With reference to the Clean Air Act—1963—

(1) How many air pollution monitoring stations are in Queensland?

(2) In what areas are they situated, and when were they set up?

(3) How many inspectors or operators are in Queensland, in what areas are these inspectors or operators located, and on what date did they take up their appointments?

Answers:—

(1) Sixty-one.

(2) Brisbane, progressively since 1969; Bowen, February 1972; Townsville, April 1972; Mt. Isa, October 1974; Gladstone, July 1979.

(3) The technical and scientific staff of the Division of Air Pollution Control comprises 21 officers. Twenty are based in Brisbane. One is based in Townsville. The dates of their appointments are as follows:—

Dr. G. J. Cleary, Director of Air Pollution Control, 4 January 1974;

Mr. H. M. Hart, Deputy Director of Air Pollution Control, 19 January 1970;

Mr. J. Reynolds, Senior Air Pollution Control Officer, 14 December 1970;

Mr. R. Wolff, Executive Engineer, Division II, 17 February 1977;

Mr. D. K. Garlipp, Executive Engineer, Division II, 8 May 1978;

Mr. I. F. Badham, Executive Engineer, Division II, 17 April 1978;

Mr. P. C. Kendall, Senior Inspector, 10 February 1971;

Mr. W. J. Wardle, Air Pollution Inspector, 19 January 1976;

Mr. P. A. Meiklejohn, Inspector, 28 March 1977;

Mr. B. R. Thiele, Chief Air Quality Assessment Officer, 30 September 1968;

Dr. P. M. Nimmo, Air Pollution Control Technologist, 23 September 1974;

Mr. D. H. Wainwright, Chemist Division I, 31 October 1977;

Mr. W. A. Muller, Chemist, Division II, 14 November 1977;

Dr. K. A. Verrall, Chemist, Division I, 11 June 1979;

Mr. R. G. McIntyre, Laboratory Technician Division I, 5 August 1968;

Mr. K. O. Allison, Laboratory Technician, Division I, 1 July 1975;

Mr. J. E. Stewart, Laboratory Technician, Division I, 27 February 1978;

Mr. W. T. Jeffery, Instrument Maker and Repairer, 10 May 1971;

Mr. R. L. Williams, Professional Assistant (Air Pollution), 1 January 1971;

Mr. E. H. Mumford, Laboratory Attendant, 27 January 1972;

Mr. S. M. Weston, Laboratory Attendant, 10 April 1978.

Part-time assistance is obtained from a health surveyor of Mt. Isa City Council.

10. DEATHS CAUSED BY DRUGS

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

With reference to the growing problem of abuse and illegal use of drugs in the community—

(1) How many deaths are known to have occurred because of the abuse or misuse of (a) prescribed and (b) illegal drugs during each of the last five years?

(2) Will he table (a) details as to the type of drugs associated with each recorded death, and (b) specific information relating to the age groups of the deceased?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) The precise details of the statistics in regard to deaths due to drugs is not recorded and therefore not able to be supplied.

No statistics are kept differentiating between deaths by prescribed drugs as distinct from illegal drugs. However, for the information of the honourable member, the following statistics are supplied.

The details below relate to deaths in Queensland over the years 1973 to 1977 inclusive, resulting from:

(i) accidental poisoning by drugs and medicaments;

(ii) suicide and self-inflicted poisoning by solid or liquid substances.

Note that this second item extends to poisoning from substances such as alcohols, cleaning agents, etc., and so must be treated with considerable caution.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN QUEENSLAND

		1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
<i>Accidental Poisoning</i>							
By antibiotics and other anti-infectives ..	M	..	1	..	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	1
By hormones and synthetic substitutes ..	M	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..
By primarily systemic and haematologic agents	M	..	..	..	..	..	1
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..
By analgesics and anti-pyretics	M	..	1	1	1	1	1
	F	1	..	1	..	2	..
By other sedatives and hypnotics	M	3	3	4	3	3	8
	F	6	5	5	2	2	6
By autonomic nervous system and psycho-therapeutic drugs	M	1	..	..	..	2	..
	F	1	..	..	..	1	..
By other central nervous system depressants and stimulants	M	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	1	..
By cardio-vascular drugs	M	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	1	..	..
By other and unspecified drugs and medicaments	M	1	..	2	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total.—By drugs and medicaments	M	5	5	7	4	6	10
	F	10	5	6	3	6	7
<i>Suicide and Self-inflicted Poisoning</i>							
By solid or liquid substances	M	38	54	43	51	37	43
	F	54	56	57	41	47	50

All of the foregoing information is available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and it will be noted that 1978 figures are provisional.

11. ADDITIONAL LAND FOR STATE SCHOOLS,
NORRIS ROAD, BRAY PARK AND
MT. SAMSON

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

What is the present position regarding the provision of extra land for the State schools at (a) Norris Road, (b) Bray Park, and (c) Mt. Samson?

Answer:—

(a) The Land Administration Commission has been requested to acquire an area of 1.94 hectares adjacent to the western boundary of the site of the Norris Road State School so as to enlarge the schoolgrounds.

(b) Negotiations are presently proceeding with the Queensland Housing Commission to acquire additional land for the Bray Park State School. A valuation of this land is presently awaited.

(c) The land under consideration of acquisition for the Mt. Samson State School is the property of the Brisbane City Council and is part of an area resumed by that council as part of the water catchment area for the North Pine Dam.

The Education Department is at present giving consideration to the desirability of endeavouring to lease this land from the council for school playground purposes.

The honourable member is assured that action will be taken to have these matters expedited as much as possible.

12. LAND RESUMPTION, MT. SAMSON
ROAD

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

With reference to the resumption of land by the Main Roads Department from Mr. Brook for the straightening of the Mt. Samson Road over one year ago, will he personally intervene in an attempt to finalise the matter of compensation and transfer of title?

Answer:—

There are two matters which the honourable member has raised in this question. Action has been taken to expedite the issue of two titles by arranging for prompt attention to the preparation of the necessary compiled plan based on the resumption survey. With regard to the aspect of compensation, it is understood that the solicitor for the owner has been asked to seek further instructions from his client.

13. DIRECTION SIGNS TO BRACKEN RIDGE

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

As the Brisbane City Council has at last discovered the existence of Bracken Ridge and is in the process of erecting direction signs on roads under its control to assist visitors to that suburb, will he help residents of this area and give directions for similar signs to be erected on roads under his control?

Answer:—

The Main Roads Department has adopted a system of using focal points for direction-signing on roads under its control. The focal point for direction-signing from Gympie Road and Sandgate Road in the Bracken Ridge direction is Redcliffe. There are over 400 suburbs listed in the Brisbane U.B.D. and only a few can be focal points.

14. TOWNSVILLE TOWN COMMON

Mr. Ahern for **Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" of 27 November in which Alderman McElligott admitted that the Townsville City Council has neglected the Town Common and made no attempt to control the recent fires on this common, which damaged flora and fauna?

(2) When will his department finalise the transfer of the Townsville Town Common to the trusteeship of the department so that this magnificent heritage may be preserved for the citizens of Townsville?

Answers:—

(1) Yes, I have seen the article in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" to which the honourable member refers.

(2) The first areas of the Townsville Town Common to be made an environmental park are expected to be gazetted this month. Further additional areas will be gazetted next year to finalise the proposal.

15. UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

Mr. Ahern for **Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Labour Relations—

With reference to his answer to a question by the Leader of the Opposition on employment on 27 November—

(1) Did he read of a claim by the Leader of the Opposition outside the House that he had completely side-stepped the question?

(2) Despite having given an entirely satisfactory and responsible answer, will he now inform the Leader of the Opposition of the changing nature of the work-force and the record Queensland performance, as compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I refused to give hypothetical answers to the honourable Leader of the Opposition on Tuesday because I believe the people of Queensland prefer truth to nebulous prediction.

As the honourable member is obviously completely ignorant of all the factors which must be taken into account in order to conceive a total picture, I see it as my duty to enlighten him so that he can make simple comparisons.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that, in the three years to August 1979, 41,600 more men found jobs in Queensland, as did 48,200 more women. I am confident that figures for all of 1979, which I will report to the House as soon as they are available next year, will show continued improvement.

Two points which tend to be ignored are that Australia's population reached a record level last year and there was a record number of women in the work-force. It is significant, as I stated in the House in answer to a question recently, that Queensland's population is growing at an annual rate of 1.14 per cent. This is much greater than the rate in many other States.

More women than ever before are rejoining the national work-force and the competition they are offering makes it harder for teenagers, particularly junior girls, to get jobs. The proportion of married women in the female work-force in Queensland last year increased to 60.6 per cent, according to the Bureau of Statistics.

At the end of August 1979, females represented 34.4 per cent of the work-force in Queensland. Married women represented 20.8 per cent. Last December there were 152,700 more people at work in Australia than in 1975, and civilian employment reached a record high of 6,097,500. Yet there was also record unemployment.

This apparent paradox occurred because the number of people coming into the work-force went up by 283,800 to a record level as a result of rising population and the decision of so many more wives that they wanted to go back to work or to stay in the work-force. For the information of the Leader of the Opposition and despite unemployment levels, about two-thirds of this record Australian population is now either working or wanting to work.

Despite all this, the Leader of the Opposition has talked in the Press again in terms of Queensland being on the brink of economic collapse in regard to job growth. The Leader of the Opposition either displays abysmal ignorance of the facts or is continuing to completely and deliberately mislead the people of Queensland. Whatever the reason, and no matter how much I deplore unemployment, the official figures I have quoted utterly destroy his last vestige of credibility.

16. OUTBREAK OF SHIGELLA AT WOLSTON PARK HOSPITAL

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

With reference to a notice that appears on the notice board at Ellerton House, Wolston Park Hospital, which informs artisans that due to an outbreak of shigella in Section B they are to report to the senior nurse before entering the area to obtain protective clothing, and on leaving the area tools are to be sterilised for four hours and electrical tools are to be wiped with antiseptic—

(1) How serious is the outbreak of shigella at Wolston Park?

(2) How many cases have been reported?

(3) What is the danger to staff at the hospital?

Answers:—

(1) The recent outbreak of Shigella sonnei at Wolston Park Hospital is not considered an exceptionally serious problem as it is not life-threatening and all possible protective measures have been taken.

(2) There were a total of six cases detected and only one person has a positive result at present. Only one member of the nursing staff was found to have the symptoms of Shigella sonnei and was receiving treatment from her private practitioner at Ipswich Hospital.

(3) There appears to be no danger to staff at the hospital if contact with the isolation area is kept to a minimum and protective clothing is worn as per hospital regulations. Personal hygiene also plays an important role in the prevention of such an illness. If these instructions are adhered to, it should significantly reduce the risk of this illness.

17. REFUSAL OF HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH A.W.U.

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

(1) Is he aware that the Public Service Board filed an industrial agreement with the industrial registrar at the Industrial Commission giving \$10.50 for all purposes

to members of the FEDFA, ETU and AMWSU employed in Queensland hospitals and that when the AWU asked for the same \$10.50 for its hospital employees it was opposed by the State Government and rejected by the Public Service Board?

(2) Why is he and his department refusing to negotiate with the AWU on this matter?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Discussions on this matter have taken place between the Department of the Public Service Board and representatives of the Australian Workers' Union. As a result of this, the union is to consider its further course of action in relation to a claim which had previously been filed in the Industrial Commission.

18. DRUG-DISPENSING, STATE HOSPITALS AND HEALTH INSTITUTIONS

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

(1) What measures are adopted by his department to monitor the prescribing of analgesics and barbiturates in State institutions and hospitals?

(2) Is he aware of concern expressed that drug-dispensing through State hospitals and health institutions is reaching the situation where Queensland is fast becoming the "pill-taking" State of the Commonwealth?

(3) Has he any statistical information relative to this issue and, if so, is the concern valid?

Answers:—

(1) The new computer system recently installed at the Central Drug Store, Brisbane, is now recording all issues of drugs and pharmaceuticals to State hospitals and institutions. The system is capable of storing the data as it is generated and collating usage figures for the various groups of drugs such as barbiturates and analgesics.

The computer is programmed to monitor the ordering of drugs by hospitals by imposing limits on the quantities which can be ordered and by the application of prescribing restrictions on certain drugs as recommended by the Queensland Hospitals Drug Advisory Committee.

Print-outs are being prepared on a monthly basis and routinely issued to all State hospitals boards showing drug expenditure for their hospitals.

(2) No. Barbiturates are declared drugs under section 30 of the Health Act 1937-1973, and records are required to be kept of barbiturates dispensed in accordance with section H7 of the Poisons Regulations of 1973.

Certain analgesics are restricted as prescription only drugs under the poisons regulations and availability is further restricted as considered necessary by the Queensland Hospitals Drug Advisory Committee.

(3) No figures are available to demonstrate comparable usage among the Australian States of drugs and pharmaceuticals dispensed through hospitals and health institutions.

19. BYPASS ROAD, MAREEBA

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

When will the alignment for the proposed bypass of the main road at Mareeba be available, as the Mareeba Shire Council and the Lands Department require this urgently for the purpose of subdivision and development of industrial land now urgently required?

Answer:—

Planning of the Mareeba bypass has been developed to the stage of initial selection of the alignment of the centre line. Plans showing the details of this alignment and possible land requirements were handed to the shire engineer on 14 November and a letter of confirmation sent to the shire clerk on 26 November. It is considered that the information made available is sufficient for planning adjacent subdivisions and industrial development.

The honourable member will, of course, be aware that there is no intention of constructing the Mareeba bypass in the immediate future, and consequently no further refinement of the information given to date is considered necessary at this stage.

20. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT LAND, MAREEBA

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

When will the old school building and site at Yorkeys Knob be declared surplus to his department's requirements?

Answer:—

It is not intended that the site and buildings of the old Yorkeys Knob State School be declared surplus to the requirements of my department at the present time. Consideration is being given to the continuing usage of the old site and buildings thereon for other educational purposes, such as environmental studies.

21. CAIRNS STATE HIGH SCHOOL

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

(1) What are the details of the building programme at the Cairns State High School?

(2) Which jobs have been completed, and what was the cost during the past five years?

Answers:—

(1) Preliminary planning is presently in hand for Stage 1 of upgrading the former technical college buildings. Consideration will be given to approving this work when the estimate of cost is available, in relation to the funds that can be allocated for works of this nature.

The Draft Forward Planning Programme requests that consideration be given to the following projects as funds become available:—

Upgrading former technical college buildings—Stage 2

Upgrading former technical college buildings—Stage 3

(2) During the past five years, an amount of \$462,353 has been expended at this high school on such jobs as new library and class-rooms; external painting of "B" block; conversion of some of the technical college buildings; provision of showers and general renovations, repairs and improvements.

Presently, the future needs for secondary education in Cairns and the surrounding areas are being assessed. The outcome of this investigation will determine where new high schools will be established and the extent to which accommodation at the present Cairns High School will need to be improved.

22. ILLEGAL NET FISHING, MORETON BAY

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

(1) Is he aware of the blatant abuse of fishing laws by some net fishermen operating on the foreshores of the bay islands of Russell, Lamb, McLeay and Karragarra?

(2) Has he been informed that these irresponsible fishermen are killing off huge numbers of small fish and sand and mud crabs by illegal staking of nets?

(3) In view of this wanton destruction of fish and crabs, will he, through his officers, take the necessary action to have the offenders apprehended?

(4) If this practice of illegal net fishing, which is causing the loss of many thousands of small fish and crabs, continues, will he consider the cancelling of the

licences of the offending fisherman or close the southern end of Moreton Bay to net fishing?

Answers:—

(1 & 2) I am not aware of any recent specific complaints of illegal netting on the foreshores of the islands referred to.

(3) The officers of the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol have been requested to take appropriate action in regard to this complaint, and will be contacting the honourable member for any specific information which might be in his possession.

(4) I am prepared to consider appropriate deterrent action for persistent offenders, rather than a complete closure of the area as the latter could seriously affect the livelihood of professionals who have conducted their business in a perfectly correct manner.

23. DANGEROUS SWIMMING-POOL SALT CHLORINATORS

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. Goleby**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Labour Relations—

(1) Is he aware that some salt chlorinators used in family swimming-pools are a danger to pool users?

(2) Will he have investigated certain makes of chlorinators, in particular Auto-chlor and Watermaid, that are reported to have exploded under some circumstances, which could cause considerable harm and injury to pool users?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Whilst the Consumer Affairs Bureau does have an interest in this matter, I am advised that the Director-General of Health and Medical Services has carried out investigations into the safety and health aspects of pool chemicals and, in the circumstances, I suggest the honourable member might direct his question to the Honourable the Minister for Health.

24. ROAD ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY INTAKE OF DRUGS

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

(1) What procedures are adopted to assess the cause of road accidents?

(2) Is the Traffic Appreciation Squad operating in all police districts in the State?

(3) In how many accidents assessed in each of the last three years has the prime cause believed to have been associated with the taking of drugs other than alcohol?

(4) Is he able to provide statistical information to demonstrate any increasing

trend in the number of accidents being caused by the illegal use or abuse of drugs?

Answers:—

(1) Police officers investigating traffic accidents report the cause, and these reports are transmitted to the Transport Department and the Bureau of Statistics. The latter department publishes a quarterly detailed analysis of such statistics.

(2) No.

(3 & 4) Accident statistics of the nature sought are not held by this department. Statistics are held as to the number of persons charged with drink-driving offences, but they do not distinguish between those persons affected by alcohol and those affected by drugs.

25. FEASIBILITY STUDIES INTO CONSTRUCTION AND ELECTRIFICATION OF RAILWAY LINES

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

With reference to his recent announcement about the findings in the consultants' report of the feasibility studies of the electrification of the Central Queensland coalfields, Brisbane-Gladstone, Brisbane-Toowoomba, and the rebuilding of the Gold Coast line to Brisbane—

(1) Who were the consultants engaged for these studies?

(2) What was the cost of each study?

(3) When will this Parliament be given the opportunity to view these reports?

Answers:—

(1) (a) The main line electrification study was undertaken by P. G. Pak-Poy and Associates Pty. Ltd., in association with R. L. Banks and Associates Inc., Elrail Consultants Pty. Ltd., Transmark Ltd. and Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Pty. Ltd.

(b) The Gold Coast transportation study was undertaken by P. G. Pak-Poy and Associates Pty. Ltd., in association with Louis T. Klander and Associates, John Paterson Urban Systems, and Fred Affleck and Associates.

(2) (a) The estimated final cost is \$507,666.

(b) The estimated final cost is \$120,000 approximately.

(3) It is not proposed to release these reports at this time.

26. OBSERVANCE BY RAILWAY DEPARTMENT OF "BUY QUEENSLAND MADE" CAMPAIGN

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

(1) Is he aware of the Government's campaign entitled "Buy Queensland Made" and, if so, is he aware that the Queensland

Railway Department is selling a soft drink called "Cheqers" manufactured by Specialty Waters International Pty. Limited, Melbourne, on the "Sunlander" and the "Capricornian"?

(2) As there are numerous soft-drink manufacturers in Queensland, will he ensure that the department conforms with the campaign to "Buy Queensland Made"?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Yes. Following the calling of tenders for the supply of soft drinks, the Railway Department did purchase some of these commodities from Specialty Waters International Pty. Ltd. However, the purchase of soft drinks is now designed to meet the popular demand of rail travellers by offering a wide range of soft drinks from the various suppliers. The soft drinks will be Queensland made.

27. EFFECT OF METAL PRICES ON DENTISTRY

Dr. Lockwood, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Have dentists expressed concern that the present record world prices for gold and silver will ultimately affect the cost of gold inlays and silver-mercury amalgam fillings used by dentists?

(2) If these traditional metals become too expensive for dentistry, could acrylics and other substances be used just as effectively?

Answers:—

(1) It is understood that dentists are concerned about rising costs of all kinds including those resulting from the dramatic increases in the prices of gold and silver. However, it would require further massive increases to make these metals too expensive for dental use.

(2) I am advised that filling materials based on plastics similar to the acrylic resins have gained greater acceptance in recent years due more to improved qualities than lower price. There are many situations where they cannot be used effectively in place of gold or amalgam.

28. USE OF LACTOSE AS SWEETENER

Dr. Lockwood, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the current advertising campaign which is actively promoting lactose or milk sugar as a substitute sweetener for use in food and drinks—

(1) Has lactose any real advantage as a sweetener over cane sugar?

(2) Since lactose is not as naturally sweet as cane sugar, would not the consumer tend to use more lactose than cane sugar?

(3) As lactose has approximately the same caloric value as cane sugar and as lactose is readily converted in the body to glucose, will he seek to alert diabetics by having the advertisers include a warning that lactose is not to be equated with synthetic sweeteners used by diabetics and, further, that unrestricted use of lactose by diabetics could be extremely dangerous?

Answers:—

(1) No, lactose has no advantage over cane sugar as a sweetener.

(2) If used alone, lactose is considerably less sweet than cane sugar and it would be necessary to use about 67 per cent more of it for a similar sweetening effect, but one gram of this product, yielding about 15 kilojoules of food energy, will replace about 10 grams of sugar which yield 160 kilojoules, so the consumer will tend to lower his saccharide intake when using the product instead of cane sugar.

(3) Since the quantity used is so small, the danger of a diabetic significantly exceeding his prescribed carbohydrate diet is low. The label and literature accompanying the product give quite satisfactory information on its dietary significance. Officers of my department have had this product under examination for several weeks and an analysis was completed late last week. The matter of the misleading advertising is now being taken up with the manufacturers and the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal.

29. WITNESSING OF SIGNATURES BY J.P.s AT SUPREME COURT

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

(1) Is a charge of approximately \$6 made if a justice of the peace at the counter of the Supreme Court witnesses a document for a member of the public?

(2) As justices of the peace are not allowed to charge a fee for witnessing a signature, will he take action to abolish this charge?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) A charge of \$1.70 is made under item 30 of the Third Schedule of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Queensland when an affidavit or deposition which is to be filed in the court is witnessed by an officer of the court as a justice of the peace at the counter. This is in addition to the ordinary filing fees payable when the document is filed in the Supreme Court Registry. This charge is an official one and no part of it is payable to the justice of the peace concerned. I thank the honourable member for drawing my attention to this matter. I will have it further examined.

30. GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SPORT

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

(1) What amounts of money were made available by the Government for sport from 1972 to 1979?

(2) What contributions were made by previous Labor Governments in Queensland for sport in this State?

Answers:—

(1) The annual reports of the Director of Sport show that the subsidies and grants paid to sporting associations and clubs throughout Queensland since the inception of the scheme for assistance and encouragement to sport in late 1972 from funds allocated to my department have been—

Financial year		
1972-73	.. ..	\$117,806.10
1973-74	.. ..	\$468,615.58
1974-75	.. ..	\$824,995.45
1975-76	.. ..	\$1,320,000.00
1976-77	.. ..	\$1,560,000.00
1977-78	.. ..	\$2,422,964.45
1978-79	.. ..	\$2,238,265.16
Total	.. ..	\$8,952,646.74

The allocation for expenditure in the present 1979-80 financial year is a further \$2,916,410.00.

In addition to these amounts, the Government has also already paid \$3,722,700 to the greater Brisbane City Council towards the provision of sporting facilities for the 1982 Commonwealth Games from the \$10,000,000 grant the Government has undertaken to provide overall.

Under the Government's Sports Subsidy Incentive Scheme for capital works, which provides one-third of the costs with two-thirds from the sporting association or club involved, additional sporting playing facilities costing over \$19,000,000 have been constructed throughout Queensland in the last seven years.

(2) To the best of my knowledge, nil.

31. PENSIONER UNITS, DECEPTION BAY

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

Is it proposed to erect pensioner units at Deception Bay and, if not, will he give consideration to their erection by the Queensland Housing Commission at Deception Bay?

Answer:—

There are no immediate plans for construction of pensioner units at Deception Bay but the matter will be considered when framing future programmes.

32. SUBSIDIES TO SPORTING BODIES

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

(1) With reference to subsidies payable to sporting associations and clubs from funds allocated for assistance and encouragement to sport, and with particular reference to the extremely large \$215,667 subsidy paid towards the cost of construction of an ice skating rink at Acacia Ridge, are there any restrictions placed upon the recipients of such subsidies by the Government so as to prevent the sale or leasing of the project which has been subsidised from public funds?

(2) What action does the Government take to protect large investments of this kind?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Sporting associations and clubs, for the most part, construct their facilities on Crown land or land leased from a local authority which cannot be re-leased or sold. Where a sporting association or club, by its own fund-raising efforts, has acquired freehold property, as is the case with the Ice Skating Association of Queensland which has constructed an ice skating rink at Acacia Ridge, they are entitled to subsidy for projects which qualify within the guidelines. Subsidy is not paid on the purchase price of land.

Applications are accepted in good faith from reputable executive officers of the various voluntary non-profit sporting organisations. It is improbable that any sporting association or club would or could lease or sell their sporting facilities erected in most cases after a long struggle to raise the necessary finance and of which they are justifiably proud.

In the most unlikely event of any sporting association or club seeking to sell facilities on freehold property which had been subsidised from sporting funds—to date this has not occurred—the Government would justifiably expect and demand the return of all or part of the subsidy previously provided, having in mind, of course, the length of time which had elapsed since the facility was first constructed.

I might add that the department's experience to date has been that only an extremely small number of sporting organisations have erected facilities on other than Crown or local authority land.

33. ADVERTISING OF ARTIFICIAL MARIJUANA PLANTS

Mr. Warburton, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

With reference to the 22 November issue of "People", which is a magazine distributed widely in Queensland by Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd., Bowen

Hills, Brisbane, and which contains an illustrated advertisement for what is described as artificial marijuana plants at a cost of \$5.95 each, obtainable by applying to Post Office Box 658, Manly, New South Wales 2095, and also mentions the words "pot" and "insert"—

(1) In view of the public concern over drug-taking and trafficking in Queensland, will he undertake to have the matter investigated as a matter of urgency?

(2) Does he agree that this form of advertising must tend to promote an interest in the drug plant, and what action will he take to have this obnoxious form of advertising prohibited in this State?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) There is no law in Queensland to prohibit advertisement for sale of artificial marijuana plants. Whether this form of advertising would tend to promote an interest in the drug plant is a matter of conjecture. The article is, of course, not dangerous in itself and legislation to prohibit this advertisement or sales of the article would be impracticable and could raise constitutional difficulties in view of the interstate nature of the operation. I have sufficient confidence in the good sense of Queenslanders to suggest that they will see the "toy" which is advertised as a gimmick in the poorest of tastes. I consider that it should be treated with the contempt it deserves.

34. MORETON ISLAND INQUIRY

Mr. T. A. White, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) Which Government departments and authorities are represented on the inter-departmental committee set up to advise on the future land use of Moreton Island?

(2) Has the committee requested submissions from the sand-mining companies involved on Moreton Island?

(3) Have other groups interested in the future use of Moreton Island been likewise contacted by the committee to present their views?

(4) When do they expect to have completed their report?

Answers:—

(1) The Committee comprises—

Co-ordinator-General (Chairman);

Under Secretary, Department of Mines;

Chairman, Land Administration Commission;

Director of Local Government;

Valuer-General;

Director of National Parks and Wildlife;

General Manager, Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation.

(2) The committee has not requested submissions from the sand-mining companies but has held discussions and obtained data from them concerning the relative importance of ore bodies on the island.

(3) When the Government released the report of the Committee of Inquiry—Future Land Use—Moreton Island, I invited public comments on that report on the understanding that any comments would be considered by the present committee. A number of submissions have been received from private individuals and organisations interested in the future use of the island.

(4) The Co-ordinator-General expects that a report will be completed early in the new year.

35. WOODY POINT JETTY

Mr. T. A. White, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism—

Is he aware of the deteriorating condition of the Woody Point jetty and, if so, what action does his department have in mind to maintain the jetty in the future?

Answer:—

Yes. The jetty is quite safe for the pedestrian traffic and occasional small-craft use it receives. This use does not justify major expenditure on maintenance which would be appropriate if it were heavily trafficked. My department will carry out annual inspections of the structure. To ensure that the jetty remains safe, any necessary maintenance will be carried out by Redcliffe City Council and paid for by my department.

36. LICENSING OF PRAWN TRAWLERS

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

(1) What are the reasons for the recent decision to impose a licensing system of all prawn trawlers?

(2) If the reason was the protection of the resource, could it have been controlled by closing certain areas to allow regeneration, and does that control occur already?

(3) On what date was that policy introduced?

(4) Was the licence policy introduced without warning?

(5) Is an effect of the policy the creation of a very valuable and highly sought after windfall asset in the licence?

(6) Could the policy be modified to accommodate persons who are long-term residents of Queensland and persons associated with the industry, for example, deckhands, boat-builders, designers of boats and naval architects, who wish to acquire at least one licence?

Answers:—

(1) New licensing criteria for otter trawlers were introduced in an effort to constrain a massive influx of new vessels into the fishery off the Queensland east coast. It was estimated that over 400 new vessels were under construction or about to enter the fishery, and responses since the policy was announced have confirmed the accuracy of this estimate. Many of these trawlers being constructed in interstate shipyards are large vessels over 23 m in length, and are being built specifically for the Queensland east coast, which was virtually the last trawling ground of any consequence in Australia not subjected to some form of restricted licensing until the introduction of the current policy.

(2) No. Closure of sections of the resource would only have intensified further the already high fishing pressures presently operating. There is also no information available on which closures could be based, nor can such information be readily obtained.

(3) Cabinet approved the new policy on 24 September 1979, and the policy was announced and came into force on the following day.

(4) The policy was introduced without warning to avoid an inevitable last-minute and uncontrollable rush for licences which would have negated the intent of the policy.

(5) Some such effects are unavoidable whenever entry to an industry is restricted, whatever the nature of such industry may be. Discussions are going on with industry representatives with a view to determining a replacement policy which will keep such effects within bounds.

(6) Queensland residents who can prove they committed themselves to enter the fishery prior to 25 September will have no problem with the licensing of their vessels when completed. It is not possible at this stage to provide special entry conditions for Queenslanders who may decide to enter the fishery for the first time at some period in the future.

37. DANGEROUS SWIMMING-POOL SALT CHLORINATORS

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

With reference to reports some months ago drawing attention to explosions in automatic swimming-pool chlorinators—

(1) Is he aware that there has been another explosion in this type of equipment and that hundreds of Queenslanders are unknowingly risking injury from exploding salt chlorinators?

(2) As this danger could be simply and cheaply eliminated by proper installation procedures, will he take action to have appropriate regulations introduced urgently?

Answers:—

(1) I am aware of one explosion in an automatic swimming-pool chlorinator earlier this year. I have no knowledge of any further incidents of this type. Investigations carried out at the time indicated that the apparatus may have been misused. If the transformer/rectifier portion of the unit is operated separately from the filter pump, there can be a build-up of hydrogen and oxygen which does constitute an explosive mixture.

(2) The units are normally installed correctly and, provided there is no unauthorised interference with the connections, there should be no hazard. Under the circumstances; no additional regulations are necessary.

38. SCHOOL PROGRAMMES TO EDUCATE STUDENTS AGAINST DRUG ABUSE

Mr. Shaw, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education—

(1) What specific programmes have been introduced in Queensland schools to educate students on the important issue of abuse and illegal use of drugs, and when were they introduced?

(2) Has any assessment been made of the effectiveness of such programmes?

(3) What training is given to trainee or student teachers and the teaching profession generally to enable them to participate in such programmes and to cope with the drug problem as it relates to school communities?

(4) What role does the Health Education Council play in school programmes?

Answers:—

(1) Two bodies have been largely responsible for alcohol and drug education in this State, namely,

(a) from 1963 to 1977, the Queensland Co-ordinating Committee on Alcoholism (QCCA);

(b) from 1970 to 1977, the Queensland Health Education Council Drug Education Section (QHEC).

Both bodies have, however, now ceased to exist as independent agencies. The QHEC has been incorporated within the Division of Health Education and Information of the Department of Health, and the community-oriented functions of the QCCA have also passed to the Department of Health.

The office of the QCCA has been the departmental function through which alcohol education services and programme have been planned and conducted. In the decade 1964-1974 the approach, which was State-wide, was recognised as a pace-setter and the innovative efforts attracted considerable attention from interstate and overseas educational authorities and agencies specially concerned with prevention of alcohol problems.

Between 1975 and 1977 the QCCA executed its responsibilities with the assistance of a group of some 12 advisory teachers drawn from the State teaching service. With the disbandment of the QCCA and the advisory service in 1978, responsibility for school-based programmes of alcohol and drug education reverted to the Department of Education, such programmes being basically integral components of a comprehensive health education programme.

With the appointment of a Co-ordinator of Alcohol and Drug Programmes and two alcohol and drug advisory staff in 1979, the department's approach has been re-structured, and alcohol and drug education will be conducted in a number of subject areas on a school-based programme approach rather than centred on one subject.

(2) Yes. The nature and efficacy of alcohol and drug education programmes in Queensland schools was studied as part two of the 1974-75 research study conducted by my department and commissioned by the Queensland Co-ordinating Committee on Alcoholism and the Queensland Health Education Council. These programmes were the alcohol education programme based in the Alcohol Education Kit prepared by the Queensland Co-ordinating Committee on Alcoholism (QCCA 1974) and the drug education programme based on the Drug Education Guide prepared by the Queensland Health Education Council (QHEC 1972). Both programmes were in 1974 and were information-oriented programmes, although there was an increasing emphasis on values education in the Drug Education Guide for the upper years of schooling. This second report of the study has not yet been published as a consensus on the interpretation of the findings has not been reached by the Departments of Education and Health.

The department recently obtained for some three months the consultant services of Professor Gerald Globetti of Alabama, a world authority in the field of alcohol and drug education. Dr. Globetti, who had previously assisted in setting up the QCCA programme in 1970, assisted in an evaluation of previous efforts and in the re-determination of the department's philosophy of approach, goals and priorities in relation to alcohol and drug education.

(3) Little or no training in relation to drug problems as they relate to the school community is currently given to teachers-in-training. However, considerable activity has been generated recently through in-service programmes for teachers.

In 1978, the Curriculum Branch developed an Alcohol Education Resource Package for secondary schools. In 1979, resource teachers from each region were specially trained to promote the package in Government and non-Government

schools. Assisted by two alcohol and drug education advisory teachers, they conducted seminars throughout the State for teacher librarians, and teachers of health, English, home economics, citizenship and science. The seminars were necessary to introduce the new materials and the possibilities of their use in subject areas other than health and to the concept of responsible decisions about drinking.

In 1980, the programme will be extended to education about drugs other than alcohol.

(4) As I have previously pointed out, the Health Education Council no longer exists as such. The precise role of the Division of Health Education and Information, into which the council was incorporated late in 1977, in relation to alcohol and drug programmes in Government schools at least, has yet to be defined by further consultations between the Departments of Health and Education.

Further information on the matter at this time should be addressed to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Health.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The time allotted for questions has now expired. The questions remaining unanswered will appear on tomorrow's Notices of Questions.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

STRIKE IN ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would otherwise prevent the debating of a matter of urgent public importance.”

Motion agreed to.

STRIKE IN ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (12.1 p.m.): I move—

“That all members of this House, representing all Queenslanders, deplore the misuse of industrial power and the losses, hardship, personal deprivations, and inconvenience caused to the whole community by the current unnecessary and unwarranted strike action by the electricity supply unions, and call on all unions concerned to end their strike immediately.”

Today we see the people of Queensland being bludgeoned and blackmailed by the Labor movement's revolutionary council—six faceless men who decided to plunge the State into darkness and back into the industrial Dark Ages.

These men, who are aided and abetted by members of the Labor Party and members opposite, have set out deliberately to bulldoze the State Electricity Commission and

the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission by depriving the community of an essential service. They do not identify themselves, but attempt to hide behind a cloak of secrecy and hold the community to ransom. They send others into the firing-line to do their dirty work and they skulk in the darkness, directing operations.

For the information of honourable members who are interested, these faceless men are:

Mr. Kevin Byrne, of the Municipal Officers' Association; Mr. Bill Stone, of the F.E.D. & F.A.; Mr. Ozzie Vaughan, of the Amalgamated Metal Workers' & Shipwrights' Union; Mr. Bill Stewart, of the Federated Ironworkers' Association; Mr. Gordon Bess, of the Vehicle Builders Union; Mr. Fred Whitby, Secretary of the Trades and Labor Council; Mr. John Thompson, of the Electrical Trades Union.

Mr. Neal Kane was also heavily involved behind the scenes, but at the present time he is overseas—quite appropriately—in Russia. Those are the men who have pulled the strings and pulled the switches, thereby causing the black-outs that we now have to contend with.

In view of the Opposition's affiliations with the E.T.U., it is not difficult to understand why the strikers enjoy the support of Opposition members. Mr. Warburton, Mr. Vaughan, Mr. Burns and Mr. Houston are all members of the E.T.U. In fact, Mr. Warburton and Mr. Vaughan were formerly E.T.U. organisers. Mr. Burns and Mr. Houston were former Leaders of the Opposition. All of them are wrapped up in this whole business. They are influenced and directed by their E.T.U. masters.

As I was saying, these faceless men send others into the firing-line to do their dirty work. They attempt to hide in the darkness while directing operations. These faceless men, the Trades Hall spokesmen, the Labor Party and those workers who have meekly followed directions to bring about chaos through this senseless power strike have shown a blatant contempt and disregard for the law, for the whole community and for the normal process of arbitration.

The radical leaders of the power industry unions and their friends have turned back the clock, using Stone Age tactics to hurt as many innocent people as possible. They have done this to achieve their own selfish end. The people whom they are hurting are their fellow workers, women, children, patients in hospitals, old people in need of care, and babies. The safety, well-being and care of all those people have been ignored. Every single member of the Opposition supports the strikers. Not one of them has spoken out against the strike.

No doubt Opposition members will try to get out from under by saying that they support the 35-hour week, and that if we would grant a 35-hour week we would be

out of trouble. That is the irresponsible way in which Opposition members will act. They will have some method or scheme by which they will try to slip from underneath. Never once have we heard them come out on the side of the public. They have never had the courage, determination or the sympathy within them to support the community as a whole. It is disgusting to think that they are elected by Queenslanders to represent their interests.

Mr. R. J. Gibbs: Get back to your notes and stop stuttering.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I should think that the honourable member for Wolston, as a comparatively new member, would at least be mindful of the people who put him where he is. However, he is very much under the influence of certain people.

Opposition members are not prepared to recommend, or say openly to their colleagues, that they should revert to the normal arbitration processes. The radical leaders of the power industry unions and their friends have certainly turned the clock back. Few people in the community have been left untouched by this unnecessary, unwarranted, flagrant abuse of power that is supported by Opposition members, and is a pointless exercise of industrial muscle.

The power union leaders, their Trades Hall backers (with members of the A.L.P. supporting them) have shown a completely contemptible disregard for the interests of the community.

Mr. Kruger: You've been in Government for 22 years, and things are getting worse.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I could quite easily answer the statement that things are getting worse. Things must get worse when people similar to Opposition members are in power and are supported by their A.L.P. colleagues in this Parliament. They are supporting and abetting them. It is bad enough when people outside act in this way, but when members of Parliament back, support and encourage them, it is worse. We will see shortly how Opposition members vote on the motion.

What a wonderful Christmas present for so many people of Queensland! Hundreds of thousands of dollars—millions of dollars—are being lost by the community so that some people may benefit in a monetary way. What a disgusting state of affairs that some members of this Parliament will do everything in their power to excuse what is being done—to justify the action that the unions have taken. I am sure that not one Opposition member will reprimand them for what they are doing to the community.

And so I ask: Where do Opposition members stand on this? I know where they stand, and it is only right that the public should know. After this debate the people will be able to see quite clearly where they

stand. It is right that the public should know where Labor Party members stand, and which side Labor members are on. Labor Party members will not be on the side of the people, whom they always claim to support. They will be on the side of the militant union leaders, the six faceless men. Instead of standing by the community which elected them, Opposition members will be standing side by side, shoulder to shoulder, with the faceless six and their Trades Hall lieutenants. After this debate, the House will see quite clearly where they stand.

The Government initiated this action this morning to draw the attention of the House and of Opposition members to the seriousness of the situation; to the unbelievable fact that there are men in the community, men whom Opposition members support, who are prepared to act like thugs and highway robbers by setting upon the community to gain some monetary benefit and greater power for themselves.

The Trades and Labor Council secretary (Mr. Fred Whitby) gave a hint in "The Courier-Mail" this morning that anyone who attempted to break the strike might not have a job. If we can get half an opportunity under the new Act to substantiate such an attitude, I assure rank-and-file members of the union that the Government will initiate action against people who threaten others. That is nothing less than standover tactics and industrial thuggery.

The power unions have demanded the right to do what they like, while expecting the Government and the community to do nothing in reply—to take no retaliatory action or to seek no redress on behalf of the community. Mr. Casey will be supporting them in their stand and their attitude. He will not be saying that the Government ought to take action against them. He will say that they should be let off scot-free, that they should be allowed to raid the community and that they be allowed to take the disastrous action that they are taking today.

The Leader of the Opposition says that the Government should engage in further discussions. Instead of saying that the attitude of the unions is futile and wicked, he says that we should have more discussions, when talks have already failed to produce the results which the unions demand and when the Industrial Commission hearing of the claims has been guaranteed. What more can we do? The way is open, the way is prepared, for the Industrial Commission to hear the matter. The unions completely disregard the wishes or the instructions of the commission and go their own way.

The Opposition Leader has once again failed to speak up for the community. That has come out crystal clear in the whole debate on this matter. The people whom we all represent in this House are being unnecessarily hurt. Not one member of the Opposition has spoken up in their favour. Those members will come up with some airy-fairy talk to try to overcome this problem, such as

giving shorter hours to these men at extra cost. That would put people out of work and cause chaos in the community. But that does not concern Opposition members. Their attitude is to give way and to let the unions have what they want, irrespective of the consequences.

Mr. Casey supports those who cause disruption and loss. He says that the Government and the community should give in to the standover tactics of these people. We will not give in to these standover tactics.

There is no way in the world that the Government will adopt the Opposition's attitude. We will act in the best interests of the community. The Government is firm in its resolve that industrial matters must go ultimately to the Industrial Commission. That is the only way in which such matters can be resolved. Out of all this, there may be a possibility of the formation of a new union which might adopt a new attitude and take different action.

Mr. Jones: You'd put Wiley Fancher in charge.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: If the honourable member were in charge, he would muck it up. That is quite sure.

The Government will not be bulldozed into giving way on this or any other issue and allowing the community to be blackmailed and bruised. It is becoming increasingly clear that, in this State, there is a powerful and vocal minority within the trade union movement and its leadership, which is attempting to use that movement for radical political purposes rather than for industrial ends. In this regard, those persons are quite irresponsible in their attitude to the laws of the land.

The current electricity strike has become nothing more than a ploy—it is just kite-flying—to gain increased wages by receiving the same money for less work, and to get more overtime.

Mr. Frawley: They want 48 hours' pay for 35 hours' work.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: They do want 48 hours' pay for 35 hours' work. I have suggested that they take 35 hours' pay for a 35-hour week and allow the other 12 per cent to go to other people so that they can get a job. Again honourable members opposite, who are smiling and laughing, will say that that is ridiculous and that they will not go along with it. They are not concerned about this problem.

The Opposition Leader has clearly come out in favour of bypassing arbitration. He no longer has any interest in the processes of arbitration. That is quite obvious. Instead, he is supporting the unions in their stand. He supports the law of the jungle. He supports already highly paid workers who seek to become the princes of the work-force by making paupers of the consumers. What

about the other thousands of workers throughout the State who have been inconvenienced by the strike and have lost money or their jobs because of it?

Those people opposite have not come out and condemned the strike. They have not adopted any attitude or taken any action other than to support the strike. Mr. Casey and his blackmailing friends in the trade union movement are not concerned in the slightest about the plight of the people of this State. They are not concerned that there has not been a vote taken by the workers in this whole operation. The matter was decided overnight without any consultation with the workers.

The Leader of the Opposition is one of those who support this strike, and he supports it very strongly. I am sure that I speak for most honourable members of this House, and for the vast majority of people in the general community, when I call on all the unions concerned to end this unnecessary, unwarranted and indeed wicked strike action, and to end it immediately. We have appealed to the members of the unions. I know that many in the union movement are deeply concerned about this matter. Many union members have returned to work, and we congratulate them for that. They are prepared to work. Of course, in view of the decision made by their union leaders, the six faceless men, a key section is perhaps unable to return to work. Those union members are in a fix. We are concerned, as obviously they must be. I can only appeal to them to adopt a more positive attitude within their own union and not let their leaders, with the support of the A.L.P., force them into the situation in which they and we as a Government find ourselves.

We, as a Government, have met a number of times. We have sought not to be provocative. We have sought to be positive in our attitude. We have not directed any action at the unions in a way that we could through the essential services legislation. Of course, that it not to say that, should the situation continue, or develop, the Government will not take such action. Cabinet has met on this matter, and it will meet again on it later today and again tonight. In the meantime, I deplore what has happened. I invite all honourable members on this side of the House, and indeed on the Opposition side, to state exactly where they stand on this very volatile issue that has resulted in so much disaster and heartbreak for so many people.

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (12.17 p.m.): I second the motion moved by the Premier, which reads—

“That all members of this House, representing all Queenslanders, deplore the misuse of industrial power and the losses, hardship, personal deprivations, and inconvenience caused to the whole community

by the current unnecessary and unwarranted strike action by the electricity supply unions, and call on all unions concerned to end their strike immediately."

In seconding this motion that the Premier has moved on behalf of the Government, I wish to draw to the attention of the people of Queensland the very serious situation in which the Government, and indeed the community, finds itself today. There is a situation in Queensland that is causing grave concern to any thinking Queenslander. This position has been brought about by the action of a small number of people who have been prepared to take upon themselves the decision-making of the trade union movement, without referral to the membership of the trade unions involved. Over the last couple of years—

Opposition Members interjected.

Dr. EDWARDS: Honourable members opposite run to the defence of the trade union leaders. They know full well that no vote has been taken over the last few days. Many union members have rung me today and indicated that they did not even know a strike was being held until they presented themselves for work. Others received notification an hour before the strike was to take place.

The member for Sandgate and the member for Nudgee have said that a vote was taken. Some time ago a decision was taken, which left the matter in the hands of the trade union movement leaders to act in the way in which they thought it was necessary to act. But that decision did not give them the right to bring this State into the situation where all the services have stopped. It gave them the opportunity to act responsibly, but they have acted irresponsibly, and they stand condemned by this Parliament for the situation in this State today. Any member of this Parliament who does not support this motion stands condemned, along with those trade union leaders.

Let me speak about the history of the trade union movement. For the last couple of years there have been threats from certain members of the Electrical Trades Union within the leadership of the movement. Trade union leaders have tried to provoke situations to cause concern within the industry. At last they have stumbled upon the situation that could, in their opinion, create a division within the community and within the industry—the 35-hour week. Some weeks ago they said they wanted negotiation, and the Government said that it would be prepared to allow this issue to be discussed within the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission—and discussed it was. Then the Industrial Commission decided to refer the matter to the Full Bench. The issue was left for a few days and then it was referred back to the Industrial Commission for negotiation.

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The union movement then decided that it wanted total information and was not prepared to negotiate any further. How could the State Electricity Commission negotiate with a gun held at its head? It was impossible for the State Electricity Commission to undertake to give any further information to the Industrial Commission at that stage. In its wisdom the State Electricity Commission decided to let the matter go to arbitration. The Government has repeatedly placed on record that it would accept the result of arbitration. When the Government was threatened with industrial disputation some months ago, the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police and I made a public commitment on behalf of the Government that it would abide by any decision of the Industrial Commission or the Industrial Court in regard to this matter. That commitment of the Government still stands.

I wish to make it quite clear that, now that arbitration has commenced, action has been taken by these trade union leaders to bring the industry to a standstill. This morning we read in the Press of the six faceless men. I do not know about those particular people, but I do know that this decision was made over the week-end without referral to the members of the trade unions.

Mr. Davis: Rubbish!

Dr. EDWARDS: It is not rubbish; it is absolutely true. The honourable member for Brisbane Central would not even know what day of the week it was, let alone whether it is rubbish or not.

Let me make it quite clear that a number of the trade union members involved in this industry have said that they knew nothing about the union leaders' decision until after the strike was called. Some even thought that the strike was to begin at midnight last night. That is an indication of how much information the trade union leaders gave to their members in the work-force.

As a result of the unilateral action of the union leaders, without reference of recent date to their membership, the community has been brought to a standstill. There is inconvenience; there is loss of production; there is loss of salary to those people who have wanted to go to work. There is also discomfort to old people, suffering and road accidents. The cause of all those disabilities must be totally laid at the feet of those people who initiated this strike action.

I agree with the Premier when he says that the Opposition stands condemned, as do the trade union leaders. I will say more about that in a moment. I believe that every thinking Queenslander must protest at the action taken by the trade union leadership at this time. I believe that the total concern being expressed by the community today supports the Government's actions. I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition is prepared to identify himself and his party with this motion, which any sensible member of

Parliament who truly represents his electorate must support, when it is put to the vote later today.

Where does the Leader of the Opposition and the Labor Party stand on this particular matter? As usual they are sitting on the fence. As usual they are afraid to speak on trade union matters. What is the policy of the Labor Party when disputation such as this current matter confronts the people of Queensland? Where are the rights and liberties of thousands of Queenslanders who have been inconvenienced as a result of this unilateral action?

We see the hypocrisy of the Labor Party and the Leader of the Opposition, who has said that he believes that the dispute should be settled by the Industrial Commission. Well, let the trade union movement stay in the Industrial Commission and let the matter be settled. But, of course, all the Opposition wants is to cause more conflict and more provocation within the community. The threats of blackmail made by a few militant trade union leaders against the members of the trade union movement have brought a great day of disgrace to Queensland.

It is a very difficult industry for which to legislate on trade union activities. Let me say again, as I have already said in previous debate in this Parliament, that it is not possible to legislate for industrial responsibility. It is not possible to legislate to bring responsibility into the hearts and souls of those people controlling the trade union movement. This must be the responsibility of sensible, thinking Queenslanders. A small number of people is holding to ransom the State of Queensland. I feel very sad that the day has come in the history of our State when the people see the Leader of the Opposition not prepared to declare himself in line with the correct motives of responsible people in this Parliament.

The people of Queensland recognise the long-term implications of the actions of a small group of trade unionists. These actions could have an enormous effect upon the whole of our society. The divisions and communication breakdowns that result from their actions compel us to call upon the Opposition to declare itself quite clearly.

Let us ask the public to ponder what would happen if all people in the community acted on the same principle as this small number of trade union leaders. One of the prerequisites of civilisation, of living in a community, is that all people agree upon a general set of rules, principles and standards upon which they will act. Those principles are determined by society and the rules are made by the Parliament. All sections of the community—employers, public servants, trade unionists and professional people—are expected to live by those rules for the benefit of the whole of society.

Without general compliance with those rules, it would be impossible for society to operate. There is no doubt that some people

in this Parliament today sitting on the Opposition benches would like to see society break down. Some trade union leaders would like to bring anarchy into our community. If proof of that is needed, one has only to look at those countries in which there is no longer respect for the rule of law and of democracy.

Today a small group of trade union leaders have themselves decided that they no longer want to comply with the rules of society. They no longer want to comply with the rules of responsible trade union activity. They have decided that they want to act by their own set of rules and guide-lines, completely oblivious to any effect their actions might have upon the community. What would happen if the whole of the community decided to see these things broken down within society? The trade union leaders have acted irresponsibly. Those responsible trade union members who are concerned about the future of their industry, and the future of the community, are ashamed of the trade union leaders who have initiated and promulgated this strike action.

I believe that the majority of trade unionists within our community are responsible people. Let me repeat that: the majority of trade unionists within our community are responsible. However, at present they are being overwhelmed by the opinion given by a very small number who are prepared to break down our society, to break down the rules of responsibility and to give to our society chaos, anarchy, discomfort and suffering.

If we as a community and as a Government are prepared to accept this, then we are failing in our responsibility. If the Opposition dares to vote against this motion, it, too, will share in the irresponsibility of this action. The time for political point-scoring has ceased. The Leader of the Opposition must identify himself either with this motion or with that part of the trade union movement that has acted so irresponsibly today. We want to see peace returned to our community. We want to see this industry continue, as it did for many years, without the disruptions that have occurred in recent times. I believe that that is possible. The Government has initiated certain moves that it believes will bring democracy back to this society and to the area of responsibility in the electricity industry.

Finally, I say this: we live in an age in which tremendous pressures are being put upon the community. There are the pressures of the economy and the pressures of division within society. The action taken by a few people over the past few days has resulted in divisions within our society that I believe are unnecessary. The responsibility for the discomfort and suffering that have been caused in the past few days lies fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the union leaders. They have been responsible for the

injustices that have been perpetrated on both the community generally and the responsible trade unionists in our society.

I call upon the Opposition to identify itself with the Government's concern, but I expect that honourable members opposite will play politics and talk about everything except the meat of the subject. I challenge them to tell us where they stand.

Mr. CASEY (Mackay—Leader of the Opposition) (12.31 p.m.): There are two sides to every story. Unfortunately, the Government has put forward a motion designed deliberately to try to hoodwink the public of Queensland and convince the people that there is only one side to the dispute now occurring.

One point that has not been mentioned to date by the Government, the media, the Industrial Commission, or anyone else, and one that stands out, is the political interference of the Government, especially of the Premier of Queensland, in the power dispute. The political interference of the Premier is, of course, par for the course and follows his record and the form that he has shown over a long period in this State. It is further evidence of the truth of the stories that have come to us over the years of his interference in industrial matters.

The second line of the motion moved by the Premier this morning mentions "misuse of industrial power". Again, there are two sides to the story. In this instance, the key to the dispute is to be found in the misuse of political power by the Premier and the Cabinet of this State. I have said time and time again, both in this Chamber and outside in the community, that the big stick will not solve any industrial dispute, that the use of the big stick tends only to aggravate a dispute. Disputes can be solved only by the parties concerned sitting round a table and making a co-operative effort to find a solution. They will not be solved by the use of the big stick, whether by the unions, the employers or the Government. Its use will only create industrial insanity, and probably that is the situation that is being reached in Queensland in the present dispute.

At one stage, the Leader of the Liberal Party in this Chamber said that he would endeavour to trace the history of the dispute. I am afraid that he did not go very far into that history before becoming sidetracked. The history of the dispute shows that it began before the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission of this State. What happened? Because of the type of discussion that took place and the type of argument that was put forward, the Full Bench of the Commission decided that it would refer the matter to a single industrial commissioner. It was referred to Commissioner Gibson, who convened conferences.

From the number of conferences that were held and the number of attempts at conciliation that were made before Commissioner Gibson, one thing came through loud and clear—that the breakdown was the result of the refusal by the State Electricity Commission to provide the information required, not by the unions but by the commission itself. The dispute went back to the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission and was then again referred to a single commissioner for the purpose of obtaining information. It was not forthcoming from the State Electricity Commission. The reason for that was that months ago, even before the matter went before the Industrial Commission, the Premier laid the ground rules in relation to this matter and stated that it was not negotiable. That attitude became the attitude of the State Electricity Commission.

What were the questions asked by the unions? They were as follows:—

(1) What additional cost would the industry consider a reasonable cost in reducing the working hours to 35 a week worked over a nine-day fortnight?

Is that an unreasonable question for the union to ask? Was it unreasonable for the union to request that information before pursuing its case before the Industrial Commission? I stress the term "reasonable cost". There was nothing wrong with that question whatever.

(2) If the unions are able to convince the industry that the cost of implementing reduced working hours and a nine-day fortnight can be contained within the industry's estimation of a reasonable cost, will the industry agree to the unions' claim?

The unions sought from the industry a guarantee in return for an undertaking by the unions that they would contain any increased costs.

(3) Will the industry supply details of industry classifications, wage rates and work locations for each of the suggested 1,074 additional employees on a board-by-board breakdown, together with details of costs associated with each additional employee?

That question was the most important of all, and again it amounted to a reasonable request. Similar requests are made in other matters that come before the Industrial Commission. It followed the normal procedure in industrial relations. However, what was the point in making the request? The State Electricity Commission refused point-blank to give the specific information that was sought.

The unions' requests were reasonable. They followed the normal guide-lines set down for the attempted settlement of any industrial dispute that comes before the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. In other words, the unions were doing the normal thing. The unreasonableness was on the part not of the unions but of the State Electricity Commission. Before the Industrial Commission it refused point-blank to provide the information.

On 28 November, only last week, it was pointed out before the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission that there were great discrepancies in the information provided by the State Electricity Commission and also between the information presented by it and its annual reports, which are presented to Parliament. The unions were able to see immediately that the State Electricity Commission was endeavouring to mislead them and also to mislead the Industrial Commission and, furthermore, the people of Queensland. It misrepresented the position concerning the cost of implementing a 35-hour week and a nine-day fortnight.

One thing that is obvious is that somewhere along the line there has been political interference in these industrial relations. We have seen a remarkable difference between the attitude of the State Electricity Commissioner and that of the South East Queensland Electricity Board. In its annual report, at page 23, it says this in relation to industrial relations—

“The Board takes the view that resolution of industrial issues with SEQEB should not be contested through direct industrial action where curtailment of supply will follow. Industrial matters which lie solely within SEQEB's operations should be resolved by negotiation if possible, with recourse to arbitration if and when negotiation has been exhausted.”

The attitude that is clearly expressed there is that preference and priority should be resolved by negotiation if possible. That is what the unions sought to do, and their actions are in keeping with the thoughts expressed by a board that represents a major portion of the electricity industry in this State. The attitude expressed by the State Electricity Commission, of course, is entirely different.

Another interesting aspect of this report is to be seen on page 19, where it is stated that last year S.E.Q.E.B. made a profit of \$26,200,000. Despite that increased profit, tariffs increased by 10 per cent from 1 July 1979.

Today, the Premier told us that the reasons why the unions want certain information should be given. The unions sought the information but the State Electricity Commission did not give reasons for increasing tariffs by 10 per cent. The people of the State were not told that, for a start, S.E.Q.E.B. made a profit of \$26,200,000 and had paid for all capital works out of revenue—without the use of loan funds! When we talk about the problems of the consumers, surely we should recognise that they are entitled to know why, in the light of such a huge profit, it was necessary to increase tariffs by 10 per cent.

Another very interesting point that has not been referred to in the House today or in the media, and which the people of Queensland should recognise as one of the main points in the dispute, relates to a passage in the transcript of the case heard by Mr. Gibson on 17 July 1979. Mr. Neal

Kane, the State Secretary of the Electrical Trades Union, the man whom the Premier tried to malign this morning, said, as one of the key spokesmen for the unions—

“... whilst the claims have been for a 35 hour week there have been methods of introducing it over various periods of time. So long as the principle can be established, it is a matter of the parties then determining how it will be introduced, over what period of time the implementation of the principle would take place.”

That is the union's main point of argument in having this matter determined by conciliation.

The unions have made it quite clear that they do not wish to force the electricity industry into implementing a 35-hour week and a nine-day fortnight immediately. They want the principle adopted in exactly the same way as it has been adopted and is operating in so many other States. Their whole purpose was to have guide-lines laid down properly by sane, sensible men sitting round a table working out exactly how it could be done. It was clear from the outset of this dispute that the unions were not demanding an immediate 35-hour week. They are very keen to have the matter determined by conciliation—by agreement between the two major parties—so that it can be implemented progressively.

At least the Minister for Labour Relations knows that arbitration decides a matter on a hard-and-fast basis, whereas conciliation is a completely different method of dealing with industrial relations. Conciliation facilitates a much smoother transition from one set of rules to another over a certain period, with agreement being reached on the guide-lines to the satisfaction, more importantly, of both parties and, in this case, the consumers of Queensland.

Another reason why a decision must be made on an industry basis concerns the huge increase in productivity of the power industry. Instead of boring honourable members with figures, I ask them to look at past annual reports of the State Electricity Commission.

Mr. McKechnie: Pass it on to the community.

Mr. CASEY: The Government responded to that increased productivity by increasing tariffs by 10 per cent, without giving the consumers any reason for doing so.

The other matter for consideration is the technological change that has taken place in the industry. Any honourable member who has worked in an industry where technological change has taken place knows the concern that workers in that industry have for their families and their homes—

Dr. Lockwood interjected.

Mr. CASEY: Their homes, which is the only major investment they have.

Dr. Lockwood interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CASEY: They fear that they may be among those who become redundant.

Dr. Lockwood interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Toowoomba North under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr. CASEY: They fear that they will be among those who lose their employment, not because of something they have or have not done, but because of a decision made in a boardroom—in many cases, because of this Government, an overseas boardroom—without consultation with the Government, the unions or those who will be affected. That is what has been happening in the power industry. Many of our power-stations have been closed down. Within the next few years, many more will be closed down.

Mr. Camm interjected.

Mr. CASEY: The Minister mentioned the life span of Swanbank Power Station. I could also mention Tennyson, the power-station at New Farm, the one at Burrum—I could go on and on. The Minister mentioned the power-station at Mackay. Power-stations have been closed down because of technological change. It is all very well for Government members to smile and smirk. They should put themselves in the position of employees who have committed themselves to a lifetime in an area and an occupation, and have bought homes, such as the fellows in Burrum, who were flat out getting anything for their homes when they had to be sold up. They lost all of their savings. They are the matters that we must consider. The consideration must be for the people. The Government's attitude should be one of caring for the people and not saying point-blank, "It is a one-sided affair and this is what the attitude should be."

The productivity of an industry must be shared by all within the industry. There is no better example of that than the sugar industry. Government members know full well that, when productivity came to the sugar industry, a special allowance was paid to the workers within the industry to ensure that they shared in that productivity. That industry is no different from the power industry, whose workers should have the same entitlement.

This dispute has reached a no-win, dead-locked situation. The electric authorities, the trade unions and the inconvenienced public are all losers. There can be no doubt about that. Instead of trying to aggravate the problem, as the Premier has done, aided and abetted by the Deputy Premier, and instead of deliberately trying to inflame the situation

and turn it into a political issue, the Government should be using the House for a different purpose. For that reason, on behalf of the Opposition, I move the following amendment to the motion—

"Omit all words after the word 'unwarranted' and insert in lieu thereof the following words—

'industrial dispute between the State Government instrumentality, the State Electricity Commission, and the electricity supply unions and call upon the State Government to instruct its Industrial Relations Minister to immediately convene and chair a conference between the two parties to the dispute in order to resolve it forthwith.'

I want to change the Premier's destructive motion to a constructive one and involve the man who should be involved—the Minister for Labour Relations. Constantly, in recent months, he has dodged his responsibilities in this House. Through the essential services legislation the Government deliberately and politically created a conflict with the union movement of the State. What did we see with that legislation? We saw it passed from the Minister for Labour Relations to somebody else.

I give an assurance to the public of Queensland that if there were a Labor Government in this State now, we would be doing, under similar circumstances, exactly what is set out in that amendment. We would be trying to resolve this dispute. The Government would be acting for and on behalf of the people of this State, not just acting to further inflame a situation that is detrimental to every person in the State of Queensland today.

The union sought conciliation in order to keep this industrial matter out of the political arena. The Labor Party, when it was in Government, introduced conciliation and arbitration provisions into legislation on the statute-books of Queensland and Australia to take this matter out of the political arena. But it has been deliberately brought back into the political arena by this Government, this Premier, this Cabinet and the Deputy Premier. In actual fact, what is happening today with this motion is that the Government is endeavouring to make this Parliament the main stadium for every community brawl in Queensland, and that is not what it should be. It was never designed for that. It was designed to pass sane, sensible legislation that could be adhered to. It was designed in such a way that it would stay out of certain industrial matters. That is why Labor leaders of old in this House introduced the conciliation and arbitration legislation that we have in Queensland today.

The unions of this State are separate and have their own autonomy. That is accepted by the Industrial Court of this State. That is how they are registered with it. The A.L.P. has no more right to dictate to the unions than has the present Government to dictate

to the United Graziers' Association or to any union of employers as to what it should do. That is quite clearly the basis of the whole of the industrial legislation in Queensland. Governments that want to make a political football out of everything are not able to do so under the law of this State. Unfortunately, that is what this Government is doing.

It was the Premier who laid down the guide-lines in this matter. He did that long before the commission began negotiations, or before anything was commenced in the commission. Long before any evidence had been submitted to the commission, the Premier quite clearly said, "They can talk about it until they are blue in the face. We won't give them a 35-hour week ever." The State Electricity Commissioner went before the commission and followed the Premier's example. He just sat back and said, "It is not going to be negotiated, and that is it." Who is the perpetrator of the one-sidedness of this dispute? It is none other than the State Electricity Commissioner. Perhaps, in doing the bidding of the Premier of this State, he is trying to ingratiate himself, because it was only last year that the Premier declared him to be untrustworthy and incompetent in regard to the Tarong Power Station issue. That was the Premier's declaration about State Electricity Commissioner Murray. Commissioner Murray is now just another political stooge of the Government, doing the bidding of the Premier. He said straight out, "Not negotiable", despite the fact that power workers in most other States of Australia have this particular provision and that power workers in the others are moving towards getting it. They have obtained this provision through negotiations with the power industry.

Another very interesting and important point to be considered in this matter is that, despite the absolute refusal of the negotiators of the State Electricity Commission to hear anything whatsoever from the unions on this issue, those negotiators have enjoyed a 36½-hour week for the whole of their working lives in the Public Service of this State. Yet, at the bidding of this Government, they are deliberately refusing to allow other workers to negotiate a shorter working week. Goodness gracious me, how good they must be! I believe that the statistics that have been asked for by the unions should now be produced, not just for their sake and for the sake of the Industrial Commission but for the sake of the public of this State. They are entitled to this information, as they are the ones who have suffered the inconvenience caused by this dispute.

The decision in this matter is, and has been, up to the rank and file members, and they have voted on it. A reading of the transcript of the hearing before the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission on 28 January reveals that the Industrial Commission also knew that. Unfortunately many members opposite prefer to do their research into industrial matters through either a

telephone conversation with the Premier, with his old, antiquated ideas, or through the files of "The Courier-Mail" or "Telegraph". However, if they were to read the full transcript they would get a different view altogether. The rank and file union members took a hard line point of view because the Premier had publicly done the same in the first place.

There is now no further room in this dispute for emotional hard lines, and that is what the motion before this House is today. It is negative; it is emotional in its content; and it is certainly hard line in its expression. The Premier has got onto the bandwagon and spoken a lot of nonsense about the six faceless men who, it is claimed, brought about the current situation. That type of talk may have worked 30 years ago, but it will not work today. Those persons are well known to the Industrial Commission and there has been no endeavour whatsoever by any of those men to hide. However, the Essential Services Act, passed by this Government in another attempt to use its big stick, has meant that those men will not declare their names.

Of course, it is no wonder that the Premier wants to go back 30 years in his methods of operation. He stands alone in this Parliament as the only one who opposed the introduction of the 40-hour week, something that is now enjoyed by every worker in this State. If one researched the speeches made by the Premier in the Parliament over the years one would find that he is the one who opposed workers' compensation for the workers of Queensland; and that he is the one who opposed the introduction of long service leave. That, too, is now enjoyed by almost all Queenslanders. He also opposed improvements in the superannuation scheme for public servants in this State.

They are examples of his attitude to industrial relations. So far as he is concerned, any benefit that might go to an ordinary worker is no good. However, he is quite happy to do all he can to help multinational companies and wealthy corporations. He has encouraged men such as Mr. Iwasaki to come to Queensland. A Press report of a few days ago stated that the people in the tourist industry in Queensland are making a greater effort to get tourism off the ground than Mr. Iwasaki has ever looked like making.

The Essential Services Act is a classic example of the Premier's thinking. This debate today is positive proof of the absolute nonsense and ridiculousness that was spoken a month ago in this House when the Essential Services legislation was introduced, because if the Essential Services Act was as good as the Premier tried to indicate, there would be no need for this debate. Both he and the rest of Cabinet know that the Essential Services Act is an unworkable piece of legislation.

The Premier spoke of forming a new union in an attempt to solve this problem.

When it comes down to knowing and understanding the thinking of the ordinary man on the job, the ordinary employee who relies on a take-home pay packet to provide the wherewithal for his wife and family, the Premier has absolutely no idea. Other members of Cabinet have not, either, because for the past 10 years they have introduced, one after the other, absolutely useless amendments to industrial legislation. They have been used purely for political propaganda at the time, in exactly the same way as the Premier is endeavouring to use this present motion today—merely as political propaganda.

When the Premier was speaking, a member referred to the number of hours that people do and do not work.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Because of the trying and depressing conditions, I have granted approval for the attendants to remove their coats if they so desire.

Mr. CASEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish the Government's industrial relations were as good as yours.

Prior to the luncheon recess I had referred to a comment that came, I think, from the Liberal Leader in relation to the number of hours worked and payment for hours. Members of the Government—and the Premier particularly—should refrain from referring to that matter. The Premier's pilot, who earns \$25,000 a year, is a classic example. If one averages the number of hours flown by that aircraft, she receives her salary for nine hours' flying a week.

In Queensland today we see a senseless deadlock, with employers refusing to negotiate. That is made evident by the transcript of a hearing before the Full Bench of the Industrial Court as recently as 28 November, when the representative of the State Electricity Commission said, "This claim for a shorter working week is not negotiable." I emphasise that: "not negotiable". How can there be proper conciliation in industrial matters in this State when that is the deliberate attitude of the employer, reflecting, of course, the attitude of the Government? Is it any wonder that the unions are reluctant to go to arbitration? The Premier has already announced the Government's findings, and he has been supported by the Leader of the Liberal Party (Dr. Edwards).

All Queenslanders wish to see a fair and peaceful solution of this dispute. That is the key to it: a peaceful settlement free of further political provocation. We see that type of political provocation in the motion put before the House by the Premier. I have spoken to the representatives of the unions involved in this dispute. They have given me an undertaking that there will be no more industrial unrest or disputation before Christmas. There will be no more disruption to the public this year. If they are taking that attitude, it is up to the Government

and the State Electricity Commission to take a step to see what they can do to accept responsibility for solving this problem. That is the reason why we have put this amendment before the House. We believe negotiation to be the job of the Minister for Labour Relations. Of all in this House, he is the one who should be most concerned about good industrial relations. It is his task to obtain the figures that are required before calling together the relevant parties for meaningful discussions.

The Treasurer stated that the unions made their decision over the week-end without any further recourse to their members, and without a further vote of the members. I make it quite clear, as a perusal of the transcripts of all matters before the Industrial Commission would verify, that the union leaders had a clear indication from the rank-and-file members that there would be further industrial action on this issue if the State Electricity Commission continued with its pigheadedness and its refusal to give appropriate information to the Industrial Commission. The union leaders clearly indicated to the commission that that was their greatest concern; that they had already been directed by their rank and file about what they had to do and what their line of action should be on this matter. However, the Government has no real interest in delving into these things and finding out what is going on. This Government's only real interest, desire and intention in this issue is to be provocative. It is attempting to cash in on an emotional issue, one of great concern to all Queenslanders, for some type of political gain.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, there are two sides to every question. There are two sides to every coin in the pocket of every member of this House. There are two sides to every story. Indeed, the other side of the story had not been put forward properly till I put it before the House today.

The Opposition believes that if Parliament is to become involved in this dogfight, the Minister for Labour Relations should play an important role, and I therefore commend the amendment to the House.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (2.21 p.m.): I second the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. At the outset, Mr. Speaker, let me say that of all strikes that have taken place in the history of this land, this one will go down in the annals of this Assembly as the one that brought sanity to the dress of members. I am sure, too, that you, Mr. Speaker, will be recorded as the one who allowed members of this Assembly to be reasonably dressed for the State's climatic conditions, and I congratulate you for taking the action that you did. However, I regret that it required a strike on an entirely different matter to bring that about. I am sure that neither the standard of debate nor the decorum of members will suffer because of your decision.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order

Mr. HOUSTON: If it had not been for the strike, we would not have had the heat in the Chamber and Mr. Speaker would not have agreed to a sensible standard of dress right from the word go. For years, the women members of this Assembly have come into the Chamber dressed as they desired and, on most occasions, very attractively. I hope that the ruling will not change as industrial circumstances change. Let us remain like this, particularly during the heat of the day, and carry out our duties in comfort.

So much for that, Mr. Speaker. Let me now get down to the nitty-gritty of the debate. The Government decided years ago that it was going to "take the trade unions on", in the words of the Premier, with the idea of using disputes as a political football for years to come. It has done that successfully year after year. Every time an election drew near, or every time problems arose in the Government ranks, the Government was able to stir up industrial trouble or, when a problem looked like developing, fan the flames.

Let us look at some of the headlines—not all of them—going back as far as 1976. Before a State election, we saw, "Joh wants a tough line with unions". Another one said, "Showdown on 'blackmail'", and the article said, "The Premier yesterday declared war on 'union anarchy'." I reiterate that that was back in 1976. Another one said, "Bjelke calls for troops to beat strikes." One could go through a whole host of them. An article that I have here said—

"It was time the Arbitration Commission said 'no' to wage demands, the Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) said yesterday."

That was in 1977. In other words, the Premier took it upon himself to try to direct the Industrial Commission.

Again in 1977, under the headline, "No dole for sacked strikers", the Premier said that he wanted the dole refused to workers sacked through union action—not just those who were on strike, but anyone who happened to be out of work. That is the tough line that has been developed.

Let us look also at all the nonsense that has taken place in recent months in relation to the Essential Services Bill. The Government introduced the Bill with the idea of saying, "There will be no more strikes now. We have fixed everything." Honourable members will recall that the Essential Services Bill was rushed through the House immediately after the last two-day power strike. No reasons were given why that was necessary; it was only to show the Government's muscle.

Now let me come right up to date. The Leader of the Opposition has gone through various points relating to the actions of the unions and the Industrial Commission. What

did the Government do? Last night, Cabinet met and talked about the strike but failed to come up with a solution to the problems that it helped create through its semi-governmental instrumentality, the State Electricity Commission. This morning Cabinet met again. Suggestions were put forward concerning the use of troops, the use of the police and the implementation of the provisions of the Essential Services Act. Other people and I said during the debate on that legislation that it was nothing more than a ploy and could not work. The upshot was that the Cabinet meeting concluded without a decision being reached. Cabinet did not know where to go. It had created a monster, and did not know how to handle it.

Then the Premier got a brainwave. He said, "Let's go into Parliament and try to show the people of Queensland that we care, that we will achieve something." I ask: What will this debate achieve?

Government members get up, beat their chests, and say, "It is terrible that we have a strike." Of course it is terrible. No-one wants strikes. The workers themselves do not want strikes; but how far can people be pushed? How far over the years has the Government pushed people in the industrial movement? The Government, having found no answer, came into Parliament and moved this motion. The Opposition, on the other hand, has adopted a positive approach. We have said, "Get the parties together." That is something the Government should have done ages ago.

The Government created a Labour Relations portfolio, headed by the Minister for Labour Relations. What is he supposed to be doing? I know that he sits in Parliament and that personally he is a nice fellow. But what does he do in administering his portfolio? So far he has not entered this industrial debate. We have heard two Government speakers, the first of whom was the Premier. Of course, it wasn't the Premier who introduced the Essential Services Bill. It is no good saying that the Minister will not have time to speak. If this really were an industrial matter and not a political one, the Minister for Labour Relations would have moved the motion. He should have told the House what he and his Government have attempted to do to bring about industrial peace. However, that is not the position. The Government is only trying to bring about industrial chaos. If it is unsuccessful in its attempt, it will stand firmly behind a body that it has created.

The electricity set-up in Queensland is the Government's creation. It is headed by the State Electricity Commission. Talk about faceless men in the unions! Who really controls the State Electricity Commission?

Mr. Hartwig: Murray.

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, he is the Electricity Commissioner. Would the honourable member try to tell me that he alone is responsible for refusing to give to the unions the information that they require in order to present their case? If he is, the Government should take positive action. It means, in effect, that one man, not the union leaders, as claimed, is against the community.

The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that the dispute arose from a desire of men and women to guarantee their security in the future, in the belief that technology, computerisation and overall development in the electricity industry warranted a reduction in working hours. The State Electricity Commission has claimed that a reduction in working hours will create a thousand or more jobs. Is there anything wrong with that? Wouldn't it be a great thing for this State if we could create another thousand jobs without causing any great financial problems?

I have heard Ministers boast in this House about the Japanese taking over some major coal deposits and creating 300 jobs. In order to give overseas companies an opportunity to establish themselves on the coalfields of this State, the Government and the local authorities are paying out millions of dollars on the development of schools and roads and the provision of essential services. But the Government does not mind that. When we asked about it we were told that 200 or 300 jobs would be created. I am not decrying the creation of those jobs, but this, on the words of the Electricity Commissioner, is an opportunity to create over 1,000 jobs. However, the Government is not at all interested.

On this occasion, the Government's approach is the same as that adopted by the then Opposition to the 40-hour week. Without retracing the history of the 40-hour week or other matters concerning working hours, I think it is appropriate to recall that the 40-hour week was introduced by a Labor Government in 1947. At that time, the anti-Labor forces in Opposition argued very strongly against it. They told the Government of the day that it would break the State; that it could not work; that it would mean the sacking of workers and that it would stifle industrial development. The then Opposition advanced every possible reason against the introduction of the 40-hour week, but the Government now boasts that the 40-hour week is all right. When the Government came to power in 1957, it endorsed—

Mr. Miller: When the 40-hour week first came in, what happened in the building trade? Wages were reduced because they wanted the 40-hour week.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right. I am not denying that. I am being completely factual.

Mr. Miller: They were prepared to take 40 hours at a lower wage.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right.

Mr. Miller: They were prepared to take the 40 hours at a lower wage.

Mr. HOUSTON: They did. Will the honourable member let me finish my speech. He can then get up and make his speech.

Mr. Miller: No, I can't.

Mr. HOUSTON: Can't the honourable member make a speech?

Mr. Miller: I can't.

Mr. HOUSTON: Has the honourable member been gagged? Now we are starting to get the story. No wonder Government back-benchers want to interject. We now learn that the debate is to be kept in the hands of the faceless hierarchy of the National and Liberal Parties. If that were not so, the honourable member would be able to speak in this unlimited debate. The honourable member can rise to speak if he wants to, and I ask him to get up and make his points.

Mr. Miller: I'll try.

Mr. HOUSTON: We will not stop the honourable member getting up. If the gag is applied, it will be applied by the Government.

The honourable member for Ithaca has at least worked in the industrial field. I am not arguing with his explanation. If I were as old as he I could go back as far as he can. But I cannot, and I will just relate what history tells me.

In the years before the building workers got the 40-hour week agreed to by the employers—it did not come through legislation; the combined employers group agreed to it—there were many strikes. People in the industrial movement went on strike to try to persuade the Government of the day and the employers that a 40-hour week was justified and in the interests of the State. Later on it proved to be in the State's interests.

For the honourable member's information, another industrial union got a 40-hour week, for 44 hours' pay, a few weeks later. The coopers' union negotiated a 40-hour week, without a drop in pay. Other unions followed suit. Finally, in 1947, the industrial legislation was passed. It is well to remember that in 1947, 32 years ago, it was considered that a 40-hour week was good for the State. We should not forget that public servants and many workers in the electricity industry work only 36½ hours, while others work even fewer hours. Many people in our community are working less than 40 hours a week, so Government members should not think that we are talking about something outlandish. Mark my words: whether the Government likes it or not, unemployment, advances in technology and advances in computerisation will force it and other Governments to legislate for a working week of 35 or fewer hours.

Mr. Miller: Mr. Houston—

Mr. HOUSTON: I do not intend to take interjections. The honourable member has the chance to make his own speech.

Mr. Miller: You know I haven't.

Mr. HOUSTON: He has. He has every chance. He is one of the Liberal members who get up in this House and say, "We are free to do what we want to do. We, as Liberal members, can do as we like." As I said before, I challenge him to get up and open his mouth in this debate. He knows that he has been gagged. It is possible that he might embarrass the Government because he is a truthful man. He would tell the truth, and that might embarrass the Government because it is relying entirely on half-truths.

It is quite remarkable that the greatest upheaval in industrial matters in this State took place in the short period between 1929 and 1932, under the Moore Government. That is when all the industrial anarchy took place. That is when the seeds were sown. Thank goodness a Labor Government was returned in 1932. This Government is again heading for trouble. It took a bit longer but the Premier is setting out deliberately to put the unions into a position where they have little option but to fight.

Let us look at the background of this dispute and what has happened in recent years concerning industrial disputes. Most of them have been between trade unions and Government instrumentalities. Very few of them have been between industrial unions and private enterprise. The private employer understands the meaning of conciliation. All major employers today have public relations officers. Many of them employ former union officials as their industrial officers. Those union officials are very loyal to their present organisations but they are also very well versed in industrial matters. Such employer groups get round the table and avoid strike situations.

What a different story when it comes to Government and semi-Government departments such as the Railway Department and the State Electricity Commission. The Government says to the public servants, "Stand firm. Don't give an inch."

In this particular case, why is it that the State Electricity Commission will not back up its statement that it will cost \$27,000,000 a year to implement the 35-hour week? Surely that figure of \$27,000,000 was worked out.

Mr. Miller: Mr. Houston—

Mr. HOUSTON: As I said before, the honourable member is wasting his time. He should make his statement, and I will tell him all about it later on.

Mr. Miller: You can't tell me later.

Mr. HOUSTON: I defy the honourable member—

Mr. Miller: You tell me what it will cost.

Mr. HOUSTON: I do not know what it will cost.

Mr. Miller: What does the union think it will cost?

Mr. HOUSTON: It is not a matter of what I think it will cost. The State Electricity Commission has said that it will cost \$27,000,000, but the union believes it will cost much less than that. The union realises that it will create a tremendous number of jobs, and that is what we want, amongst other things. The union wants the extra jobs.

This morning I listened to a fellow on the radio. I have no reason to doubt what he said as his other statements were very sound. He pointed out that at the power-house at which he is working—he did not say which one, but it is obviously one somewhere in the southern part of Queensland—one man was doing the work that was performed by four men at the other power-house at which he worked.

I know something about the electrical industry. I think that, with the exception of some of my colleagues on this side of the House, I know more about that industry than most honourable members. In the modern power-house, job after job is being eliminated purely because of technological advances, computerisation and the various circuits that have been introduced. Because of these advances, men are seeing jobs going all the time. Every time a new power-house is opened, the number of men employed per kilowatt hour produced is reduced.

One of the factors that the unions have to argue before the Industrial Commission is cost. They are not in a position to know many cost factors. It is recognised British justice that when two parties argue a case in court, each party has to know the fundamental basis of the other party's argument or defence. What is wrong with the State Electricity Commission's telling the unions how it arrived at its figure? What is wrong with this Government instrumentality, this unit of Public Service, letting that figure be known?

The State Electricity Commission has no competitors. When I have asked questions in this House about the State Government Insurance Office or some other Government operation, I have been told, "We cannot allow our competitors to know our field of operation or our cost structure." That may be a valid argument in some cases, but surely it is not an argument against letting the unions and the public know the cost structures of the State Electricity Commission, the generating authority and the distribution authorities. There is no competition, and public money is being spent in these operations. Also, the people are being charged various amounts for the supply of electricity.

What our amendment seeks to do, and what the Government should have done months ago, not just last week—and it is not too late even now to do it—is to get the State Electricity Commission representatives around the table with the Minister for Labour Relations and the unions and find out what the whole score is. We all seem to have forgotten the name of the legislation that we are discussing. It is the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. The Government is talking about arbitration, yet if the unions were to go to arbitration now they would have to do so with only half a case, because so much information is available only to the electricity authorities. This information is the crux of the whole strike. If the State Electricity Commission believes that it has an accurate figure and that that figure does not justify the granting of a 35-hour week in the power industry, what is wrong with the commission's making that figure available to the other parties?

Of course, the Premier in his argument said that the Government has never sought to be provocative. That is a lot of nonsense. I think that the whole history of the Premier indicates that he has tried to entice the unions to take industrial action. He has hoped that they would take industrial action.

Then there has been reference to inconvenience to the public. No-one is more concerned about the welfare of the public than the Australian Labor Party and, I believe, the trade union movement. As I have said, it is the Government that has a vested interest in causing industrial unrest. It hopes that the public will be inconvenienced. If that was not the case, why was it that after two meetings of Cabinet, one last night and one today, all it could come up with was this pious motion presently before the House? Even if it is carried 100 per cent, what would it achieve? Does the Government think it will affect the trade union movement or those on strike? The Government knows as well as I do that the strike will be over by midnight tonight. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, the unions will make no further moves before Christmas.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Does that wipe the slate clean?

Mr. HOUSTON: It does not wipe the slate clean at all, as the member for Greenslopes knows.

The Minister for Labour Relations and the Cabinet must do something positive. By that, I do not mean that they should impose penalties on the unions; I mean that they should get the parties together. The Industrial Commission can go only so far, and that is not the answer.

Mr. Porter: There is always an answer to everything.

Mr. HOUSTON: The member for Toowong did not contribute anything. He has had a

month's long service leave. Anything that he achieved in England could have been done as well, if not better, by Sir Wallace Rae. So he should not talk about the use of public money. He has not been in Queensland for the last month to witness this current problem.

As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, it was the union rank and file who determined the action to be taken in this dispute. I ask Government members to cast their minds back, not just to yesterday but to when the initial decision was made to seek a 35-hour week. That decision was made on the job by the workers. They made the decision and relayed it to their union officials, who were told to come up with some appropriate action and then take that action. That is what they did. The Government argues that union officials should go back to their members on every issue, yet I have witnessed this Government do things and bring Bills before the House that it has never mentioned in any policy speech. In fact, I have seen the Government do cartwheels on its own policy within a matter of hours.

I am very pleased to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. As I said, I regret that the Government has decided to try to gain some cheap political capital by this motion before the House. Instead of doing that, it should have got the Minister for Labour Relations to sit in his office with representatives of the unions and the State Electricity Commission so that they could talk out the whole matter. But, instead of doing that, the Minister for Labour Relations is content to sit here, silent, when he should be voicing his knowledge and demonstrating his ability. I know the honourable gentleman has an ability to get people together and to sort things out. Of course, one can only come to the conclusion that the Minister wants no part of it at all; that he is being forced by the domination of the National Party to take a back seat and do as he is told.

Once today's debate is over, I trust that the Government will sit down with the parties involved in the dispute. If it does not, the problem will not be solved. As it took years for the workers to obtain a 40-hour week and years to obtain the other natural advances that they received, so this will go on. A sensible Government should therefore decide to sit round the table and talk about it. That is what the Opposition amendment is all about, and I trust that Government members will support it. If they do not, that will show clearly that their motion is purely and simply a propaganda move designed to hoodwink the people into thinking that they care, when in reality the two meetings of Cabinet show quite conclusively that the Government not only does not care, but does not know what to do in a situation that it helped create.

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines, Energy and Police) (2.50 p.m.): I have listened to the two speakers on the other side. We intend to oppose the amendment and stick to our original motion. I am quite sure that the Minister for Labour Relations will be replying to some of the accusations that have been made. He will be speaking both to the amendment and our original motion, because the two speakers from the Opposition got completely away from the main text of our motion, which is that we “deplore the misuse of industrial power and the losses, hardship, personal deprivations and inconvenience caused to the whole community”. They completely ignored that. The Opposition has no feeling whatsoever towards the people who have been inconvenienced. It has no feeling at all for the suffering that has been caused by the actions of militant trade-unionists.

Let me outline completely the sequence of events that led up to this industrial dispute so that we can give the lie to the statement by the Leader of the Opposition that this was the fault of the State Electricity Commission for not giving certain information to the unionists. Let us go back to May 1979. The unions made a claim on the industry for a 35-hour week. Subsequently this was defined as a 35-hour week with a nine-day fortnight. On three occasions—1, 8 and 13 June—discussions on the claim were held between union representatives and authority representatives. The submissions made by the unions were referred to the constituent bodies for their determination, which was that on the information presented the claim could not be conceded and that, in any case, the claim was of such importance that it was considered it ought to be determined by the Industrial Commission so that all interested parties would have the opportunity of being heard. By “interested parties” I mean parties adversely or seriously affected by the introduction of a 35-hour week. The Industrial Commission is the place for this to be determined.

The Leader of the Opposition denigrated members of the State Electricity Commission who talked to the unions. He said that they have been enjoying a 36½-hour week for many years—since 1949. Let me inform the House and the Leader of the Opposition that I have worked with the Electricity Commissioner for a great number of years now, and there has never been a time when he has worked a 36½-hour week. He works nearly 60 hours a week.

Mr. Scott: What about the staff?

Mr. CAMM: The honourable member for Cook asks about the staff. I am talking about the staff. The Opposition is classing those men who negotiated with the unions on their claim for a 35-hour week as public servants. The Leader of the Opposition is classing them as public servants because they

enjoy a 36½-hour week. Then he says that public servants should be the ones who decide whether a 35-hour week should be introduced or not. We claim, and have always claimed—just as the Electricity Commission has claimed—that if a 35-hour week is to be introduced in Queensland it should be as a result of a hearing before the Industrial Commission.

The second speaker from the A.L.P. spoke about the 40-hour week. Was that decided at a meeting of unionists and one Government department? Was the 40-hour week decided like that? Of course not! It was decided by the Parliament itself. Legislative action followed.

Mr. Houston: That's not right.

Mr. CAMM: Legislative action followed. The electricity industry—and we backed it on this—said that the Full Industrial Court should be the medium through which a 35-hour week is recommended to this Government.

Mr. Houston: Don't you think Parliament comes into it?

Mr. CAMM: Yes. Parliament comes into it.

When the unions were advised that the State Electricity Commission felt that it was not the responsible body to negotiate a 35-hour week, they called a 48-hour stoppage on 9 July. On 5 July the Industrial Commission was notified of an industrial dispute, and subsequently a compulsory conference was held before Commissioner Gibson. Another one! That is four!

After hearing all parties involved, the commissioner found that conciliation was unlikely to succeed and, as a result, he exercised his rights under section 36 of the Act to have the matter heard and determined by a Full Bench of the Industrial Commission.

The Industrial Registrar issued an order to the effect that the matter to be determined by the Full Bench of five commissioners was whether the award having application in the industry should be varied to provide for an ordinary working week of 35 hours. The order also provided that the unions were to have carriage of the proceedings—that is, that they were to present their case.

The matter came before the Full Bench on 11, 12 and 13 July, at which time the unions made submissions to the effect that they had not presented their case in full to the industry and, as a result, sought to have further discussions with industry representatives on their claims. So there we had the unions crawling out of it and saying, “We didn't have the opportunity to present all our case to the State Electricity Commission, so we want to go back and again press our claims with the commission.” They also submitted that they had no authority from their membership to proceed

before the commission by way of arbitration; yet the last speaker from the Opposition benches said that the rank and file members had given their union representatives that authority. That was their excuse before the Industrial Commission, and it is on record that they said it.

Were these people frightened of arbitration? Are the leaders of the militant unions involved in this electricity dispute afraid of arbitration? Why do they not go to the arbitration commission, where their evidence can be examined and they can be cross-examined, where the evidence submitted by the State Electricity Commission and the electricity authorities, the distributing boards, and the figures submitted, can be examined by the union advocate, and where the Industrial Commission can itself require whatever information it thinks is vitally important to the hearing? Why will not the unions agree to go before the Industrial Commission and press their claims? Are they frightened of arbitration?

Following the plea by the unions that they had not had time to present their case, the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission acceded to their request and ordered conciliation conferences under the chairmanship of Commissioner Gibson, provided—and this is the important point—that the unions gave an undertaking that there would not be any bans, limitations or strikes during the course of the conferences.

Conferences took place on 17 and 19 July, 24 August and 5 September, at which time an opportunity was given to the unions to present their case in full. The information provided by the unions was conveyed to the boards, which re-endorsed their previous decision that the matter had to be heard and determined by the Full Bench. In conference on 5 September the unions sought answers to three questions, which included the cost to the industry of their claim and further details as to how these costs could be reduced. The industry undertook to provide this information to a conference of the parties on 11 October.

Subsequent to 5 September, it came to the notice of the industry that four-hour stop-work meetings were to be held on 25 and 27 September to enable unions to report to the membership. The unions organised four-hour stop-work meetings in defiance of the instruction from the Industrial Commission that, during the conferences, no bans, limitations or strikes were to be imposed. This appeared to the industry to be a breach of the undertaking given to the Full Bench of the commission on 11, 12 and 13 July. The commission was advised of the pending stoppage and a conference was then held before the commission.

The conference failed to prevent the stoppage and, as a result, four-hour stop-work meetings were held on 26 and 27 September, resulting in widespread load-shedding on 26 September. That was in defiance of the

request of the commission not to hold stop-work meetings or cause interruption to work while conferences were being held.

At the stop-work meeting, the members resolved—

“Resolution No. 1: Essential Services Bill”—

now we have another issue coming into the negotiations—

“The Premier of this State be informed that any moves to restrain our democratic rights to withhold our labour by his or any other Government will be met by the strongest retaliatory action within our power.

“This meeting of Queensland power workers endorses the action previously taken by our officials in the 35-hour week campaign and determines that, if satisfactory replies are not received on 11 October to the following questions put by our negotiating committee to the industry on 5 September, namely:—

‘(1) What additional cost would the industry consider a reasonable cost in reducing working hours to 35 per week over a nine-day fortnight?’”

What a ridiculous request to put to any employer! What would an employer consider to be a reasonable cost? If the unions said \$27,000,000, the employer would say that that was not reasonable. If the unions said \$10,000,000, the employer might say it should be half the figure, \$5,000,000, and the unions might say that they would work a 37½-hour week. There is nothing concise in that request.

Mr. Miller: Have the unions ever said what they believe the 35-hour week would cost?

Mr. CAMM: Never.

The resolution continues—

“(2) If the unions were able to convince the industry that the cost of implementing reduced working hours and a nine-day fortnight can be contained within the industry’s estimate of a reasonable cost, will the industry agree to the union’s claim?”

I repeat what I have said before: it is not the prerogative of one industry in Queensland to decide that a 35-hour week shall be introduced. It has never been the prerogative of one industry to say that that would be widespread throughout industry. The introduction of a 35-hour week in the electricity industry would affect every man, woman and child in the State, because the cost of electricity would certainly rise.

To quote further from the resolution—

“What are the details as to work locations, employing Boards, classifications, wage rates, additional operating costs and additional capital costs in the case of each of the additional 1,074 employees argued by the industry as necessary if the claim was implemented?”

"A 48-hour stoppage will be held in the industry on Monday, 22nd and Tuesday, 23rd October. Also we authorise the respective unions to call additional stoppages, as necessary, until we succeed in our claim."

So there are the unions asking the industry to meet them and negotiate and, at the same time, saying, "If you do not agree to our terms, we will have a 48-hour stoppage." That, in effect, is an attempt by the militant unionists to blackmail the electricity industry of Queensland.

At the resumed conference of the parties on 11 October, the industry refused to provide the information sought by the unions on 5 September, on the basis that the industry would not provide the information while it was under threat of a 48-hour stoppage on 22 and 23 October. Can anyone blame the Electricity Commission or the industry for refusing to divulge information under threats such as that imposed by militant unionists?

On 15 October, the Industrial Commission convened a conference of the parties in an attempt to obviate the threatened 48-hour stoppage on 22 and 23 October. It recommended that such stoppage not take place.

A further conference on 17 October failed to prevent the dispute and, as a result, the Industrial Commission issued an order restraining members of the union from taking part in the strike and also issued an order against the union president, secretary and officers preventing them from advising, aiding or instigating the dispute. In spite of this and in spite of the request by the commission, the stoppages took place on 22 and 23 October. As a result, the unionists breached the commission's order. These matters are on record—honourable members can get copies of them—and they refute many of the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Full Bench of the commission reconvened on 8 November, at which time Mr. Commissioner Gibson tendered a report that was read to the assembled parties. The report gave a concise and accurate resume of what had proceeded since the matter was before the commission on 11, 12 and 13 July. Mr. Gibson expressed the opinion that further conferences were unlikely to resolve the dispute and, as a result, requested that the Full Bench consider the matter. That was the second occasion on which Mr. Gibson requested the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission to consider the matter.

The Full Bench, after hearing the parties, ordered the industry to provide answers to the three questions posed by the unions on 5 September, and also obtained a guarantee from the unions that they would not participate in further bans, stoppages or strikes pending further conferences which the Full Bench suggested might take place between the parties. Some of the unions claimed in the Press that this was a victory. But it was not a victory for the unions when the Full

Bench of the Industrial Commission directed the Electricity Commission to supply the figures, because that was done on the condition that there would be no more bans, stoppages and industrial disruption in the industry.

A further conference was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Gibson on 12 November, at which time the industry answered the three questions. This is in reply to the Leader of the Opposition who said that the unions were never given any information. In reply to the three questions, Unions were advised—

"(i) The additional cost would be \$27,000,000 in the first year and \$20,000,000 per year thereafter. Since the claim was for a 35-hour week, the cost quoted is the actual cost and the industry was not prepared to make any further cost on a hypothetical basis.

"(ii) Question 2 is answered by question 1.

"(iii) Details were supplied to the industry of costs by each Board, additional staff required and other details required by the unions."

Prior to the conclusion of this conference, unions sought answers to three further questions. It should be borne in mind that the unions met the Electricity Commission. When they went before the Industrial Commission they said, "We have not had time to present a full case. We want time to reconsider it." They were then ordered back into conference. They then asked three questions. When the answers to the three questions were given, they came up with three further questions, which the industry undertook to seek authority from the boards to answer.

Following the information given to the unions on the three questions, a report appeared in "The Courier-Mail" that a spokesman for the Trades and Labor Council of Queensland reported that the information provided by the industry was dishonest and contrived. A spokesman for the Trades and Labor Council accused the Electricity Commission—after it had given the information which could have been checked with the auditor's report—of dishonesty and said that the answer was contrived.

Some two days after the questions had been answered and the claim had been made by the Trades and Labor Council that the answers were dishonest, by letter dated 15 November from the Trades and Labor Council answers were sought to four further questions. After the first three questions, there were a further three questions, and then an additional four. The industry met to appraise the situation and determined that, in view of the attitude of the unions, it was not right or proper to give further information to the unions on their claims. That is what I indicated at the start.

If the unions want the full information, the proper place for it to be given is before

the Industrial Commission, where their accusations about the information supplied being incorrect can be answered by the advocates for the Electricity Commission, and where the figures quoted by the Electricity Commission can be examined by the advocates for the unions. The commission itself can require further information if requested by either party. This is the way to have negotiations and discussions, not sitting round the table with a single commissioner and with the union being able to go away and say, "We weren't given sufficient information. The information we were given is incorrect." Go before the Industrial Commission, where people can be cross-examined. The Electricity Commission and the unions subsequently advised accordingly.

On 21 November, it came to the notice of the industry that overtime bans were to be invoked by the E.T.U. members at Toowoomba on 23 November. A compulsory conference was held before Mr. Gibson, at which time he expressed the opinion that such overtime bans would be in breach of the guarantees given to the Full Bench by the unions on 8 November.

Here are the unions again breaking the word that they gave to the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission. Mr. Gibson subsequently recommended that such overtime bans not be imposed, but the overtime bans were imposed by a meeting of E.T.U. members at Toowoomba at 4.30 p.m. on 23 November. A violent storm on that evening interrupted supply to a large number of consumers and to the sewage treatment works at Toowoomba. Because of local pressure, the bans were lifted at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday, 24 November, but the bans were imposed in defiance of a request from the Industrial Commission.

Here we have the sorry record of these militant leaders in the electricity industry defying the Industrial Commission, refusing to accept information given by the Electricity Commission, and then having the gall to come out and say that the information was misleading or was not correct, yet, at the same time, shying away from their responsibilities to appear before a Full Bench of the Industrial Commission, where the case could be argued.

As a result of a notification to the commission that this incident had occurred at Toowoomba, the Full Bench reconvened on Wednesday last. The unions were pressing to allow a further conference to take place, while the industry was pressing that the matter was not negotiable, as the bench and the unions had been informed since July. The Full Bench, in its wisdom after hearing the parties, came to the conclusion that further conciliation conferences were doomed to fail and, having regard to industry representatives submitting that the matter was not negotiable, decided that the matter should be heard and determined.

The Full Bench then asked if the unions would be ready to proceed. The unions

replied that they had no mandate from their members to proceed by way of arbitration. That is in conflict with the statement made by the honourable member for Bulimba that the union leaders had the approval of all members of their unions to go before the Industrial Commission, with the Electricity Commission, and negotiate for a 35-hour week. The union leaders replied to the Industrial Commission that they did not have a mandate from their members to proceed by way of arbitration. They had a mandate to proceed with industrial turmoil but they did not have a mandate to proceed by way of arbitration.

The bench advised the unions that, on receipt of advice from them that they were ready to proceed, the matter would be set down for hearing. That is where it stands today. As soon as the unions are prepared to indicate to the Industrial Commission that they are prepared to submit a case for a 35-hour week, proceedings will commence.

Since Wednesday, overtime bans have been progressively applied throughout the industry and, despite a compulsory conference on Friday, 30 November, when industry representatives attempted to explore whether a 48-hour stoppage was imminent as from midnight on Sunday night, no information was given by the unions. Yet I think even the Leader of the Opposition will admit that the union leaders themselves knew well before Sunday midnight that there would be a strike at midnight last Sunday evening, but they refused to divulge any information to the Electricity Commissioner or the Industrial Commission.

In the event, per medium of the media, the public and members of the union were informed on Sunday afternoon that a 48-hour stoppage would take place as from midnight Sunday. It was not very difficult for these militant trade unions to advise their members that they should go on strike at midnight but it was impossible for them to advise them to go back—when they had a longer period in which to do so, and when so requested by the Industrial Commission. At 9 a.m. on Monday morning—yesterday morning—the commission convened a compulsory conference, at which time it issued an order restraining members of the unions from participating in the strike. It also issued an order restraining the union officials, presidents and secretaries from advising, instructing, etc., members. It further ordered the union secretaries to advise their members of the terms of the order. The order operated from 12 noon yesterday. For the benefit of the members of the Opposition, I shall read the main contents of the orders.

Mr. R. J. Gibbs: You are filibustering.

Mr. CAMM: After listening to the speeches from the other side of the House, I realise that they know nothing about the subject. They know nothing about the present situation.

Mr. R. J. Gibbs: Go on, then, read the orders to us.

Mr. CAMM: If I wished, I could say a few words about the honourable member who is interjecting, to indicate how little he knows about things and how he has learnt something in the last few days.

The order outlines the employees concerned, and then states—

“ . . . be restrained from taking part in any strike in connection with the claim by the said Industrial Unions of Employees for an ordinary working week of 35 hours or any other claim of a similar nature.

“This Commission doth further order that the said Industrial Unions and their Secretaries forthwith take all reasonable steps to advise their respective members employed by the said The State Electricity Commission of Queensland . . .”

Then it mentions all the employees. It then states—

“This Commission doth further order that the said Industrial Unions, their Presidents, Secretaries or Organisers and other Officers of the said Industrial Unions be restrained from authorising, encouraging, instigating, advising or directing any of the members of the said Industrial Unions to take part in such strike and from aiding and doing any of such things.

“This Commission doth further order that service of this Order on the Secretaries of the said Industrial Unions shall be deemed sufficient service on the said employees of The State Electricity Commission . . .”

It then goes on to list all the employees, and states—

“This Commission doth further order that service of this Order on the said Secretaries of the said Industrial Unions shall be effective by tendering a sealed copy of this Order to the said Secretaries or by leaving a sealed copy of this Order with any person apparently above the age of 16 years at the usual place of business of the said Secretaries of the said Industrial Unions.”

The order made it very clear to the leaders of the unions what they had to do. They had to tell their men to return to work.

But no. We heard on television a very pious expression from a man with a distinct Scottish accent. He is one of the leaders of the industrial dispute. He said, “It would be very difficult to get this information out to the unionists.” It was not difficult for him to advise them on Sunday afternoon that they would finish work at midnight, but it was too difficult for him, in the same period, to advise them to return to work. After all, there was radio and all the other means of communication.

A further conference was convened by the commission at 2.15 p.m. yesterday, at which time the unions advised the commission that they were unable to inform their members of the terms of the order because of curtailment of electricity supplies. They said, “We can’t tell them because there is a strike on.” It was a strike, of course, caused by themselves. They said that this interrupted telephone communications, and that some unions were unaware of who their delegates were in the respective authorities. Such was the disorganisation among the union movement leaders that they did not know whom to approach and to tell that the strike was over. In addition, they felt that by giving too much information they were incriminating themselves in the terms of the order. All they had to do was copy the order and send it out.

The industry indicated to the commission that its attitude in respect of the claims was unchanged. To date, the strike is still current, except for one responsible gang at Swanbank, whom I want to thank, who have made available one additional generator producing 60 MW. They did that as a result of the order issued by the commission, which has been breached by others.

The two speakers from the other side, who obviously knew nothing about what they were talking about, spoke about industrial relations between the Government and the unions but did not get down to the nitty-gritty of the dispute involving the unions and the electricity industry and the turmoil and hardship that has been caused to the people of Queensland. I point out that Commissioner Gibson met the parties just after 5 July, and on 17 July, 19 July, 4 August, 5 August and 12 November. On those dates there were discussions between the unions and the commission.

The Full Bench sat in relation to this matter on 11, 12 and 13 July, 15 and 17 October, 7 November and 3 December. Despite the fact that the State Electricity Commission has said to the Full Bench that it has all the information to reply to the union’s claim and is prepared to defend its stand and answer any of the union’s criticism, the union has refused to submit its claims to the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission.

In summing up, I say that the Government has given sufficient information to indicate the order of costs involved. Those costs are of such a magnitude as to confirm the view of the industry that, as an industry, it cannot agree to the claim. The question of detailed accuracy does not arise because it is impossible to arrive at a precise figure on something as complicated as the introduction of a shorter working week. That was borne out by the testimony of a Mr. Selby at a recent hearing of the Full Bench. In any event, the costs give no indication of additional costs elsewhere in the economy by virtue of the inevitable rise

in electricity charges, let alone the massive costs should the 35-hour week flow to all other industries. Obviously the unions have no case and are engaged in a fishing expedition to structure a case and to prevent an exposure of weaknesses in their arguments in a formal hearing where expert witnesses can be called and cross-examined by both parties.

Honourable members would be aware that employees in the electricity industry do enjoy certain advantages over employees in other industries.

Mr. Warburton: Which ones?

Mr. CAMM: The sugar industry.

The State award rate for a mechanical fitter at the present time is \$174.90 a week. However, workers in the electricity industry receive an allowance for continuity of supply. Some years ago that was recognised as being important, and the unions accepted that it was important and accordingly received an increase in their salary. Later on the workers received what is known as a powerhouse allowance and also a substation allowance. A mechanical fitter after three years in the electricity industry—

Mr. Warburton: Let us be truthful about it. That is in a powerhouse.

Mr. CAMM: A mechanical fitter in a powerhouse enjoys a 25 per cent loading above the standard rate for a mechanical fitter in Queensland. If the workers in the electricity industry are granted a 35-hour week, then that advantage will be increased by at least 14 per cent. So they are not in a very onerous position.

As I indicated at the beginning, it is the Government's opinion that the matter is one entirely for the Industrial Commission, where the State Electricity Commission and the unions themselves can present their cases.

I wish now to say a few words in answer to some of the previous speakers. The Leader of the Opposition made a great ploy about the big stick not achieving a solution to any problem. I will pass the stick back to him, with the clean end this time, to see if he can persuade the unions that the big stick will not achieve anything and will not solve this problem. He spoke about profits in the electricity industry. He does not know what he is talking about. The Government has agreed over the years that the various electricity boards can make a profit so that revenue financing can take place. How else does the Opposition think huge transmission lines and power-stations will be built? How does the Opposition think that the existing power-stations will be improved unless the industry is allowed to make a small profit?

Mr. Scott: Why shouldn't that be a burden on the economy as a whole?

Mr. CAMM: It finishes up as a burden on the economy as a whole.

The member for Cook speaks of people associated with the electricity industry, but 99 per cent of the people of Queensland enjoy the benefits of electricity, so 99 per cent of Queenslanders contribute to this revenue financing of the industry. It then becomes a cost on the community as a whole. If we borrow money to build power-stations, who pays for them? The electricity users, and the community as a whole. Of course the community as a whole is contributing.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about redundancy in the electricity industry. What a ridiculous statement to make about an industry in which consumption is increasing by 8 or 9 per cent a year. If there is one industry in Queensland that is increasing, and increasing in employment opportunities, it is the electricity industry. Because of the industrial development that has taken place, more and more personnel are required in that industry.

For all his talk, never once did the Leader of the Opposition commit himself in his attitude towards the strike, other than to say that he is on the side of the unions who have fomented this trouble and are responsible for the strike. He said that this Government has not agreed to arbitration. We have agreed to arbitration every time. The electricity industry has told the Industrial Commission that it is prepared to hear the case of the unions. Those to blame are the militant unionists he is supporting. The vast majority of workers in the electricity industry are good, hard-working people. They are appalled at the stage that has been reached through this misleading of union affairs by a small group of militant unionists.

I think that I have replied to the honourable member for Bulimba. He spoke about the introduction of the 40-hour week. That finished up as a political decision. It was not decided between a group of unionists and one particular industry.

Mr. Speaker, I have outlined to the House the present state of affairs in the electricity industry as well as the matters leading up to it. I will leave it for the people to judge who is at fault. I have outlined the many conferences that have been convened by the State Electricity Commission in the Industrial Commission, all of which have resulted in defiance of the commission's instructions by the unions.

Mr. VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (3.27 p.m.): I rise in this debate today to try to be constructive about the issue that presently confronts this State.

Mr. Elliott: That will make a change.

Mr. VAUGHAN: At least I will try.

I believe that this debate has been brought on for purely political purposes. It is certainly not going to solve the impasse that currently exists between the employees of

electric authorities and the authorities in this State. It is a sad day for the State now and in the future. The Government allows the current situation in this State to continue unabated for purely political purposes.

Two years ago, in September 1977, the Government introduced the street-march legislation, for purely political purposes. I am firmly convinced that the reason we are debating this issue today—and the reasons why we debated it on 24 and 25 October last when the essential services legislation was introduced and passed in this House for the alleged express purposes of protecting essential service industries—is a purely political one. When he introduced this motion the Premier spoke about the present issue. In my humble opinion, he did not make one constructive suggestion about what should be done. The Minister for Mines, Energy and Police made no constructive suggestion either. I expected a long time ago that, as the Minister responsible for the electricity industry, he would do something constructive. Had I been the Minister for Energy in this State I would have taken the bit between my teeth a long time ago.

I have a little more experience than the Minister in this field. I was a shop steward on the job for seven years and a union official for 13 years. I make no beg pardons about that. What has happened in this State is that the Government has poisoned the minds of the people against workers. It also causes divisions between people in the country and people in the cities, and between people in Queensland and people in other States. It does this for purely political purposes.

Today we are faced with a dispute, just as we were on 22 and 23 October. The Government was going to do all sorts of things then. I recall Government members saying in this House on 23 October, "It is a pity that we didn't have the essential services legislation now. We could have done something about this." The Government has had the essential services legislation since 25 October. It has it today, it had it last week, but it has not sought to act on it.

Mr. Campbell: You are disappointed, aren't you?

Mr. VAUGHAN: I am shocked at the impotency of the Minister for Labour Relations. Having in mind the feelings that the honourable gentleman has expressed in past years, I would have expected him to step in, as he is entitled to under the provisions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, take the bit between his teeth and do something constructive. He has not done that. I believe that he is under pressure, as he has indicated previously. He cannot act. I know for a fact that the attitude of the honourable gentleman industrially does not line up with that of the Premier and the Cabinet. If he wishes to interject and make comments, I say to him that he is

completely weak in administering his portfolio, and the sooner he retires from it, the better.

A lot of hot air could be created in this Chamber by honourable members talking about the current situation. The fact is that there is a dispute between the electricity authorities and the employees of those authorities. Honourable members opposite can talk all they like about blaming elected officials. The blame for the situation that has arisen in this State must come back to the Government.

Mr. Miller: Rubbish!

Mr. VAUGHAN: I will tell the honourable member why.

The Minister has referred to the exhaustive discussions that have taken place. I see Mr. Murray sitting in the lobby listening to the debate. In this State, we have an Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. First, there is the process of conciliation. If that process fails, there is the process of arbitration. Although the process of conciliation was entered into initially, I should say that it was entered into rather lightly by the electricity authorities and was not pursued right through. That is one of the big problems with the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in this State. The State commission does not resolve issues and disputes to the same degree as the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. I think I am on record already as saying in relation to the coal-mining industry, with which I had a little bit of experience, that when Commissioner Mansini had people round the table, he kept them in exhaustive conferences and discussions. One of the big problems is that there is a tendency for the State commission to adopt the attitude, "Well, we have gone as far as we can in this conference. We will just adjourn the conference and leave the matter up in the air." That is not good enough, especially when dealing with an essential service industry such as electricity supply.

I made the point earlier that the Government is responsible for the present situation. Let me go back a couple of years to the proposed rationalisation of the electricity industry in this State. The primary aim of the Government was to get its hands on the 38 per cent of the State's consumers who lived in the Brisbane metropolitan area, for the purpose of financing capital development in the industry. If honourable members wish to consider that issue, let them look at the recent annual report of the S.E.Q.E.B., the annual report of the State Electricity Commission, and also the report of the State Electricity Commission to Cabinet on rationalisation. It will become evident that the sole purpose was to have access to sufficient funds to capitalise the industry. This year, the S.E.Q.E.B. was able to meet 100 per cent of its capital commitments from tariffs imposed as a result of the rationalisation.

What did the rationalisation of the industry do? Of course, prior to the rationalisation, the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland, because of the hand-over of the Brisbane metropolitan power-stations by the Brisbane City Council some years previously, controlled Bulimba, Tennyson, Swanbank, Middle Ridge and, to a lesser degree, Bulimba B, and, previously, New Farm. The employees in those power-stations were covered by (a) the Electrical Engineering Award—State and (b) the Shift Engineers and Operators' Agreement. Outside the Brisbane metropolitan area, in the Wide Bay area there was the Howard Power Station, which was controlled by the Wide Bay board, where the maintenance employees were covered by the Electrical Engineering Award—State and the operators by the Regional Electricity Boards Award. A little further up the coast, the Callide Power Station, which was formerly called the Calcop Power Station, was covered by the same two awards, but the employer was the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board. Further up the coast, the power-stations at Collinsville, Barron Gorge, and Kareeya were controlled by the Northern Electric Authority.

In effect, there were four separate generating boards: the S.E.A.Q., which covered the southern part of the State; the Wide Bay board, which covered the little Howard Power Station; the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board, which covered the Callide Power Station; and the Northern Electric Authority, which covered the two hydro stations, Collinsville and, at that time, the old Townsville Power Station.

The Government's idea was to rationalise the industry, to amalgamate it. It does not believe in the amalgamation of unions, yet it believes in the amalgamation of the electricity authorities. It amalgamated the power-stations and formed the Queensland Electricity Generating Board. The result was an amalgamation of not only power-stations but also workers and awards. It created a situation in which there was one employer, a whole host of classifications of employees and a whole host of awards. For example, there were the Electrical Engineering Award—State, the Regional Electricity Boards Award and the Shift Engineers and Operators' Agreement at Swanbank.

The Government decided to construct the Gladstone Power Station and also decided that the S.E.A.Q. would be the constructing authority with overall control. It brought operators from virtually every other power-station in the State to Gladstone. It had an amalgamation of employees who worked under a multiplicity of awards on both the operating and the maintenance side. Operators were brought from Collinsville, Callide and Swanbank. Demarcation disputes arose as unions competed to determine who would cover the large membership in the largest power-station in the State. The Government created the environment—it created the monster, so to speak—by its amalgamation of the electricity industry.

Mr. Miller: Is it wrong to amalgamate all these unionists into one industrial union?

Mr. VAUGHAN: No. What was wrong was that the Government did that before it dotted all the i's and crossed all the t's. The Government is an infant when it comes to industrial relations.

Mr. Miller: So we have a monster?

Mr. VAUGHAN: The Government created a monster and does not know how to handle it.

A series of discussions were held and people went through the motions. The Electricity Industry Industrial Committee was set up with the Electricity Commissioner, Mr. Murray, as its chairman. It contains representatives of each of the regional electricity distribution boards and generating boards. In addition to creating the Queensland Electricity Generating Board, the Government recommended that the Cairns board, the Mackay board and the Townsville board be amalgamated to form a Northern Electricity Distribution Board. It was also recommended that a Central Queensland Distribution Board, a South East Queensland Distribution Board and a South West Queensland Distribution Board be established, but, owing to political pressure and the political climate, the Government decided to retain the Cairns board, the Mackay board and the Wide Bay board.

Having done all that, the Government set up the committee, and its purpose was to meet the unions. Because I was an elected official of the Electrical Trades Union for 13 years, I participated in quite a number of discussions with that committee concerning problems in the electricity industry. We used to appear before the committee and present our problems with a view to having them resolved. However, we ran into a brick wall.

The Essential Services Act provided for settlement of disputes procedures, but the Government does not know the principles behind them. It does not know how they work in practice.

As I said, we ran up against a brick wall. I remember that on certain issues, such as the stand-by issue, that committee used to adopt the same attitude as the State Electricity Commission has in this instance. We would go before the committee, which would say, "No. We have to report back to the electric authorities." A matter would drag on for months, and finally we would get a reply saying, "We are terribly sorry. We cannot agree to your claim. Take it to arbitration if you believe you have a case." The electric authorities used to wait until about Christmas-time before making a final decision on stand-by issues—winter-time was not of much consequence—and then say, "Surely the rank and file will not hold the people of Queensland to ransom?"

As my leader said, there are two sides to an industrial dispute. Today, Government spokesmen are castigating employees in the industry, but I prefer to level criticism at the industry itself. If the managerial staff of electric authorities would leave industrial relations and the settling of industrial disputes to the people whom they employ to do this job, we would not be in the situation we are faced with today.

One reason for our debating this motion today is to allow the Government to make political capital out of the issue. Here I refer to the introduction of the essential services legislation. Today we are leading up to a similar situation. The Government is playing politics on this issue. So far no Government spokesman—neither the Premier, the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police, nor the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—has made any attempt to do anything constructive, as is proposed in our amendment, to try to resolve the dispute.

If Government members want to find out the attitude of the rank and file to the dispute, they should not simply accept what they read in the Press about union officials. They should talk to the rank and file, just as I have done. I challenge any Government member to talk to a mass meeting of men at the Gladstone Power Station and listen to what they have to say. The Government is equally guilty in holding the electorate to ransom. The Government is the second party to this political exercise. It is trying to make political capital out of an industrial situation.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to certain articles in the Press dealing with the extent to which the Premier has gone to break down the standing of elected union officials. I have a file on these matters, which I have shown honourable members on another occasion. The Premier is on record as saying, "It is not the rank and file members whom we are concerned about; it is the terrible elected union officials." On each occasion the Premier tries to turn facts around to gain political advantage, whereupon the Press and other media snap up his accusations about Left-wingers, Communists and elected union officials.

In trying to play politics with industrial relations, the Government has been successful in destroying the standing of elected officials. I have told the Minister for Labour Relations what has happened. The Government has destroyed the standing of elected union officials to such an extent that it has now to wrestle with the rank and file. An article in this morning's Press stated that it would require a brave elected official—just as it would require a brave elected member of this House—to tell his electors that he would not do something that they wanted him to do. Union officials are no different from members of Parliament.

Our conciliation and arbitration system is based on unions of employers and unions of employees. But over the years the Government has tried, for purely political expediency, to denigrate elected union officials, to destroy their credibility in the eyes of the community and the eyes of the rank and file. It has succeeded so well that elected union officials are now super-democrats. From their point of view, they dare not direct the rank-and-file members. They must go back and report and obey the wishes of the rank and file.

We all know that from time to time unions, like political parties, hold conferences at which the rank and file are asked to submit motions.

The 35-hour week campaign was the subject of one of the resolutions submitted by the rank and file to conferences of all of the 15 or 16 unions involved in this dispute. The rank and file determined that there should be a campaign for a 35-hour week, as happened with the oil industry which now has a 35-hour week and as happened with the coal-mining industry which now has a 35-hour week.

But the Government says, "It is those terrible union officials who have thought all of this up." The Government is so wrong. This is one of the reasons why the Government is not game or has not seen fit to hold a secret ballot of power workers to determine their attitude. If a secret ballot were held, it would go the same way as the only two secret ballots conducted in this State since that provision was inserted in the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. If the Government sincerely wants to find out how the rank and file feel, it should conduct a secret ballot.

Dr. Edwards: That won't resolve the dispute, and you know it.

Mr. VAUGHAN: Of course it will not resolve it, but at least the Government would know exactly what the situation is in this State. I do not believe that the Government wants to know how the rank and file feel.

Dr. Edwards: I have talked to them more than you have.

Mr. VAUGHAN: The Deputy Premier has done nothing. He was in the trade once. I suggest that he go and talk to a few people in the trade.

Over the years, the Government has created a monster in the electric authorities. Because of its inexperience and inability, and the incompetence or reluctance of the Minister to do something positive or constructive, the Government has allowed this situation to arise.

Mr. Miller: You have just challenged the Government. As a member of the Opposition, what would you do?

Mr. VAUGHAN: It is in the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

Last Thursday night, when I was discussing the Police Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill, I drew a comparison. On 25 October last, the Essential Services Act was passed. It defined those industries that the Government, in its wisdom, regarded as essential service industries. It is significant that the Government did not include the Police Department. That is all very well. Possibly the Government thinks that that is not an essential service. I believe it is.

During that debate, I pointed out that the Bill formalised the agreement that the Government had negotiated with the Queensland Police Union to give police officers the option of retiring at 55 instead of 60 years of age. The point I made then and the point I am making again today is this: the Government introduced legislation to define the power industry as an essential service. Why is it that the Government entered into conciliation and negotiation with the Queensland Police Union but will not do so with the electricity unions? As I said on Thursday night, I agree with the Government's action in negotiating with the Queensland Police Union. But why the differentiation? Why tell the employees of the electric authorities that there will be no negotiation? The Premier said that early in the piece when this problem first arose.

I will not accept that the State Electricity Commission or the electric authorities are not directed—I shall amend that and use the word “advised”—by the Government. I say that they are advised by the Government. The statement by the Premier at that time was that under no circumstances was there to be a 35-hour week in the power industry. Why go through the motions of negotiating? Why go through the exercise? Does the Government believe that it is deceiving the rank-and-file employees in the industry? It is not. That is why the Government is looking into the mouth of the gun today. A couple of weeks ago the Minister said that there would be no negotiation for a 35-hour week, that it was a matter for arbitration. Why didn't the Government tell the Queensland Police Union that? I know that the Government has regular meetings with that union. That is the way it should be. The Police Force is an essential service.

I will answer the previous interjections of the member for Ithaca, who is now absent from the Chamber. If I had been a Minister in this Government, I would certainly have gone out of my way to call the parties together before the whole of the State's power supply was disrupted. I would have convened a conference and talked to the

parties involved. I would not have hidden behind my ministerial portfolio and allowed the commissioner to be the front man.

Mr. Innes: Would you have maintained your membership of the union?

Mr. VAUGHAN: I certainly would have, and I am not ashamed of it. Have you maintained your membership of the Queensland Bar Association?

Mr. Innes: I am not a Minister.

Mr. VAUGHAN: We know that you have got ambitions. We know that a lot of people don't like your ambitions. I suggest that if you want to do something about industrial relations, you should take the industrial-relations course at Kangaroo Point.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! The honourable member will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I cannot understand why, on the one hand, the Government adopts a conciliatory attitude towards the Queensland Police Union and negotiates a reduced working life for police officers in this State and, on the other hand, insists that the employees of electricity authorities, who want a reduced working week—from my point of view, that is parallel to a reduced working life—go to arbitration.

Mr. Warburton: And not exactly an inexpensive exercise.

Mr. VAUGHAN: That is another point. I wish that the Treasurer was here, because this point amazes me. In his Budget speech, the Treasurer said that the optional lower retiring age for police officers would be introduced at no additional cost to the State. I am entirely in agreement with the scheme, but the Treasurer did not tell the truth. Last Thursday night, when we were debating the Police Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill, I asked the Minister, “How can it be that there is not going to be any additional cost, when you change it from a two-year calculation basis to a one-year calculation basis?” According to my advice, that must result in additional cost.

Mr. INNES: I rise to a point of order. The matter with which the honourable member for Nudgee is dealing is totally irrelevant to the motion or the amendment.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Nudgee will continue.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I thought that the honourable member for Sherwood would have known a little better.

However, the Minister's reply to me was that, in effect, it will result in additional cost. Yet in his Budget speech the Treasurer said that there will be no additional cost. Maybe the statement that the scheme would be introduced at no additional cost vindicates

the Government's action in negotiating with the Queensland Police Union for a reduced working life for police officers, but I submit that it will impose an additional cost on this State. Therefore, I am a little surprised that the Treasurer made that statement in his Budget speech.

The negotiations that have gone on in this dispute were outlined here this afternoon by speakers on this side of the House and by the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police. There have been negotiations, if I can call them that, between the electricity authorities and the unions representing the rank-and-file members. I know for a fact that right at the outset, the unions were requested to present their case. They did not do too bad a job at that. They produced this document that I have in my hand. It contains all the relevant facts and comparative statistics about the electricity supply industry in Queensland.

As requested by the electricity industry, the unions presented their case to the industry. This is the whole basis of negotiation. A few members on the Government side have no idea whatsoever about negotiations. As I say, the unions were asked by the electricity authorities to present their case. They presented their case in toto. They presented all the relevant facts. They had people specifically engaged for six to 12 months on researching the information required for a 35-hour-week campaign.

When those facts were presented to the electricity authorities, they said that they wanted time to analyse them in accordance with the normal processes of conciliation. They went through the facts, came back to the unions and, as I understand it, gave an airy-fairy reply. I can envisage the sort of reply that the unions received, because I know the replies that I received when I was involved in negotiations with the electricity supply industry.

I was taken back by the performance of the Electricity Commissioner (Mr. Murray) last night on television when he sat there and threw himself from one side of the seat to the other.

An Opposition Member: He might have been hot.

Mr. VAUGHAN: I know that he was in the hot seat.

Mr. R. J. Gibbs: It was significant that he kept looking at the desk. He was obviously reading from a prepared brief.

Mr. VAUGHAN: All I know is that he was very shifty.

The State Electricity Commissioner said last night that there was no way in the world the electric authorities would give the unions the information they required, as that could be used by them in subsequent arbitration. However, in accordance with the normal processes of conciliation, the electricity authorities requested the full facts of

the unions' case. Of course, once the State Electricity Commission had the full facts of the unions' case, Mr. Murray stated that there was no way in the world that the electricity authorities would give the unions any information to be used in a subsequent arbitration hearing. That is a very nice old tactic.

The Premier and the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police have both stated that there are to be no negotiations on a 35-hour week, that it must be arbitrated. The exercise that was gone through was that the unions submitted their case, and once the authorities had that documentation from the unions, they said they would not give the unions their case. On numerous subsequent occasions, the Industrial Commission recommended to the electric authorities that they produce the information for which the unions had asked. It is significant that although the Industrial Commission can issue orders and directions to unions and to the workers of this State, it is reluctant to or will not issue directions or orders to employers, particularly in this case.

Mr. Miller: Could I ask you what the unions believe a reduction in working hours would cost the community?

Mr. VAUGHAN: If the honourable member for Ithaca wants to have his say, he should get up and have it.

Today I am not arguing the case for or against a 35-hour week; I am pointing out to the people of the State what the Government is doing and how it is exploiting an industrial situation for purely political purposes. The sooner the people of Queensland wake up to what is going on, the better.

During the last Parliamentary recess I took the opportunity to visit the Gladstone Power Station. I will have quite a bit to say about that power-station at some other time. The Queensland Electricity Generating Board issued an invitation to me to inspect the Gladstone Power Station as I had criticised it from time to time. I looked over that power-station from where the coal goes in right through to where the power comes out. I also took the opportunity to talk to some of the workers up there. As I understand the position, the Gladstone Power Station is completely off line during this dispute.

The Government's introduction of the essential services legislation made the workers at the Gladstone Power Station more determined than ever. It is significant that the Government has had the use of that Act for all this time, but today we are in the same position as we were on 22 and 23 October, with the whole State affected by a power dispute. On that previous occasion the Government used the fact that it did not have the Essential Services Act as an excuse for not acting and why the community had to put up with such a shocking situation. But we have exactly the same position today. Why hasn't the Government

used its Essential Services Act? To find the reason for the introduction of that legislation one should read in "Hansard" what the Premier said when he introduced the second reading of the Bill. It was not the Minister for Labour Relations who introduced the Essential Services Bill, but the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads.

Mr. Jones: Where is he today?

Mr. VAUGHAN: He is over in New Zealand. There must be a trotting meeting on there. That is why he is not here today.

The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads did not introduce the second reading. When the Premier introduced it he said—

"This Bill is to reassert the rights of the people of Queensland. These rights have been bludgeoned by naked union blackmail recently—and especially in the past 24 hours."

The Government now has that Act; why hasn't it used it? The Premier further said—

"The Essential Services Bill, which is years overdue, is a reform to make unions accept their responsibilities as eagerly as they demand their rights."

We have to look beyond what I submit are the views of the Premier and his interpretation of unions. The newspaper headlines read, "Strike Law Australia's Toughest". That is typical of the Premier's propaganda machine. This is going back to 29 May, just prior to the commencement of negotiations. The Queensland Government has Australia's toughest strike law. During the Committee stage it even went to the extent of amending the provisions. Because of the 48-hour strike on 22 and 23 October, the Government amended the legislation by changing "48-hour" stoppage to "24-hour" stoppage. The Government has the toughest legislation in the country, but what has happened to it?

To back up my remarks about what the Government is really all about with its propaganda, I point out that it embarked upon shocking Hitler-style advertisements on television. Then in the Press it had advertisements headed "Strike me. Enough's enough". The Government exploits an industrial dispute and lets the people of this State suffer by allowing the situation to continue. By virtue of its inaction, it is allowing the dispute to continue. It can sponsor all of these advertisements—"Strike me. Enough's enough" and "Why should my kids have to scramble over rubbish?", and all of the other propaganda (I will deal with propaganda in a minute)—but it will not change things one iota unless it does something constructive; unless it gets the parties into conference and convinces the rank-and-file members of the respective unions that it is prepared to do something about a 35-hour week.

Mr. Porter: In other words, give in to them?

Mr. VAUGHAN: No, not give in to them at all.

What I am saying is that the Government should get wise about how the processes of conciliation and arbitration work. No matter how much it tries to make a political issue of an industrial dispute, there will continue to be industrial disputation. After all, in the United States, where there is direct negotiation between the parties, far worse disputes than this occur. Disputes over there go on for three months. This Government passes essential services legislation, but then just sits on it. It does not use it. It knows it is not going to be effective because it is dealing with something over which it has little or no control.

I will comment now on the statements made by the Premier when he initiated this debate. He referred to the six faceless men. Of course there will be elected officials who will carry out the directions and the wishes of the rank and file. The Premier referred to six. He named seven, and then he included an eighth name. I will go back to what I said earlier: if the Government really believes that these six faceless men, as the Premier referred to them, are in complete control and can direct all the people throughout the length and breadth of this State who work for electric authorities, let it test the matter.

Over the years the Government has repeatedly amended the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act to introduce something new that would, in the Government's opinion, control disputes. No amendment to the industrial legislation introduced by the Government has worked. Industrial relations cannot be short-circuited. All the processes have to be gone through. The Government included procedures for settlement of disputes in its essential services legislation. I submit that it does not really know how it will operate. The Government will not exhibit such knowledge until it learns how industrial relations work and how the industrial scene functions, and until such time as it gives the Minister for Labour Relations the opportunity to handle his portfolio as he wants to and as he should do instead of being manipulated by the Premier.

I submit that what happens in this Cabinet is that Ministers are under the direction of the Premier. I will repeat what I have said before: I believe that the Premier is being directed by people outside this State and that he is a tool for people who do not have the full interests of this State at heart. By virtue of the power and control he has over Cabinet, he has not allowed the Minister for Labour Relations to handle this industrial dispute in the way that it should have been handled and, secondly, he has not allowed the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police to intervene. I am firmly convinced that the reason the Premier gave the Minister for Mines and Energy the Police portfolio was so that he could have his

finger on that also. Besides dabbling in a whole series of other portfolios, he wants to have his finger on that, too.

The fact that the Government has brought this debate on for purely political purposes is a shocking indictment of it. It will not resolve the dispute. It may be good politics. It may gain politically out of this issue, as there is no way in the world that the people are not upset about it. It is understandable that they are upset. But the sooner they understand the extent to which the Government has set about denigrating, by design, the elected officials of unions to try to break their authority and put power back into the hands of the rank and file, the better. That happens with monotonous regularity. On the one hand, the Government asks elected officials, "Why don't you control your rank and file?"; on the other hand, it says that elected officials should not dictate to the rank and file. The Government cannot have it both ways. It cannot put an elected official into the position of having to direct his rank and file and then say, when it suits it to do so, that an elected official should not have control of the rank and file, that the rank and file should have control of unions. That is on record. The Premier is on record as saying—the Minister for Labour Relations is not on record—

Mr. Warburton: He doesn't say much these days.

Mr. VAUGHAN: No. He is in semi-retirement; he is on the way out. I do not blame him; but at least while he has that ministerial portfolio and while he is receiving a Minister's salary, he should take the initiative, notwithstanding the dictates of the Premier, the Leader of the Government in this State, and try to resolve the dispute along the lines suggested in the amendment moved by the Opposition.

Honourable members opposite may talk about arbitration. One can lead a horse to water but one cannot make it drink. I ask honourable members opposite whether they believe that, with the situation in the power industry over recent months, and, indeed, over recent years, since the rationalisation of the industry, the dispute would be resolved even if the processes of arbitration were to be followed.

(Time expired.)

Mr. INNES (Sherwood) (4.7 p.m.): There has been an element of unreality about the debate so far. It has taken four Opposition speakers to get round to talking about people in terms of the people who are affected by the consequences of this industrial action.

Mr. Miller: In the closing hour of the debate.

Mr. INNES: In the closing minutes of the fourth Opposition speaker. Previously the word "people" was used in the sense of,

"Get out and find out what the people think, find out what the rank and file in the unions think." That is the way in which the debate has gone today. The Opposition has completely avoided—if it ever thought of them—the consequences of the industrial action on the third parties in this dispute, the innocent people of Queensland.

Perhaps that is not unexpected when one looks at the composition of the Opposition. Over half of them have been professional union organisers or position-holders.

Mr. Vaughan: Not professional; I was an elected official.

Mr. INNES: All right; a professional, elected official. As I said, more than half of the members of the Opposition have, for a significant part of their working life, been dependent upon union positions, on which their election to Parliament has also been dependent.

Mr. Scott: What has that got to do with it?

Mr. INNES: I will tell the honourable member. At a time like this, the people of Queensland should know the type of persons who make up the claimed alternative Government of this State, and they should know also the type of thing that they say in debates in this House. They should know that it took four speakers to get round to one Freudian slip—and it was a slip on the part of the honourable member for Nudgee—and mention the outrage of the people of Queensland who are affected by the consequences of this industrial dispute.

Industrial disputes of this type are not between two parties. They are not merely between an employer and employees. A third party, the public, is affected. It is all very well to talk about withdrawing labour when only an employee and an employer are involved. In this instance, money provided by the great mass of the people has been used to elevate key personnel to their positions and legislation has given those key personnel the immense power that they have now abused—and I emphasise "abused"—to the detriment of the people of Queensland. How could people in that union accept in their pay for 19 years a loading for continuity of supply? That loading was given to them because they are in exceptional circumstances in an essential industry. They are given it because they are expected to maintain continuity of supply. How, in all conscience, can they accept that? Clearly, they are prepared to accept it under false pretences. Has their union offered to relinquish that benefit at any time since it went on strike in October?

Mr. Warburton: It can be taken off them.

Mr. INNES: The union certainly has not offered to relinquish it. It is something the union sought because its members were asked to provide continuity of supply.

One is dealing with people with double standards. In fact, when we listen to Opposition speakers, we gain the impression that we are dangerously close to dealing with people with no standards at all. This matter affects a third party—the people of Queensland.

I will detail to the House only one story concerning the distress that is wrought by this action on the people of Queensland. This story must be mirrored by thousands of others.

Mr. Scott: Bleeding heart.

Mr. INNES: I shall take that interjection. This is a bleeding-heart story.

At 5.30 last night, the alderman for Corinda (Alderman Phil Denman) and I went to a geriatric hospital in our area, taking with us 2½ cwt. of ice. That ice was necessary because for only two brief periods yesterday, one of one hour and the other of 10 minutes, that hospital had power. The only auxiliary power available was for the lift and for no other purpose.

At the beginning of the day, although many of the patients in the hospital have terminal illnesses, not one of them was in a critical state. By 5.30 last night, however, one patient had died.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr W. D. Hewitt): Order! I would have thought that the subject-matter touched upon by the honourable member for Sherwood was of such seriousness that it would demand reasonable silence.

Mr. INNES: As I say, by 5.30 p.m., one person had died. In the period immediately preceding that, some of the patients were suffering distress caused by the intense heat. In fact, four other persons, none of whom had shown symptoms of heat distress either the previous day or earlier yesterday, were being treated for it. They were being hand-fanned and bathed constantly because of the concern that the people nursing them had for their lives.

I do not intend engaging in the one-eyed, biased diatribe that Opposition members engage in. There was the intercession and help of a prominent member of the A.L.P., Alderman Harvey. I left Alderman Denman to try to contact people after hours at S.E.Q.E.B. while I went to the iceworks to obtain the ice to help cool the patients. Through the good offices of Alderman Harvey and because I was later able to speak to the management of the S.E.Q.E.B., arrangements were made to restore power to the hospital at 6 o'clock last night. I understand that power was maintained this morning. However, no fans were available during yesterday, nor was cold water on tap for the benefit of those patients who were suffering acute distress.

When the unionists at Gladstone put the label "Gone fishing" on their doors, they want to remember that many people are confined to their beds and mothers are locked in to the care of small infants who cannot be taken fishing.

Mr. Scott: What has fishing got to do with it?

Mr. INNES: "Gone fishing" is the explanation given by unionists twice over the past two months for their inability to contact fellow-unionists or to have them return to work in Gladstone. That excuse has been given twice over the past two months. Some people cannot go fishing. Some people cannot escape from the circumstances that the unions have imposed on them. As a result, lives are in danger, if not lost.

I ask honourable members opposite to imagine the distress suffered by tens of thousands of Queenslanders. There are hundreds of old people of 80 years and more in my electorate and every other electorate in Queensland—people who are peculiarly distressed by problems caused through the combination of heat and humidity yesterday. Who knows how many people were distressed or became unwell struggling between floors of buildings designed only for air-conditioning?

The person who gave me ice yesterday owned the local iceworks. He told me that he has \$4,000,000 worth of meat—if it is still fit to be called meat—in cold storage. He gave me ice from a room in which 10,000 blocks had been stored awaiting the Christmas rush. The people who want block ice in my electorate are mainly workers.

Mr. Casey: If there were enough workers there, you wouldn't be here.

Mr. INNES: Workers in my electorate would be very interested in that interjection. They are ordinary people who will be affected by the consequences of this strike. The ice had started to melt. As soon as that block ice begins to freeze again, it will solidify and be useless.

Mr. Jones interjected.

Mr. INNES: I saw that the honourable member for Cairns was asleep throughout half of the debate this afternoon.

Mr. Vaughan: You weren't even here last week.

Mr. INNES: I was in the House throughout last week. But that is irrelevant.

The point is that tens of thousands of Queenslanders were sorely affected. I have no doubt that the honourable member for Cunningham will be able to tell a few truths about the distress in other areas. Owners of cold stores, shopkeepers with deep freezers, people with home refrigerators and so on are losing or have lost foodstuffs, and distress has been caused to the aged and the young. But I will ignore discomfort for the moment.

Before we got round to talking about the problems confronting the people of Queensland, we heard four speeches from Opposition members. We have not talked about the shut down of industry.

Mr. Vaughan: You have had the essential services legislation since 25 October.

Mr. INNES: I will take that interjection. It shows the absolute hypocrisy and inconsistency of Opposition members.

This morning the Leader of the Opposition said that big sticks will never solve industrial disputes. The Opposition says that the essential services legislation is a big stick and will not solve disputes. When the Government stays its hands and does not use the big stick, Opposition members still complain. Who is playing politics?

I think it was one of the Opposition member's well-known mentors, Mao Tse-tung, who said something about power coming from the barrel of a gun. The honourable member for Nudgee and his union cohorts have found that power comes from the sockets of a power point. That is precisely what is happening in this case. Union leaders have found this to be the ultimate way to try to blackmail the people of Queensland. That is exactly what it is about. The honourable member for Nudgee represents, and speaks for, people who are prepared to engage in false presences; who are prepared to receive special allowances for which they are expected to maintain power throughout the State.

I am reminding the House that we should let the people of Queensland know that there are people who are prepared to air their problems. The majority of Queenslanders could not care about the petty intrigue and posturing of the unions against the employers. They will support the unions if they have a valid claim; they will maintain and pursue the unions' claims coincidentally with their maintaining the power supply. But the unions cannot and should not cut off the power supply to get a resolution of the problem. In many fields of work, nobody would expect workers to withdraw their services. For instance, nobody would expect nurses in hospitals yesterday to withdraw services from the sick and the dying. Nobody expects the Police Force, the Army, the Navy or anybody else to withdraw their labour. Nobody has seen a situation in this State where so many members of the Public Service have withdrawn their labour as to bring this place to a halt. But today we are witnessing a union, for the first time in probably 20 years, being prepared to use a most sensitive and a most responsible situation, which has been built in for it by the community with community money, and use community laws which created these statutory authorities, the vulnerability of the State and of the people of the State, to try to extort industrial demands.

The offer has been there. The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act was set up

by Labor. Somebody applauded it today. But the unions will not abide by an arbitrated decision. They will not go to and utilise the provisions of that legislation or the services of the commissioners appointed under it. Opposition members want it all ways. In the last resort, what they really claim is that the laws do not apply to unions, that the unions can play in if they are succeeding and play out if they are not succeeding. Opposition members cannot have it all ways, but that is precisely what they have been doing during the past 24 hours.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. INNES: I am not out of puff, nor am I out of sympathy for those who have been distressed, damaged or destroyed by the actions of the unions whose position is advocated by Opposition members today.

Mr. YEWDAL (Rockhampton North) (4.21 p.m.): It would seem to me that the previous speaker used the argument that members on this side of the House are devoid of any standards. I take umbrage at that statement and I am sure that my Opposition colleagues agree with me. That is the type of approach adopted by the honourable member for Sherwood with his sarcasm about people without standards. One could suggest that he came from a profession that lacks standards. Perhaps the reason for that is that he did not have sufficient standards to stay in that profession, so he has come into Parliament and is adopting the same sort of approach in his arguments in this debate, because he has nothing else to say about the matter. It is very easy for a person to introduce the human element into an argument. He said that it was a faux pas by the honourable member for Nudgee to raise the question of the concern of people in the community.

As it is in black and white in "Hansard", I should like to reiterate what I said during the debate on the Essential Services Bill. Of course, I said it on behalf of the Opposition. In regard to the activities of the power industry unions, I said—

"I have in a number of respects, and I still do, but I do not give anything a blanket cover. But the situation is that the unions in the power industry have argued and argued about the issue for months."

Later I said—

"We have heard a great deal of discussion about concern for the community, and I might say here that everybody is concerned for people in the community, irrespective of their colour, creed or politics. The Premier said here today that trade union officials and trade union members were inhumane, callous and brutal. That is the sort of thing the Premier says when he describes the unions. But Government members and everybody else in the community—with very few exceptions—know that the very people who come

to the fore both physically and financially when the community is in need, such as in time of war, are trade-unionists. If members talk to any organisation in their electorate, such as an ambulance or p. and c. committee, they will find that the majority of its supporters are people who belong to either a white or blue-collar trade union association. It is obvious that they are not inhumane or callous. They have kids, mothers, fathers and grandparents of their own, and they do not take action with the intention of inconveniencing people; they take action in the interest of improving their job conditions and the future of their children. When Government members get that into their thick skulls, they will get somewhere. They have to be prepared to sit down and talk."

I reiterate that because I believe that they majority of members of trade unions do think of the people in the community and consider their own families, relatives and aged people.

The member for Sherwood gave an example of aged people and the television programme "Today Tonight" last night dealt with a similar subject. The honourable member has tried to upstage the television programme, possibly to get a paragraph in the Press. Whether he gets it or not is debatable. Irrespective of actions taken by the trade union movement, we have been aware of a similar situation in the community for many years. We have been aware of it at times of war and of shortages. I do not believe that trade unionists set out to cause inconvenience and, as the honourable member suggested, possibly death. I agree that he qualified that statement and said that death may have occurred, anyway.

I return to the action that the Premier of this State took this morning to move this motion. It seems to me that it really is going to be an absolute waste of the time of this House because, in essence, it is not going to do anything at all about the current issue. It is obvious, as many other members have said, that it is a political exercise. Government members came in here this morning purely to use this arena to further their political aims; to put the issue before the public in the terms that they decided.

I turn now, as other members have done, to the essential services legislation. After all the protracted processes with the legislation—the question of what Minister was going to introduce it, the amendments that were to be introduced, and the amendments that finally were not introduced—I am surprised, as I am sure are Opposition members and the community, that the Premier did not win the day in Cabinet. To my mind, that strikes a very interesting note in the minds of the members of this House and of the community at large. Although the Premier still persists in saying that he will have his way, the Government, for its own

reasons, decided that it was not going to implement the legislation at this point. I can only suggest that Ministers do not believe that to implement it would be of any advantage to the Government. I believe they have decided it is not advantageous for them to introduce it at this time.

I return to what was said by the member for Sherwood. While he was speaking he referred to the power supply in this old persons' home—I cannot think of its name—and he intimated that these old people were without power and other needs. My personal impression of the power industry workers, in terms of supplying power, was that they have retained sufficient power for emergencies in hospitals and old persons' homes. I cannot understand why sufficient power was not provided to this home. It has been provided to many other places throughout the length and breadth of this State at times such as those we experienced yesterday and are experiencing today. It would seem that, because of the rotation of power cuts, these people were left without power. I am sure that ordinary householders could have gone without power for a longer period so that the people to whom the member for Sherwood referred could have received power.

There is another pertinent point about the supply of power to hospitals and old persons' homes. It has been pointed out in this Parliament very clearly that auxiliary machinery to supplement the power supply was provided to a hospital in Toowoomba some months ago. However, it could not be used simply because the wiring was not connected. It has been lying there idle for many months waiting for the wiring to be connected. That matter was raised by a Government member who represents a Toowoomba electorate. He implied that it was the Government's fault that there was no emergency power at that hospital in Toowoomba. There is talk about emergency needs, yet that is the position that prevailed at a hospital in Toowoomba during the last 48-hour power strike. People should provide their own emergency power.

In common with some of my colleagues in the Opposition, I believe that the blame for the previous stoppages and that of yesterday and today lies at the door of the Minister for Labour Relations and the State Electricity Commission. Although it may be repetitive, I must reiterate the remarks of my colleagues that the Minister for Labour Relations has completely forfeited all rights as the Minister for that portfolio, particularly in the last few months. The Opposition cannot stress enough that labour relations are the very essence of the problem in the power industry in Queensland today. The meaning and interpretation of labour relations are the things we have seen nothing of from this Government, and from the Minister in particular. Everybody says that the Minister will retire, and they can hold that opinion if they wish.

The leading lights in the introduction of the Essential Services Bill were the Premier and the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads. The Minister for Labour Relations took a back seat and only came into the debate in a belated effort to try to justify his position. I think he has to accept that criticism as fairly valid, as circumstances show that is what has been happening in this State.

The whole crunch of this issue is the question of the 35-hour week. When the power unions indicated their intentions at the beginning of this issue many months ago, I watched very carefully an interview with the Premier in front of the Executive Building. The Premier was very definite when he emphatically stated, although I cannot quote his exact words, that as far as he was concerned the 35-hour week was never on. That has been his attitude from the inception of this campaign.

I say very clearly here today, as a member of the Opposition and its spokesman on labour relations, that I believe that the tactics of the unions in the power industry are incorrect. That is not to say that I have any say in what they do. They make their own decisions in accordance with the wishes of their members. But perhaps I would adopt different tactics in an endeavour to achieve their aims. The fact of life is that the Government, the State Electricity Commission, the Minister for Labour Relations and the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police have to accept some responsibility for the situation prevailing in the community today.

I want to hark back to a comment made by another Minister during the course of the debate on the Essential Services Bill when he was thrown in as the stop-gap on the introduction of that legislation because the Premier could not handle it or was not tough enough or forward enough to be able to take it on. The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads made this statement—

“No industrial legislation in any State, or at the Federal level, so far has been successful in halting the rush of industrial disputation and strikes in essential services (and other areas). . . .”

The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads said at that time that no industrial legislation was able to appease unions or cause them to desist from their claims in the industrial arena. He went on to say—

“Queensland perhaps has a better record than some other States in the area of industrial disputation.”

He then qualified that by saying that this State has a better record than other States. This was at a time when the industrial climate in Queensland was good; yet this Government decided it would introduce this legislation.

The shadow Minister for Mines, Energy and Police gave a very detailed expose of the build-up to this dispute, the functions

of the Industrial Commission, the functions of the trade union movement, the functions of the Electricity Commission, and all the ramifications of the industrial relationship between all those people and what has happened over a period of some decades. I do not intend to reiterate that, because I believe he covered it quite clearly and fully.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I have been advised that the lights are out upstairs and that it is impossible for the moment for the Hansard staff to operate. It has been suggested to me that the House should adjourn until the ringing of the bells, and I intend to accept that advice.

[Sitting suspended from 4.35 to 4.45 p.m.]

Mr. YEWDALE: I wish to make some brief comments in relation to the activities of the trade union movement in Queensland surrounding the introduction of the essential services legislation. Prior to the introduction of that legislation, many unions in Queensland, both white-collar and blue-collar, expressed grave concern about it and the likely effect that it would have on the unions and the community if implemented. Some white-collar unions intimated that they would be prepared to take action if the legislation was implemented. That attitude still prevails throughout the length and breadth of the trade union movement. It certainly has a great bearing on the attitude of power workers, not only the E.T.U. members but also workers in several other unions in the power industry.

A previous Opposition speaker made the valid point that the Government was not talking about secret ballots. I think it was the member for Nudgee who emphasised the point that the rank and file are quite adamant that they will pursue their claim for shorter working hours.

In this computer age and at a time of tremendous technological advances, the Premier's statement that he will not accept a 35-hour week while he is Premier or while his party occupies the Treasury benches is completely out of date. It is totally out of touch with the progress made in the community. Whether we like it or not, industry will not be able to provide the jobs that we would like to see it provide in the foreseeable future. Technological advances have been made into areas where previously the labour content has been relatively high. The objective of both private and public enterprise is the reduction of the labour force on the work floor and the attainment of higher profitability.

In the first instance, because of the cost of installation of mechanised equipment, technology might retard profitability. However, as mechanisation advances, profitability will increase. The employer is setting out in no uncertain fashion to both reduce the

cost of production and increase profitability. Whether we like it or not, shorter working hours will come.

I am sure all of us remember the hue and cry that was raised by employers when it was suggested that the 48-hour week be reduced to a 44-hour week. The employers said that it would ruin the nation. A similar hue and cry was raised when the working week was reduced to one of 40 hours. The same situation prevails today.

Who is to say that the 35-hour week is not possible in the power industry? In view of the fact that the power industry itself will not supply the information that is sought concerning cost of implementation of the 35-hour week, how can anyone say that it will not work? It has been pointed out that the unions have presented their case.

Mr. Miller: On what figures did they present their case?

Mr. YEWDAL: I cannot quote details and I do not think anyone here can. The power industry has not provided details of the costs of introducing the 35-hour week.

Mr. Greenwood: They said that it would cost \$27,000,000.

Mr. YEWDAL: They quoted a figure, but they did not give documentation. I could be contradicted on that. I do not want to enter into a discussion on it. If I am wrong, I can be corrected.

Neither the commission, the Minister for Labour Relations nor the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police has said that he is prepared to discuss the likelihood of reducing the working week to 37½ hours, 35 hours, or otherwise. There has been no sympathy or co-operation in discussing this matter.

Today, Opposition members have said that while confrontation emanates from the Premier and of a number of his Cabinet Ministers right through to the Government back benchers, we will continue to have industrial trouble. While I accept the comments by Government members about the effects on the community, on the old, the frail and the sick, I believe that those on the other side must accept their responsibility. They cannot absolve themselves from blame, because they have played a leading role in continuing the confrontation in an effort to gain political advantage.

I still believe that in 1980, when the Government decides it is time to go to the people of the State in an election, it will use the essential services legislation, with all its power, as it sees fit. It will do so in an effort to maintain a climate of distrust and dissatisfaction with the unions. It is not opportune at this stage of 1979 for it to do so. I am sure that many members of the community agree with me on that.

The trade union movement, through the power industry especially, should use public relations and propaganda in the next few weeks to put its case fully, either in print or through other forms of media. I believe that the union movement should spell out for the community just what has been happening.

I firmly believe that the Government is intent on continuing confrontation. Without a change in attitude and thinking, some of which must come from the Government side, nothing will be achieved. I do not accept in any shape or form that the power unions are totally to blame, that they are the villains causing all the problems while the Government and the Electricity Commission are the saviours of the community, the lily-whites who have not in any way engineered the situation. I do not accept that they have made any attempt to overcome the problem but, until they do, we will never solve it.

Mr. ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (4.54 p.m.): It was pleasing to note that, in taking part in this debate, the honourable member for Rockhampton North indicated that he does not agree with the tactics being used by the unions. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition—

Mr. Miller: He took a very sensible approach to it.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Compared with his leader, he took a very sensible approach.

Mr. Ahern: I think he is running for the leadership of the Opposition.

Mr. ELLIOTT: He may well be doing that.

Let us examine the attitude of the Electrical Trades Union. One gentleman rang my office to tell us of the problems affecting him as a result of a pole being damaged by a storm yesterday. We suggested to him that he should appeal to the better nature of the Electrical Trades Union. He rang the union and told the person who answered the phone that because yesterday's milk could go off, in the interests of decency union members might be prepared to come out and try to overcome the very small problem. All that was needed was for the switch to be thrown back.

I make it clear that I am quoting the reply of the Electrical Trades Union official over the phone and that these are not my words. He said, "You can go to buggery." That was his attitude, and it is typical of the attitude being adopted by the E.T.U. in our area. It is not good enough. Surely no member of the Opposition would agree with that sort of attitude. It is absolutely abhorrent. The whole crux of the matter is that these people are thumbing their noses at the Industrial Commission and, by so doing, are putting the whole arbitration system at risk.

Mr. Davis: Like Ayatollah Khomeini.

Mr. ELLIOTT: He would be about on a par.

What really upsets me was mentioned by the previous speaker. He said that all wages personnel already receive a continuity-of-supply allowance of \$3.40. That is obviously a bonus paid for guaranteed supply. They are breaking their contract by taking part in the present industrial dispute. What effect has this totally irresponsible action had? The people who have been most disadvantaged are the dairy farmers and the fruit growers. In our area this irresponsible action is placing a tremendous impost on the dairy industry.

Mr. Houston: How often was the power off? For what period of the day is the power off in your area?

Mr. ELLIOTT: It is on and off all day.

Mr. Houston: For what periods? Be factual.

Mr. ELLIOTT: For half an hour at a time in some cases and in one case an entire area on the Downs was blacked out completely.

They are not doing anything about it. The honourable member for Bulimba is trying to make out that our dairy farmers are not really being disadvantaged. That is really not the case. Because of the heat, the milk vats cannot cool the milk in time and the producers are throwing their milk out. There is also a disruption to the milking routine. That might sound very funny, and the clowns on the Opposition side tend to laugh. But the people who understand the dairy industry realise that if cows are not milked regularly morning and night, their lactation period could well be shortened.

Earlier today I was speaking to the honourable member for Carnarvon. He told me of the tremendous consternation on the granite belt. The growers there put a lot of fruit into cold storage, particularly fruit that requires controlled atmosphere. Those growers stand to lose one-tenth of their yearly income if the problem is not overcome. That is absolutely catastrophic. Any fair-minded person would admit that. In many cases, the fruit and vegetable growers are unable to irrigate, and that places an added impost on them.

The wheat and grain industries in my area are absolutely incensed. We are getting phone calls every five or 10 minutes in regard to this problem. The State Wheat Board facilities are unable to operate on any sort of reasonable basis. People are queuing up trying to deliver wheat to the board. Anybody who knows anything about the augers in the old facilities would know that if an auger is stopped when it is full, it becomes blocked. It has to be run backwards and somebody has to use a Stillson wrench on the shaft before it can be operated again. There are tremendous problems.

Worse still is the position of people who are trying to dry grain. During the last four weeks of harvest time, there have been many storms and a lot of wet weather. The grain growers have been drying a tremendous amount of grain which has been harvested with a high moisture content. Because people are not able to keep the grain moving through the driers, the grain is heating up and it will go right off. The member for Warwick indicated to me that he has a silo of grain which he is very worried about. There is a good chance that he will lose the lot. That is the sort of consequence that flows from the present action in the power industry.

As I have said, rain has been falling throughout the harvest period. Grass and summer weeds are growing up through the crop.

Mr. Davis: You are not going to blame that on the power strike?

Mr. ELLIOTT: If the honourable member listens, I shall explain the position to him. All that grass and those summer weeds are mixed in with the grain, which has to be graded before it is stored in a silo. This is another impost that is being placed upon farmers.

What about industry and the public in general? I am greatly concerned about the number of people who will be out of work as a result of this industrial action. But the people about whom I am most concerned are the little people who, in order to avoid the Christmas rush, have bought their Christmas supplies and put them into deep freezers. Quite a few cases have been quoted to us today.

Mr. Davis: That is untrue.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I can give the honourable member some cases. Some of these people have their Christmas supplies in deep freezers, and they stand to lose everything. Many of them have saved in order to buy their Christmas supplies, and I doubt whether they will be able to buy further supplies.

Mr. Prest: How much does a deep freeze hold?

Mr. ELLIOTT: The honourable member's lack of concern is absolutely incredible.

The present situation in the power industry is absolutely unbelievable. I call on all those men who are on strike to think, for a change, of the people they are hurting. If they had any common sense at all, they would realise that they are putting everybody offside. I hope that there is some more intelligent thinking on this matter. The only members of the Opposition who appeared to have given this matter any thought were the member for Rockhampton North and the member for Nudgee.

Mr. WARBURTON (Sandgate) (5.3 p.m.): It is because of the Opposition's concern about the industrial disputation in the electricity industry and its effect on the citizens

of Queensland that we have put forward, in the limited opportunity that is presented to us here in Parliament, what we believe to be a constructive proposition. I shall remind honourable members what our amendment seeks to do. It calls upon the State Government to instruct its Labour Relations Minister to immediately convene and chair a conference between the two parties to the dispute in order to resolve it forthwith.

It was not our doing that this debate took place today, although we welcome the opportunity at any time to debate matters of importance to the people of Queensland. We believe that the proposition that we have put forward could bear fruit.

Whilst we are on the subject of what that amendment says, let me reiterate that the Opposition calls upon the State Government to instruct the Minister for Labour Relations to do something about the current dispute. With due respect to the Minister, his performance over recent times has not been in keeping with the position that he holds. We saw his performance when the Essential Services Bill was debated. Of course, one is led to believe that the reason why he did not participate as fully as he could have on that occasion was that he did not fully agree with the propositions that were then put forward. However, he is in the House today and one hopes that he will take the opportunity to address the Parliament to tell us his points of view.

For the benefit of those people who have seen fit to castigate members on this side for putting forward their opinions, I reiterate that that has been for the very reason that we have concern for the people of Queensland and what is happening in an industry that was hitherto almost devoid of industrial disputation of any consequence. It is for that reason that the Opposition put forward a proposition that it believes could bear some fruit.

The Opposition has become used to some of the comments that the Premier makes from time to time, the manner in which he denigrates certain people throughout the State of Queensland and his attitude towards members of the Opposition. When I received an unfavourable mention from the Premier, that was not something that I did not think would occur. Be that as it may, in my position I am prepared to cop that sort of thing from the Premier at any time whatsoever, as his utterances do not concern me. But I do get upset—it seems to be something that he repeats and repeats—when he starts to denigrate the workers of this State whom I have known and been mates with for so long, people who I am prepared to say are so much better, so much more presentable and much better citizens of Queensland than the Premier will ever be, despite his rather unconvincing remarks from time to time. I would like to know if members of the Government support the comments that the Premier made this morning.

I will not dwell on this point for too long as I want to speak on other matters. I do not know whether there are any women involved in the dispute, but there possibly could be. However, the Premier referred to the people involved in the dispute as thugs and highway robbers. I have mixed with people in this industry for many years, as have some members on the other side of the House who have been chairmen of the various generating, supply and distribution authorities. The men involved in this dispute vary in ages from the young, who have just gone through their apprenticeship training to become qualified in certain areas, to men of 60 years of age who have made huge sacrifices during their lives, many of whom went to war for this country and, as I indicated before, many of whom suffered the consequences of having to do that. I am not prepared to remind people of the Premier's infamous history during that period of crisis, but when I hear him denigrate the people who are taking some action in what they believe to be a democratic way to get what they consider to be their democratic rights, I just wonder where we are going. It does not stand the Premier in good stead to persevere with that type of unreasonable and unreal criticism of people whom he does not know. If he is critical of the decision made, that is one thing; but he should not criticise the worker—the man himself—for arriving at that decision. He should not get personal about the matter.

I hark back to the history of this dispute that has caused the problems we face in Queensland today. It has been reasonably well covered by other speakers. I saw the rationalisation programme as being the one thing that brought about a tremendous change in all aspects of the electrical industry, an industry that I worked in and was very close to. Along with rationalisation came the centralisation processes. This is something that the Government likes to make people believe it does not agree with. In fact, the process of rationalisation of the electrical industry brought about centralised control in many aspects.

The member for Nudgee covered the matter of how politics stopped the amalgamation of various electric authorities in this State. However, one important issue in the process of rationisation sparked off the bitterness felt by many of the workers in the industry. Why do we have problems with us today that we did not have last year, the year before or 20 years ago? Basically, formerly the electrical industry was a peaceful industry. We were always able to resolve our differences by talking. 1957 was the last year before this that I can recall a dispute of any consequence.

Let us look at the reasons for the present dispute. When the rationalisation programme was introduced, the employees were not fully consulted about their future. I recall the bitterness at job level about that. Employees were never really consulted about who

their next employer was to be. If changes were to be made, who was to be their employer? Were they in fact to be forced to work for an employer that they did not want to work for? That type of attitude prevailed within the industry.

I am making these points because I believe that, if we are to have a discussion in the Parliament of Queensland about a matter of such importance, for heaven's sake let somebody on the Government side—and after all it is the Government that has the responsibility—listen to what is being said by people who may know a little about the history of the matter, take note of what is being said and see if he can assist in bringing about some sort of a conclusion to the present impasse.

The trouble started with the employees being concerned about their future. Even on the day that the rationalisation programme was introduced, many employees still did not know what their future was to be. There has been discussion here today—and I will not enlarge upon it—about how various people on different salary and wage structures found themselves working together, and the problems associated with trying to sort those matters out. I agree that initially, prior to the rationalisation, attempts were made to bring about an industrial situation that the electricity authorities saw as a solution to the problem, but they failed. Certainly a few meetings were called to try to resolve the problem.

The present dispute really began a couple of years ago when the situation in the industry changed and employees found that the people with whom they had been able to discuss industrial disputes were no longer available and that, in fact, the process of trying to resolve dispute was more difficult. The problem has grown, and someone with industrial nous must go into the industry and sort it out. I do not intend to castigate particularly people who happen to be in the higher echelon of the industry today, but I have said in the House before that not many years ago the leaders of the trade union movement were able to sit down with the leaders of the electricity supply industry and thrash out differences at that level. Pushing trade union representatives into discussions with lower management and people who cannot make decisions has never worked, and it never will. It is up to the higher echelon of management to be prepared to talk with the representatives of the workers for the purpose of endeavouring to resolve problems.

I reiterate that, firstly, problems have arisen only recently and, secondly, that they began because of the way in which the Government and the electricity-supply industry embarked on the rationalisation programme and the way in which people in an industry that was almost devoid of dispute were treated. They have not forgotten. In addition, there was the way in which the industrial relations set-up in the

electricity industry came about. The fact that it is not working is one of the roots of the problem.

In this debate, much mention has been made of the Essential Services Act, and I wish to go on record as saying that, although it has been thrown up at the Government and the Premier that that legislation should be invoked, I would be the last to wish to see the Government do that. I hope that the Government will have the good sense not to invoke the provisions of the Essential Services Act, because to do so would be one way of bringing the State to a complete halt.

The hypocrisy of the Government in relation to the Essential Services Act is emphasised in today's news. I refer honourable members to an article in an early edition of today's "Telegraph" under the heading "I'll keep up the fight"—Joh". It says—

"The government obviously is powerless to restore normal electricity supply before the workers' scheduled return to work at midnight tonight.

"Mr. Bjelke-Petersen said before the special Cabinet meeting he would again ask ministers to order the implementation of the Essential Services Act.

"I won't give up on this. I'll naturally pursue it again this morning. I don't worry about being rolled."

That is the old, old story. We have heard it since the early 1970s. I do not know how long the Press and other sections of the media in this State are going to put up with that facade. The Premier is a "gunna"—he is going to do this, and he is going to do that. We read in the newspapers continually the story that he is trying to put up to the Parliament and to the people of Queensland—that he is fighting Cabinet, that he is fighting members of the coalition parties—but he is not really prepared to do anything about it.

Mr. Scott: I don't think he even tried to do anything about it in Cabinet.

Mr. WARBURTON: I take a contrary point of view. I think it is a facade. In my opinion, each and every member of Cabinet takes equal responsibility for decisions that are made. I do not believe that he has the iron rod that his publicity people would like to let us think he has.

In a later edition of today's "Telegraph", under the headline "No Government strike move", this appears—

"State Cabinet today again backed away from invoking the Essential Services Act to break the 48-hour power strike.

"Cabinet decided that letting the strike run its course was the best way to handle it."

What's new? The Government had no intention of invoking the Essential Services Act against the trade union movement, nor did it have any intention of trying to resolve

the problem. Its only intention was to try to aggravate the position. We do not have to be Einstein to work out that all the Government is doing is endeavouring to denigrate the Opposition and damage its standing in the community.

Although Government members try to indicate that they have concern, they are not prepared to do anything about the situation. Because the Opposition members are concerned and believe that something should be done as a matter of urgency, we urge Government members to support our amendment. The Minister for Labour Relations has certain powers under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, if he wants to use them. If he is not prepared to use them, he should be instructed to bring the parties together immediately. That could be done, not tonight, not tomorrow, but this afternoon within half an hour.

Today certain members referred to the order of events. My information, which I believe to be absolutely accurate, is that on Monday, 12 November, acting under the order of the Full Bench of the State Industrial Commission, the unions' negotiating committee, which had been formed, met with the electricity industry representatives. That meeting was a recommencement of the negotiating conferences that were held prior to the 48-hour stoppage on 22 and 23 October. At the direction of the Full Bench of the Industrial Commission the electricity industry was required to provide the unions with detailed answers to questions put by the unions on 5 September. The industry had previously undertaken to provide those answers by 11 October. That interesting point has not been brought out before. The industry gave a promise to provide certain information by 5 September, but it was not forthcoming till a later date.

I will not read the three questions asked by the unions; they have been read earlier today. They dealt with additional costs and so forth.

In reply to those questions, the industry advised that, based on a reassessment by each board of the costs of implementation of the claim, the cost would be \$27,000,000 in the first year of implementation and \$20,000,000 in each subsequent year. It added, of course, \$680,000 to the original estimate of the costs.

In reply to the first two questions, the industry stated that the object of the claim before it was a 35-hour week, with a nine-day fortnight. It believed that there was no alternative to that, and it had not considered any alternative.

I raise these points only because of the initial confusion in the Government ranks about the true facts of the matter. Following the assessment of the situation the industry furnished the unions' negotiating committee with a paper that purported to explain what additional staff, with classifications, etc. would be required, and the

associated costs if the claim were granted. Although the answers provided were more detailed than those given previously, the unions believed that further details were necessary. Really that is the crux of the matter. As I say, I raise those matters because of the confusion in the Government ranks.

Whoever sums up for the Government might care to explain what the Government expects in such a situation. It has been put to the Minister for Labor Relations that under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act he has the right to intervene, but he has not done that in former disputes. The honourable member for Nudgee, my leader and other Opposition speakers have said that the commission has the power to conduct a ballot to see whether the workers truly believe in the justice of their cause. Surely that is stage one. Despite the fact that we must be concerned about the ordinary citizen, we must resolve the dispute. I am sure everyone agrees with that. However, we will not resolve it if we stick our heads in the sand and do not look to the cause of the problem.

Dr. Edwards: A ballot won't necessarily solve it.

Mr. WARBURTON: A ballot may not solve anything, but it is certainly a stage in the process of determining the facts, and we head that people on one side or the other do not believe that the facts are being laid squarely before them. Because we hear so many stories I thought I should put the record straight and save the Government the bother of considering a ballot. After doing that the Government should know where to start in trying to put an end to the impasse in the electricity industry.

While we were dealing with the essential services legislation, the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police referred to the resolutions that were passed at meetings throughout the State. So that it will be on the record I shall refer to those resolutions. If we act as a true Parliament we may be able to get down to the nitty-gritty of the exercise and come up with a satisfactory solution to the problem. Resolutions were passed at a number of meetings throughout the State. They were held at Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Southport, Gladstone, Biloela, Rockhampton, Mackay, Collinsville, Townsville, Innisfail, Cairns, Nambour, Gympie, Maryborough and Bundaberg. I understand that the meetings were held at those centres to give all workers in the industry a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meetings, understand the points and come to a conclusion in a reasonable, democratic manner.

The first resolution read—

"That the Premier of this State be informed that any moves to restrain our democratic rights to withhold our labour

by his or any other government, will be met by the strongest retaliatory action in our power."

That was a simple resolution. I suppose that those of us who have been round the woods and have worked in various jobs have seen that type of resolution pop up from time to time. It is interesting to record the result of the combined vote on that resolution. It must be remembered that the meetings were held on 26 and 27 September 1979. The vote resulted in 95 per cent in favour and 5 per cent against. That is an overwhelming majority.

I have made the suggestion that the Minister for Labour Relations, who will be speaking shortly, might be able to assist me by explaining how people holding responsible positions in unions overcome the problem of democracy among their rank-and-file members. With the rank and file deciding 95 per cent to 5 per cent, I will be interested to hear from anybody who can suggest any way in which the trade union movement can deter those members from taking the action they propose.

The second resolution read—

"This meeting of Queensland Power Workers endorses the action previously taken by our officials in the 35-hour week campaign and determines that if satisfactory replies are not received on 11th October to the following questions put by our Negotiating Committee to the Industry on 5th September, namely—

"(1) What additional cost would the industry consider a reasonable cost in reducing working hours to 35 per week worked over a 9-day fortnight?

"(2) If the unions were able to convince the industry that the cost of implementing reduced working hours and a 9-day fortnight can be contained within the industry's estimation of a reasonable cost, will the industry agree to our claim?

"(3) What are the details as to work locations, Employing Board, classifications, wage rates, additional operating costs and additional capital costs in the case of each of the additional 1,074 employees argued by the Industry as necessary if the claim was implemented? then a 48 hour stoppage will be held in the industry on Monday, 22nd and Tuesday, 23rd October.

"Also we authorise the respective unions to call additional stoppages as necessary until we succeed in our claim."

I repeat the final part of that resolution because everybody should understand the position in which the "faceless men" referred to by the Premier are being placed by the people they represent. The final part of that resolution read—

"Also we authorise the respective unions to call additional stoppages as necessary until we succeed in our claim."

When that resolution was put to the vote, 87 per cent of the total number of people who attended those numerous meetings throughout the State said that that was what they believed in. By virtue of that resolution, they advised or instructed their unions to take whatever action was necessary to bring their claims to fruition. That is very important.

When the Premier and other Government members denigrate people in responsible positions, it is only fair that truth should out. It is only fair to understand that in this particular case the people involved in the industry were given the opportunity of determining whether they would participate in the dispute. I am not arguing here the rights or wrongs of the dispute, but I think it is fair that the facts be laid squarely before honourable members so that any criticism made is fair and reasonable.

I conclude my remarks by again making the point that if the Government heeds what has been said by members of the Opposition here today—and I believe sincerely that every member in this House is concerned about any disputation that affects the citizens—

Mr. Moore: Rubbish!

Mr. WARBURTON: The honourable member for Windsor had every opportunity to speak in the debate. Of course, at one time he was involved in a dispute in the industry, and I give him credit for his stand on that occasion.

As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted by the member for Windsor, the position is that we are all concerned about this matter. That is the main reason why the Opposition brought forward its amendment. It is not good enough for the Premier to come out and say in Press articles, as he did in today's "Telegraph", "We are not doing anything because the power industry dispute will be over to-night. We will wait until next time." I believe that he should have the gumption and principle to stand up here some time today before this debate concludes—after all, he initiated it—and tell us what he intends to do about the problems that are confronting the State.

We believe that the amendment that was moved by the Leader of the Opposition and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition should receive the fullest support not only of Opposition members but also of Government members who are sincere in the objective of bringing about industrial peace in Queensland.

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (5.37 p.m.): I rise to speak in this debate not because I was challenged to do so by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition but because I want to speak on behalf of the people I represent. First of all, the Premier and the Deputy Premier spoke in this debate on behalf of the Government and the State. The Leader of the

Opposition and many members of the Opposition have spoken on behalf of the unions involved in this dispute. I, as a member of this House, wish to speak for the ordinary rank-and-file people of Brisbane, indeed the whole of Queensland, because they are the meat in the sandwich in this dispute.

I want to talk about the old people who have no power when they get up in the middle of the night. I want to talk about the young parents who cannot heat milk for their young children at the right time. I want to talk about the unemployed. I want to speak on behalf of those small pastrycooks in my area who had to put off their staffs yesterday because they did not know the number of hours they would have in which to bake their cakes. Yesterday morning they stood down their employees; and they have been stood down for two days. Not only have they been unemployed for two days, but the community has not been able to buy the cakes that they normally buy in these shops.

I also want to talk about the butchers who are losing meat because it is going bad in their freezers. The power supply is not sufficient to maintain the freezers at the correct temperatures. I want to talk about the local stores, where milk is going off.

Mr. Vaughan: Well, get on with the subject.

Mr. MILLER: The honourable member for Nudgee says, "Get on with the subject." I say to the honourable member for Nudgee that what I am talking about is the subject. The subject I am talking about concerns the people in the community who have become the meat in the sandwich in this dispute.

I want to talk about the 73 people in the Redlands electorate who are unemployed because the abattoir had to put them off when no power was available to carry on. I want to talk about the man in the quarry who lost his hands when cleaning out a machine that jammed when the power went off. He forgot to turn the switch off and the power came back on again while he was working on the machine. I want to speak about all the innocent people who have been affected by the actions of the unions.

I recognise the right of unions to go on strike. I recognise the right of individuals within unions to fight for their just rights. I recognise the right of Governments to fight on behalf of the community. But in all of this there is one group that does not have a say. I have heard it said over the years that there should be three groups involved in any industrial dispute: there should be the employer; there should be the union; and there should be the community—the third group who are never considered by any union.

Mr. Vaughan: Why don't you bring in legislation to alter the Act?

Mr. MILLER: The honourable member for Nudgee spoke for the full time allotted to him and in the dying moments of his speech finally decided to mention the people whom he represents. He now has the hide to ask me why the Government does not introduce legislation to give the third group a say. If the member for Nudgee is to continue in the way he has today and speak only on behalf of the union that he used to represent instead of the people he is supposed to be representing, it is very necessary for the Government to look at ways of allowing the community—the third group of people involved in all disputes—to have a say. Why should not the community have a say? They are not being represented by the people on the other side of the House. As far as I am concerned, they should be represented. What is this all about?

Mr. Vaughan: If you had been in the Chamber all day, you would have heard.

Mr. MILLER: The member for Nudgee has had the opportunity to tell me what he thinks this dispute is all about. Now I intend to tell the House what it is in fact all about.

This dispute has been brought about because the unions and the Trades Hall decided, because the Government had introduced the Essential Services Act, that this was the time to test out the Government; this was the time to test out the community. So they decided that they would go on strike for 48 hours and cause the inconvenience they have caused just prior to the Christmas vacation to see what the Government was prepared to do.

The Government has made a decision, and I stand by that decision. The Government says that certain industries must be essential industries. The Government says that workers in those industries should not have the same rights and privileges as workers in other industries. I would hate to think that the people who supply water to the houses of Brisbane would decide one day that they were no longer going to reticulate water. I would hate to think that the responsible people who work the sewage pumps would one day say that they were going to stop those pumps.

What would happen in Brisbane? What would happen in my own electorate, where the suburb of Torwood is lower than the high-tide level of the Brisbane River? What would happen if the sewage pumps stopped? I will tell the member for Nudgee what would happen. All that raw sewage would erupt over the streets of Torwood. There are therefore certain industries in all States that have to be placed in a situation in which they cannot hold the community to ransom. We cannot allow unions involved in essential services to say to the community and the

Government, "We are going to govern this State." They will not govern this State. I firmly believe that the community is behind the Government. It realises that, if this strike is successful, our lives and the future of the community could be threatened by workers in every essential service. As far as I am concerned, what the Government has decided to do is the right move.

Mr. Vaughan: What is that?

Mr. Scott: What are you doing? Tell us. You have the time now.

Mr. MILLER: I have been challenged to say what the Government is doing. I will say what I am prepared to do as a back-bench member of the Government. I cannot say what the Government is going to do, but I will support whatever the Cabinet decision is.

Mr. Vaughan: You're weak.

Mr. MILLER: The member for Nudgee calls that weak. I do not know what else I can do but support the Government in any decision it makes.

We heard a lot of talk when the Essential Services Bill was introduced. Opposition members referred to it as the big stick. They thought that it would kill everything. We on this side said that it would be used only in essential services at times of emergency. That is the time it will be used. It will not be a big stick to be wielded at every opportunity. This Government has shown a responsible attitude at this point of time, giving the unions the opportunity to change their mind. Surely to goodness that is in the best interests of the community and the best interests of the unions. Quite a lot of rank-and-file union members do not want to go on strike. They were not given the opportunity to have a ballot.

Mr. Vaughan: Take a ballot now.

Mr. MILLER: The member should have suggested that to the unions before they decided to call a strike.

Mr. Vaughan: The Minister has the power in his hands.

Mr. MILLER: Never mind about what the Minister has in his hands. I am saying that six men within the union movement decided to call the men out. The member for Nudgee says now that we should let them have a ballot. Why didn't they have a ballot prior to their being called out?

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the fact that we were able to remove our coats in this Chamber. Of course, it was a wonderful concession. He praised Mr. Speaker. He said that he was a very learned Speaker for allowing us to

remove our coats on such a hot day in a room where there is no air-conditioning. However, he did not say one word about the old people out in the community who cannot put a fan on. He did not say anything about young children lying in cots so hot that they are uncomfortable. My colleague the honorable member for Sherwood brought up a matter about a hospital in his electorate. Some members of the Opposition even ridiculed what he had to say. What he said was true—and a direct result of what happened yesterday and is happening today. It is no good going behind a bush and trying to change the facts. At least the honourable member for Rockhampton North had the decency to say that he did not know whether what is happening is the right thing.

My leader has asked me to allow the Minister for Labour Relations the opportunity to speak before the dinner recess. I will allow him to do so.

Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL (Aspley—Minister for Labour Relations) (5.49 p.m.): In the 20 years that I have been in this House, this is the first time it has been found necessary to adjourn because we did not have any power. My colleague the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police put before the House a very detailed sequence of the events which led up to the dislocation of the community and the consequent grave hardship caused to so many citizens. What a tangled skein it is.

I listened with interest to the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. Although it might be a novel approach, the Labor Party is surely naive in suggesting that I, as Minister for Labour Relations, should be required to usurp the role and responsibility of the Industrial Commission in an endeavour to resolve this difficult problem. This preposterous suggestion casts a slur on the commission and is tantamount to a motion by the Labor Party of no confidence in the members of the commission. I suppose I should feel complimented. However, I do not possess the wisdom of Solomon and prefer to act in my own way in these matters, which usually meets with success. I have complete confidence in the Industrial Commission and am satisfied that if the parties approach the commission in a spirit of good will and accept its decision, a way of unravelling this tangled skein will be found.

The Leader of the Opposition is struggling hard not only to retain his leadership of the parliamentary Labor Party but also to disguise his lack of ability to influence the powerhouse workers to see reason and not repeatedly inflict grievous hardship on the community. Much has been said in this debate about the process of decision-making in the trade union movement. I have never been able to ascertain just where the

decision-making process is carried out. On the one hand, the union members say that the officials make the decisions; on the other hand, the officials say that they are bound by the decisions of the rank and file. What a lovely way of opting out of responsibility when a serious situation confronts the community!

I must say that I am disappointed with the attitude and tactics adopted by most of the electricity workers. I acknowledge that there are some areas of discontent, and I hope that they will be attended to; but their actions have prevented these issues from being subjected to a dispassionate review. After all, the work-force in Queensland has the full protection of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act and any employer who does not completely fulfil his obligations under the Act is liable to prosecution for recovery if he short changes his employees. My department is obliged to obtain evidence from employees to support the prosecution, and the employer has no chance of avoiding his obligations. That is fair enough. But what is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander—in other words, each party should be held to his respective obligations. Is that too much to expect? Is it fair that when the members of the work-force are not satisfied with the progress being made in relation to solving a particular grievance, they should be free to disregard their obligations under the Act and embark upon actions that impose extreme hardship on individual citizens and create extreme dislocation in the community? The attitude of honourable members opposite indicates that they fully support such harmful actions by the workers in the electricity industry. Of course, when one considers how honourable members opposite are beholden for their endorsements, it is no wonder that they cannot find any fault with, nor place any blame—

Mr. Jones: Oh, boring!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! Last week, I drew the attention of the honourable member for Brisbane Central to conduct that I considered to be unparliamentary. I draw the attention of the honourable member for Cairns to similar conduct and tell him also that I take a dim view of it.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Members of the Opposition are beholden to them for their endorsements, so it is no wonder that they cannot find any fault, nor place any blame, with those responsible for the present tragic impasse.

I move—

“That the question be now put.”

Motion agreed to.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (Mr. Casey's amendment) stand part of the question—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 45

Akers	Lester
Armstrong	Lickiss
Austin	Lockwood
Bertoni	McKechnie
Bird	Miller
Bishop	Moore
Booth	Newbery
Bourke	Porter
Camm	Powell
Campbell	Scassola
Doumany	Scott-Young
Edwards	Simpson
Elliott	Stephan
Frawley	Sullivan
Glasson	Tomkins
Goleby	Turner
Greenwood	Wharton
Gunn	White, P. N. D.
Hartwig	White, T. A.
Hooper, M. D.	
Innes	<i>Tellers:</i>
Katter	Ahern
Kaus	Gygar
Kippin	

NOES, 22

Blake	Scott
Burns	Shaw
Casey	Underwood
D'Arcy	Vaughan
Davis	Warburton
Fouras	Wilson
Gibbs, R. J.	Wright
Hooper, K. J.	Yewdale
Houston	<i>Tellers:</i>
Kruger	Jones
Milliner	Mackenroth
Prent	

PAIR:

Bjelke-Petersen Hansen

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

[*Sitting suspended from 6.2 to 7.15 p.m.*]

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER AND SESSIONAL ORDER

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House) (7.16 p.m.): I move—

“That so much of the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, and of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 9 October, be suspended so as to allow the Resolutions to be received from the Committee of Supply, the passing of the Resolutions of the Committee of Ways and Means and the passing of an Appropriation Bill through all its stages to proceed forthwith.”

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY

SEVENTEENTH ALLOTTED DAY—RECEPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

The Resolutions reported from Committee of Supply on 29 November were presented and, on motion of Dr. Edwards, received.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

The Resolutions being taken as read—

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer): I move—

“That the Resolutions be now agreed to.”

Motion agreed to.

“(i) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1980-1981, a sum not exceeding \$50,000,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.”

Motion agreed to.

Resolutions reported, received, and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS

OPENING OF COMMITTEE

(Mr. Kaus, Mansfield, in the chair)

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer): I move—

“(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1979-1980, a further sum not exceeding \$1,158,831,362 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.

“(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1979-1980, a further sum not exceeding \$1,221,754,284 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1979-1980, a further sum not exceeding \$139,129,810 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.

“(d) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1978-1979, a supplementary sum not exceeding \$87,478,498 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.

“(e) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1978-1979, a supplementary sum not exceeding \$71,316,244 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(f) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1978-1979, a supplementary sum not exceeding \$10,513,500 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.

“(g) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1980-1981, a sum not exceeding \$350,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.

“(h) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1980-1981, a sum not exceeding \$370,000,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

FIRST READING

A Bill, founded on the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means, was introduced and read a first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (7.23 p.m.): I move—

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

This Bill is the second and final Appropriation Bill for the current financial year. It seeks parliamentary approval to cover expenditure included in the Budget Estimates for this year, unforeseen expenditure incurred during 1978-79 and expenditure for the first two months of the financial year 1980-81 to maintain Government activities until further Supply can be granted.

An amount of \$4,404.7 million is provided for 1979-80 to cover anticipated expenditures for Supply services from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund and represents the total of Parts III, IV and V of the schedule to this Bill.

The amount represents the appropriation for the full 1979-80 financial year, apart from \$184.5 million appropriated under specific Acts for special services and shown in Parts I and II of the schedule to the Bill.

It also incorporates the amount of \$662 million for Supply services appropriated in the Appropriation Act 1978-79 (No. 2) and the further amount of \$1,223 million appropriated in the Appropriation Act 1979-80 (No. 1), which was assented to on 10 August to provide for Government services until the passing of this Bill.

Unforeseen expenditure for 1978-79, totalling \$169.3 million is also incorporated in the Bill. This amount had Executive authority but now requires parliamentary approval. Full details of this amount are set out in Parts VI, VII and VIII of the schedule to this Bill.

The Bill also provides for an amount of \$770 million to provide Supply for the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund for the first two months of the financial year 1980-81. Adequate provision has been allowed to cover cost escalations in the interim period.

As has been the practice in the past, I would like to use this opportunity to speak briefly to the House on a matter of considerable financial importance to this State. Under an anomaly in the tax-sharing arrangements, Queensland is being greatly disadvantaged with respect to the other States.

Prior to the introduction of the current tax-sharing arrangements, Commonwealth general purpose revenue was distributed to the States by the financial assistance grant formula. This took account of population growth, wage increases and a betterment factor. Over the years, Queensland's position under this formula was significantly eroded by population under-estimations. The 1976 census revealed that the under-estimation for Queensland was 3.93 per cent in the period 31 December 1970 to 31 December 1977, compared to the average of 1.65 per cent for the other five States.

While the new tax-sharing arrangements take account of the new population figures, thus correcting the relativities between States, they also provide for a "guarantee" by which no State will receive less under the new tax-sharing arrangements than it would have under the old financial assistance grant formula.

Unfortunately, the basis on which Queensland's guarantee has been calculated has not taken into account the effects of the statistician's under-estimates of Queensland's population. The guarantee calculated for Queensland thus retains the old incorrect relativities. Queensland is therefore offered a much lesser degree of protection under the guarantee arrangements than are the other States.

As I indicated when introducing the Budget, this will mean that Queensland will receive approximately \$22,500,000 less than our just entitlement in 1979-80. This is in addition to the \$12,800,000 that this anomaly cost Queensland in 1978-79.

It is a matter of continuing regret to the Queensland Government that the Commonwealth seems unwilling to correct so glaring an anomaly that is to this State's disadvantage. The Commonwealth's response—that, as Queensland is a claimant State, the matter should be resolved before the Grants Commission—is quite unsatisfactory. Not only do we not believe the Grants Commission to be the appropriate place to compensate for this anomaly but, as the processes of the Grants Commission operate, it can mean a two-year delay in receiving our just entitlement.

The Queensland Government is seeking a simple adjustment to the financial assistance grant formula—an adjustment that would increase Queensland's guarantee so that it will bear the same relativity to its share of the tax pool as is the case with New South Wales. This is itself slightly lower than the all States' average excluding Queensland.

Given both the magnitude of the sums and the principle involved, I intend to raise this matter at the forthcoming Premiers' Conference later this week. It is my hope that the Commonwealth will modify its current intransigence on this issue and that Queensland's relativity will be restored to its rightful level.

The other matter I wish to mention very briefly is the decision taken by the Government, in the light of its Budget formulation, to reduce the number of working hours for teacher aides within the Education appropriation. The Government made a decision, quite deliberately, that it would review the whole of the expenditure of the Education Department and its activities and that, if any savings could be made within the department's appropriations, then every effort would be made to retain the services of teacher aides at the present level. We have been able to achieve that.

Also, as a result of our being able to make further appropriations, I am able to announce, as I did yesterday, that Cabinet has decided that the working hours for teacher aides will not be reduced and that the principle of new working hours and entitlements will be applied in the future when new teacher aides, janitors, grounds-men, etc., are employed. I believe that this move will be welcomed by all people in the community. I wish to pay a tribute to my colleague the Minister for Education for his co-operation in this matter.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (7.29 p.m.): This Bill gives the Treasurer of the State an opportunity to talk on matters of great purpose and interest to the State as a whole. I was rather surprised that the Treasurer sought only to restate what he had already stated in his Budget speech, that is, that the Liberal/Country Party Commonwealth Government had refused to listen to him and to previous Treasurers when they complained about the formula.

Mr. Frawley: Do you want him to have verbal diarrhoea?

Mr. HOUSTON: No, I would like him to talk on matters that concern the State.

Dr. Edwards: If you had read the Budget speech—

Mr. HOUSTON: I not only read it, I paid the Treasurer the courtesy of listening to it. I must say that is more than the Premier and he did to my reply.

Dr. Edwards: You know the Premier was ill that day.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is the first time I have been told. I am sorry that he was ill, but he was not ill today when he missed the vote on his own motion. He cannot have it both ways.

The Budget is a reflection on the Government of the day. This Government is now 22 years in office and a study of its Budgets over the years indicates that it lives from day to day. That is something that has happened over the years. Some of the earlier Budgets whose introduction I heard were long-range Budgets—forecast Budgets. They were Budgets of initiative that the Government hoped would help carry on projects for years. But of latter years, particularly with the present Budget, which was passed by virtue of the Government's numbers, there have been day-to-day Budgets.

The Government lives by political opportunism, not by long-range planning. The statement today by the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police on the power dispute is a clear example of the way in which the Government tries to seize every opportunity to take the mind of the public away from the Government's incompetence and lack of foresight. Over the years this Government has been one to boast of future actions and hope that something will happen to bring those boasts to fruition. It actually exists on other people's planning and actions. In fact, in many cases it then turns around and bites the hand that feeds it. Actually, it stays in power because the news media does not sufficiently report its incompetence and its tiredness in operation.

Dr. Edwards: That is a bit unfair to the media.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am talking of the media as a whole. If the Treasurer listens for a while, I will give him some examples.

The media does not report the waffling and inability of Ministers to answer questions. Would the Treasurer deny the fact that quite often in this House questions asked by the Opposition are not answered? The Opposition often gets some kind of a waffling answer. In fact, the only questions without notice that are answered and then reported to the public are those of the Dorothy Dix type that the Government itself arranges. The news media does not report the challenges to ministerial statements. Of course, this House is unique in that a Minister can ask leave of the House to make a ministerial statement. Once he makes that statement, the news media have copies of it and no opportunity is given to the Opposition, or anyone else for that matter, to dispute the validity or accuracy of that statement, or whether it is in the public interest. As far as the public is concerned, it is completely one-sided.

When there is a Parliament that operates as this one does, the news media has a tremendous responsibility to inform the people of what happens here. Far too often one reads in the Press stories about amusing incidents or statements that are critical of someone. However, I think the public really wants to know what is going on in our State and what the Government is doing. Unfortunately, in a democracy such as ours

the news media as a whole is relied on very heavily to report the activities of this Parliament to the general community so that debate can take place in public and also so that the public can let Ministers or members of the Parliament know their opinions.

There have been two recent examples of that. The first was at the time of the amendment to the Justices Act. The news media took this up and gave the people information that they would not have been aware of but for the news media itself. Irrespective of what some eminent person may say about any piece of legislation, if it was not taken up by the news media the public would not be aware of it.

Then there was the statement tonight by the Treasurer about the Education Department and Cabinet's decision on teacher aides. I am sure that that decision was greatly influenced by the media coverage of the reduction in teacher aides. It is significant that the media featured only the reduction in teacher aides. In the original and follow-up stories, the reductions affecting secondary schools, groundsman, cleaners and others included in the original Government decision were not featured.

Dr. Edwards: They were not in the original decision. In the Budget I said that we would undertake a review.

Mr. HOUSTON: They went out to schools. The schools have known of these things for quite some time.

Dr. Edwards: Following a review.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not endeavouring in any way to mislead the House or the Treasurer, but I am saying to him that the news media took up the case of teacher aides but did not do so to the same extent for other Education Department employees. The Treasurer and his Government have changed only that part of education spending cuts to which the news media gave prominence. I will deal with that later in more detail.

I want to devote some time to the types of completely misleading answers to questions that we are given in this House. On 27 November 1979 the Premier was asked this question without notice by Mr. Bertoni—

“Is he aware of the A.L.P.'s electoral redistribution proposals based on the principle of one vote, one value? Would the implementation of such a proposal slash the representation of rural Queenslanders in this Parliament? What would be the overall effect of the proposal if it were implemented?”

That is a typical, good old Dorothy Dix question. In usual form, the Premier said that he was amazed that the Leader of the Opposition would talk about one vote,

one value. I do not wish to go into that in detail, but I do refer to this part of the Premier's answer—

"However, quite apart from that, I believe that the people of the inland areas are fully informed of the A.L.P.'s attitude to the elimination of death duty and gift duty. It intends to reintroduce those duties. As well it intends to implement other policies that would have a detrimental effect on the people who live in our inland areas."

That is a completely untrue statement. The Premier just plucked it out of the air. He made the statement in this House as the Premier of the State. It is a completely untrue statement—yet the news media did not pick it up at all or, if they did, they thought it was of little significance. It is not the issue itself that matters so very much: it is the deliberate attempt of the Premier of this State to mislead Parliament and, consequently, to mislead the people of this State. I can emphatically deny that the Labor Party intends, or ever intended, to reintroduce death duties or gift duty. That is the type of answer to questions we get from the Premier.

Another example is the answer given by the Honourable R. E. Camm, Minister for Mines, Energy and Police, in reply to this question without notice by the Leader of the Opposition—

"I refer to last night's debate on the drug issue and the matters that were raised by me during that debate, and point out that the Federal Department of Transport has already initiated an inquiry into certain air activities with drug implications in the Cairns and Cape York areas. I now ask: Have similar investigations been started today by the State Police Department and will the Minister now take steps, in view of the intense drug activity in the North, to have a branch of the Drug Squad established in Cairns?"

Surely that question implies that the Opposition was referring to the importation of narcotics and other dangerous drugs from overseas. I think that would be a fair interpretation of the question.

The Minister for Mines, Energy and Police gave a long answer, telling honourable members what a great job the Police Force is doing, and suggesting that the Opposition is more interested in criminals than in the police, which, again, is completely untrue. It is an answer by a Minister in this Parliament, and I am showing how the Parliament can come into disrepute because of the answers given to questions. Surely the first thing that we ought to demand of our Ministers is that they give truthful answers and do not introduce into them other matters that have no association with the question. Only by doing that will the standing of this Assembly be raised in the minds of the public.

The point that I wish to emphasise is that the Minister said in his answer—

"Long before the Leader of the Opposition raised the drug question in the House, the Police Department of Queensland, including the Drug Squad, had been very active in North Queensland in trying to search out and destroy the growing and distribution of drugs in that area."

He made no mention of the aeroplanes, the boats, or the foreign drugs coming into this State. However, he continued his answer by trying to castigate the Leader of the Opposition, and he used these words, which I believe would be very offensive to any Queenslanders and, in particular, to any member of this Assembly—

"Judging by some of the statements of members of the Opposition, one would think that they are the cohorts of the criminals in opposing the Police Force in Queensland."

What a complete denial of justice and fair play that is!

Mr. Wright: The Premier went on to name some members of the Opposition as if they were involved in drug-running. It was all lies.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is the point. Parliament is supposed to be a responsible body in which meaningful debate takes place.

Let us look, Mr. Speaker, at what the Drug Squad in North Queensland, about which the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police was so intent on boasting, comprises. The report of the Commissioner of Police states—

"The Drug Squad is presently comprised of 27 officers and has responsibility for the investigation of drug offences throughout the State."

Twenty-seven officers! If the Treasurer wishes to put money to good use, I suggest that he should make many, many thousands of dollars available to the Police Department.

Dr. Edwards: We are providing for an additional 300 police over the next two years.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am pleased that the Treasurer is interested and has raised that point. One of the things wrong with the Government is that it is hitting and missing, and it cannot afford to hit and miss the drug situation. It must take positive action to stamp it out in every shape and form. It certainly will not be stamped out when the Government relies on only 27 experts. I am aware that the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police said in replying to the question to which I referred earlier that every policeman is doing his duty in that respect. I do not dispute that. However, it must be remembered that the police are not operating against amateurs or children who are out of work and who break into

a house. They are operating against worldwide, professional organisations. To have only 27 officers on that type of work is ridiculous, and that situation should not be allowed to continue.

My first suggestion to the Treasurer is that some of the millions of dollars he has put aside—and I am sure that he will not deny that he has put aside quite a few million dollars to cover possible increases in salaries and wages under Public Service awards—should be used now. He should not wait till election-time and then announce a big works programme, as his predecessors did. I say that the Treasurer is a faithful servant and he is following the lead set by his predecessors. However, I urge him to use that money now and to get on with the job of increasing the Police Force.

I note his comment that he will increase the Police Force by 320 personnel, or 8 per cent, over the next two years. But why wait two years? I know that it takes time to train police officers. Surely, however, in the community there are sufficient young people who could be trained quickly to do many of the less-fashionable but nevertheless essential jobs in the Police Force, leaving the more experienced officers to get on with combating the drug problem. If that were done, the Treasurer would not have to wait two years before he could attain his increase of 320 police officers.

I take it that the Treasurer is basing the number of 320 on the fact that, if the Police Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill becomes law in the near future, a substantial number of senior experienced police officers will decide to take advantage of its provisions and retire early. I have no quarrel with that at all. If the Treasurer has that in mind, he should set about training the successors to those police officers in combating the drug problem.

I notice from the Police Department's report that a total of 3,598 drug offences were reported in this State in the year under review. Although the report gives that number, it does not pretend, nor should it pretend, that that is the total number of drug offences that were committed. That number represents the number of which the police were aware. Of that number, 3,592 are classified as having been cleared. As I said the other night, the Minister for Police claims that the clear-up rate was 100 per cent. That was totally misleading. It is easy for a police officer to arrest a person for a drug offence and then claim that he has cleared up the case. What about the thousands of other people who use drugs and who have not been brought to the notice of police or arrested?

In reply to the question, the Minister made out that North Queensland receives special attention. Of the 3,598 recorded offences, only 339 occurred in North Queensland, including Cairns, Innisfail and Mareeba. Again it is significant that the Minister for

Police claims a 100 per cent clear-up rate. Mt. Isa had 26 offences and 146 were reported in the Townsville area.

I am not knocking the policemen or policewomen. They are severely handicapped in doing their job. They suffer from lack of training and lack of numbers. The fact is, however, that drug-trafficking is going on.

Again I make a call to have more police employed, not on the occasions of street marches or rallies, but in fighting the criminal element. The criminal careers of many persons begin when they are young. At a comparatively early age they decide to steal something that they value. Unfortunately the opportunity is there. It is well known that it is handed down from one person to another that the chance of getting caught for breaking and entering of dwellings is very slight. While the Minister in charge of police, through the Police Commissioner's report, was very happy to boast that 52 per cent of crimes were cleared up, he did not emphasise (and neither did the news media) that the clear-up rate for breaking and entering of dwellings was only 19 per cent. In other words, of 8,381 such crimes reported, only 1,611 could be claimed to be cleared up successfully. The clear-up rate for the breaking and entering of shops was a little better. Of 3,126 reported cases 966, or 30 per cent of such cases, were cleared up. For other premises, there were 6,391 reported breaking and enterings, of which 1,682 or 26 per cent were cleared up.

The Opposition will be pleased to support a deliberate development programme to increase the number of men and women in the Police Force and improve their training. That is one way of giving many good young Queenslanders a professional opportunity and, at the same time, it will help to reduce the minor offence of breaking and entering of dwellings which, in turn, will prevent many young people from taking the road of no return to criminal activity.

In referring to the speech made by the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police when presenting his Estimates, I wish to refer particularly to his boasting about the Government's activities in the mining field. In making his comments, he went back prior to 1957. When talking about coal mining, he said that prior to 1957 there were no exports of coking coal. That is quite true. No-one would deny it. In fact, at that time there were no buyers; prior to 1957 no-one was interested in buying coking coal. But the Minister did not tell us that the first real coal agreement with Japan for the sale of coking coal, which was announced with a great fanfare by the Government, was in 1962. It took the Government five years to do anything about it.

The Minister for Mines, Energy and Police also said that, under Labor, we received virtually nothing for our coal. I make the point again that there were no coal exports. The coal mined in Queensland was used

mainly by public utilities. It was used to manufacture gas and operate our railway system and power-houses. Would the present Government expect any Government, particularly a Labor Government, to impose high royalties on coal used by public amenities?

Mr. Bourke: Would you say that we had a steam-train economy?

Mr. HOUSTON: We had an economy that was very buoyant. The coalition Government was indeed fortunate to come to power at that time. All the groundwork had been done. All the hard slogging had been done. All this Government had to do was carry on. It did just that for a few years while the results of our planning lasted. In later years the Government fell by the wayside. If it had not been for issues completely outside the Government's control, we would be in a very sorry state today.

At that time the royalty on the first million tons was 6d or 5c a ton. For all production after that, the royalty was 3d or 2c a ton. But the coal, particularly after the first million tons, was used for rail transport, gas conversion or electricity production. It would have been completely wrong to charge excessively high royalties on coal used for those purposes. The Minister did not convey the true situation. He tried to give the idea that the Labor Government was giving coal away.

Mr. Moore: You couldn't even give it away; that's how bad it was.

Mr. HOUSTON: We were not giving it away. We were using it in this State, as the honourable member knows.

After all, it took this Government until 1962 to negotiate its first agreement for the export of coal. What did it charge? It must not be forgotten that that was five years after the change of Government. This Government charged the magnificent royalty of 5c a ton. That is all it charged the Japanese. That is the same rate of royalty that we were charging our own users.

That was one of the great sell-outs by this Government. It started the pattern of doing everything that this Government can to encourage foreigners to take our wealth. Look at the profits that are being made and will continue to be made out of our natural resources. Very little stays in this nation. More and more of it is being exported overseas. Under the agreement entered into by this Government, the royalty could not be renewed until the year 2001. In 1962 this Government bound the State to 5c a ton until 2001.

In 1973-74, the State's total mining income, including that from Mt. Isa, amounted to just over \$6,000,000. Mt. Isa, which the Government boasts about, was established because of the faith that the Labor Government had in a Queensland company. How many Queensland companies are operating today? As I said, in 1973-74, the total mining income amounted to just over

\$6,000,000. At that time, the Mines Department expenditure amounted to \$6,000,000. The State's total mining income from all mining, including coal and land rents, returned \$6,114,000 and the Mines Department was costing \$6,000,000. What a great profit! And plenty of propaganda was going out. It was not until 1974-75 that we obtained a substantial return. It increased from \$6,000,000 to \$36,944,000.

Mr. Frawley: What are you complaining about?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not complaining. I am pointing out how the Government is prepared to sell out our assets.

How did the Government achieve that enormous increase? It was attributable to one person whose name is used so often by Government members, but not in the correct manner. Whitlam decided to impose an export levy on coal. This Government immediately increased its royalty on coal from 5c to \$1 a ton. It did that overnight. That is how it got \$36,944,000. It was only because Whitlam, through the Federal Parliament, decided to show this Government that Australians were at least going to get something out of the natural wealth of Australia. And they did get something out of it.

That particular year was a good year for income, because we received \$36,944,000 from mining royalties and land rents and the Mines Department cost \$7,580,000. That is not a bad return. After all, the Mines Department has many important things to do, including looking for other fields and the safety of mines. Of course, the Treasurer knows that last year this State received an income of \$57,347,000 from mineral royalties and land rents, and the Mines Department cost just over \$10,000,000.

Mr. Frawley: That is not a bad profit.

Mr. HOUSTON: It could have, and should have, been more if the Government of the day had not sold out our State so cheaply.

Mr. Frawley: Under your Government, it would have been nothing.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is a completely erroneous supposition, as I have shown.

I now deal with another Minister, the Minister for Industry and Administrative Services. Again, he made big claims in the news media that Queensland is going ahead in leaps and bounds; so much so that 60 South Australian firms have moved to Queensland in the last few years. That is fair enough. But if the Minister is going to make a statement, surely he should check out the facts. Surely he would be able to find out from someone in a responsible position the names of the firms, what they are doing here and where they are located. I believe that the Minister plucked the figure out of the air, like other Ministers have done in this House.

When I asked him a question about this matter, he said—

“I do not see any good purpose being served by compiling a dossier along the lines suggested by the honourable member.”

I did not ask for a dossier; I only asked him to justify the statement that he had made. Of course, it is quite significant that the Minister who should be encouraging companies to come here, stay here and look after our interests has been so very silent in recent times about the take-overs that have been occurring in this State and are doing tremendous damage to it. I do not want to interfere with the free progress of private industry. I go along with the statements that some Ministers have made—perhaps they have made them anonymously, but they have been reported as making them—that they believe that some action should be taken to make sure that our people are not badly affected by take-overs. It will be interesting to see if, at some future time, the Government takes some positive action in this regard. I know that Ministers beat their breasts and say a lot of things. There was a typical example of this when the Thiess organisation looked like being taken over. Special legislation was going to be put through, but it never saw the light of day.

Dr. Edwards: Would you have supported the legislation?

Mr. HOUSTON: If it had followed the lines that I wanted, yes. I believe that we have to protect the jobs of Queenslanders. But the fact remains that, over the years, many take-overs have greatly affected this State and its employment opportunities. Let me take the retail industry for a start. One does not have to be very old to remember Allan & Starks, the B.C.C. stores, T. C. Beirnes, Finney Isles, John Hicks, McWhirters and Overells. When they operated here, they employed local people at the top. They were owned exclusively in Queensland and all the top positions were held by Queenslanders. There were Queenslanders in all their outlets. What is more important, most of the commodities that they sold in their shops were made in Queensland. Many small firms supplied them with the items that they sold. Their advertising was done in the local news media by local advertising agencies.

One could go on and on talking about the effect that these take-overs have. In fact, now the local people cannot even make decisions; the matters have to be referred to the South. If one goes to some companies, not only those I mentioned but also the others that have been taken over, and asks for advertising for some sporting organisation or the like, or asks for a donation of any sizeable amount at all, one is told that the matter will have to be referred to Melbourne, or to the advertising agent in Sydney or Melbourne. So the mere fact

that a company is taken over does not rest just there. Of course, the honourable member for Lytton has mentioned Provincial Traders Holding Ltd. and other companies.

Not only are there take-overs of retail establishments. Dozens of other take-overs have affected companies such as those at Mt. Morgan, Blair Athol Coal and Timber Co. Ltd., Blair Athol Open Cut Collieries Ltd. and other companies involved in coal-mining. Those are the types of operations that are lost to the State. It is not only the jobs of those who were working there that are lost when these take-overs occur. The companies introduce what may be termed modernised methods, but the result always is that fewer employees are needed. More machines and more computers are claimed to represent technological advancement, but it is progress at the expense of the work-force. I am surprised that the Minister for Industry and Administrative Services did not come up with arguments and seek support to stop these things going on. It will be interesting to see the type of legislation that is introduced.

As I said at the outset, this Government has lived from day to day. In other words, it has fired from the hip. If there was something that it hoped would take public attention away from its own problems, it would have a shot at it.

Let us have a look at some of the tax cuts that the Government has brought in—not, I am sure, with any great foresight or with any great determination to analyse exactly what effect they would have on the State Budget. Death duties, gift duties and succession duties are among the taxes cut. The Premier earlier accused the Labor Party of wanting to reintroduce those taxes. I assured him, the Government and the people of Queensland that that is not so. But the Opposition can ask the same question that the Government asked of Mr. Whitlam when he was Prime Minister: Did you go too far too quickly?

Mr. Moore: No.

Mr. HOUSTON, Maybe that is so, but the fact remains that the Government did it.

The abolition of transport licences and taxes was done to embarrass the New South Wales Labor Government. I am pleased that the honourable member for Windsor supports me in that view.

Mr. Moore: On half of your statement.

Mr. HOUSTON: He accepts that part. Of course he does. When it comes to that type of thing, I know that he is an honest man. I am not arguing against that. Of course, the Government hoped that the Federal Government would pick up the tab. Under the Prime Ministership of Mr. Whitlam, the Government was really spoilt.

Dr. Edwards: You must be joking!

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not joking at all. I can prove it to the Treasurer. Instead of allowing propaganda to be the main function of his parliamentary career, the Treasurer should do his homework. He would then realise that what I am saying is true. As I said, the most important speeches of the year for any Treasurer are the Budget speech and his speeches on the Appropriation Bills.

Mr. Moore: Who said so?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am saying so, because it is the finances of the State that make it go. Without money, the State cannot operate. If the money is not spent wisely, it is wasted.

Dr. Edwards: You could not really call Whitlam a good manager, could you?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am telling the Treasurer that Mr. Whitlam was very generous to the States. If the Treasurer will listen, I will prove it to him. The Treasurer can reply later on, if he wishes. Mr. Whitlam was a lot more generous than Mr. Fraser is. Will the Treasurer deny that Mr. Fraser has already suggested that the current guaranteed formula is too generous? Will he deny that that is factual comment? But for the Whitlam formula, we would be down \$44,600,000 from the Commonwealth this financial year. If he has a look at his figures, as I am sure the Treasurer has done many times, he will realise that that is a fact.

I meant to point out to the Treasurer during the Budget debate that on page 11 of his tables relating to the Financial Statement he omitted three noughts in Table 5. I think most people would understand what is meant. According to that table and to the entitlement distributed, Queensland would be entitled to \$903,200,000; but, because of the amount guaranteed under the financial assistance grants formula, we will receive \$947,800,000—not a bad sum.

In his speech the Treasurer complained about an additional \$23,000,000 he believes he is entitled to. What I am saying is that Mr. Whitlam's base formula is giving this State \$44,600,000 more.

Dr. Edwards: You are saying Queensland is on the Whitlam formula?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not saying that. What I am saying is that, if the table formula is followed strictly, Queensland's entitlement would be \$903,200,000; but, because of the other formula, we will receive that additional amount.

Dr. Edwards: I will say a bit more about that later.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Treasurer can do that, but I have made my statement based on the Treasurer's own figures.

Mr. Moore: Have another look at that, Jack. I think you've made a mistake.

Mr. HOUSTON: No. It is right.

Strange as it may seem, I completely support the Treasurer in his attitude towards our receiving additional money because of our population. I do not think he is wrong at all. However, I do believe that he is whipping a dead horse. To my knowledge, the previous Treasurer tried to get somewhere with Mr. Fraser and Mr. Howard. He failed. All I can say to the present Treasurer is, "Good luck. I hope you can succeed." The additional money will make a difference. When he gets it, there will surely be plenty of people to tell him how to spend it.

I return to my claim that the Whitlam Government was a generous Government to this State. Firstly, I deal with the railway electrification programme that this Government so unfortunately stopped in the 1960s. In 1957 it was under way. It was a reality of life. By the end of the 1960s, we would have had an electrified suburban railway system running right throughout Brisbane to Ipswich, to Lota and up to the North Coast.

Mr. Moore: It was a D.C. system. We would have had to replace it.

Mr. HOUSTON: Perhaps technology has changed, but that change could be made without changing a whole system.

Mr. Moore: We would have had to change from D.C. to A.C.

Mr. HOUSTON: I know the difference between A.C. and D.C.—and it's got nothing to do with growing hair or anything like that.

When this Government made its decision to change, it did so in the belief that dieselisation was the thing for suburban railways. It was told at the time that that was ridiculous. Many people in this House, including me, told the Government that it would regret the day that it made the dieselisation decision, because it was obvious that the oil barons would not let the Western World forever get oil and petrol at the price then being asked. Anyone at all interested in world affairs and the development of countries knew that.

Mr. Moore: What did you say about it?

Mr. HOUSTON: I said that, as "Hansard" will show.

In this State we had such an abundance of steaming coal that we could have had powerhouses on every known coalfield. However, it was this Government's decision not to proceed. It was Labor Party policy State-wide from that day on to reintroduce electrification as soon as it became the State Government. It was the Labor Party in this State that persuaded Gough Whitlam and his Government to get on with the job here. It was that money that was available to this State Government.

Dr. Edwards: What happened to the money they promised?

Mr. HOUSTON: Most of it was available. The Treasurer should not forget that it was his colleagues—I do not say the Minister personally, because he was in the health field—who would rise in this Chamber and publicly abuse the Whitlam Government. How often did the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads rise in his place in the Chamber and yell and scream about the Federal Government wasting money? Will the Treasurer deny that it was Federal Government money and Federal initiative that made it possible?

How many millions of dollars has the Government saved because of the funds made available directly to local authorities by the Whitlam Government? The situation is similar in the field of education.

Dr. Edwards: Rubbish!

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable gentleman can say "Rubbish!" as much as he wishes. The facts are there. How much money went directly to local authorities before the Whitlam era?

Dr. Edwards: The State has not reduced its commitment.

Mr. HOUSTON: I did not say that it had. That is what honourable members opposite tend to do.

Dr. Edwards: You said it saved the State money.

Mr. HOUSTON: It did save the State money. Does the Minister think that if the Federal Government had not assisted local authorities as they are being assisted now, local authorities could have survived without further State money? Surely that is logical. I did not say that the Treasurer had reduced payments to local authorities. If he had done that, I certainly would have been complaining about it. The fact remains that the State Government has saved money because, under the system now operating, local authorities cannot function purely by relying on rate revenue.

Let us look at spending on education. Honourable members will recall the Government's boast that it was going to develop pre-school education and education generally. It did that, but a big percentage of the money needed came from the Federal Government. Once there was a reduction in Federal moneys available to this State for education, the Government found itself in trouble in the field of education.

When I knew that the Federal Government was making substantial sums of money available to this State for education, it always annoyed me to read what was put out by the State Government's propaganda machine and to see Government members going to schools, opening new buildings and talking about the Government's great spending on education. There was not one word

of thanks to the Labor Government in Canberra, but there were many attacks on it on other issues.

Let me turn to the hospitals programme. How often were new hospitals promised because of the decision of the Federal Government to make money available? Today, the people of this State are still waiting for the four hospitals promised by the Government during the last State election campaign. If there is one thing that is badly needed it is new hospitals.

No-one has ever criticised the Government for speaking about development programmes, especially in the fields of education and health. The criticism voiced by the Opposition is that the Government is not delivering the goods. It promises a great deal, but that is as far as it goes. It refers to the lack of Federal money and the tight economic situation. As a former Minister for Health, the Treasurer knows full well that, because of the breakdown in the Medibank system, many more people are going to public hospitals and a tremendous burden is being imposed on the out-patient departments at the few hospitals that are available.

On the Treasurer's trip overseas seeking loan money—

Mr. Mackenroth: Which one?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am referring to the one to Japan. I hope that the Treasurer obtains additional loan money, because the State certainly needs it. He should ensure that it is not used to send Ministers on pre-retirement trips round the world. He should ensure that it is used to build hospitals so that people may attend a hospital close to where they live. That will not only save them a great deal of money in taxi fares but also reduce greatly the time they have to wait. In my opinion, to ask people to support the Government in the electorates in which it promised to build hospitals but did not deliver the goods is a very cheap political trick.

I now want to refer to spending on education. The Treasurer has now come up with the idea of retaining teacher aides. Perhaps the Government has suddenly realised that an election is to be held next year and that this would not be an appropriate time to decrease the number of teacher aides. However, will it cost \$6,500,000 to retain teacher aides? After all, that is the figure quoted by the Minister for Education as being the shortfall in the education allocation. What about the other services that will be cut out? What about the janitors?

Dr. Edwards: No, we are not. I have told you what we are doing.

Mr. HOUSTON: If a janitor retires, he will not be replaced by a full-time janitor. That will happen in certain schools; is that true?

Dr. Edwards: In some schools.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is true. Why deny it?

Mr. Moore: You said in all schools. It's one of the most important positions in the schools.

Mr. HOUSTON: I agree with the honourable member. The Government is adopting a pinch-penny attitude and saying that it will cut down on services.

Mr. Moore: I don't mind that, as long as they don't get rid of the janitor.

Mr. HOUSTON: In schools there are other persons employed whose services should be retained, too. It all goes to quality of education. Trained teachers are specialists and they should not be required to do the janitor's work. Years of training are required before a teacher becomes proficient.

I can well remember the Government's propaganda before former State elections. It claimed that it would appoint full-time janitors, full-time groundsmen, full-time secretaries and full-time administration officers. What has happened? As soon as the Federal Government tightens the purse-strings, this Government loses its initiative and sends out memorandums to school principals stating that certain procedures are to be followed. The fact is that in many instances the persons who retire will be replaced not by full-time employees but by part-time employees. That is not good enough.

I have drawn to the attention of the Treasurer some of the matters that I believe are of importance in relation to the State's financial position. I would be remiss if I sat down without mentioning the most serious problem confronting all State Governments in Australia, that is, unemployment.

It is quite strange to see the number of jobs listed in the "Positions vacant" columns of the newspapers. From the statistics of the number of persons who are out of work, it is apparent that the majority of unemployed persons have no chance in the immediate future of finding a job, let alone a worthwhile job.

Mr. Scott: On the Government side of the House they don't care, either.

Mr. HOUSTON: Of course they don't. If they cared, they would take action instead of merely talking about it.

Dr. Edwards: Haven't you read about the \$98,200,000 additional funds?

Mr. HOUSTON: All we hear is a lot of talk. The statistics show that the number of people out of work is increasing.

Dr. Edwards: It's a decreasing rate.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is not. A decrease can be expected at this time, the end of the year. But what happens early next year

when the school-leavers come onto the labour market? Up will go the number again, and it will be higher than last year's number.

At present, there is a shortage of tradesmen. Most of the advertisements in the "Positions vacant" columns call for qualified tradesmen. Year after year, particularly when I was responsible more for the industrial and education aspects of the Opposition's role, I made speech after speech pleading with the Government to encourage employers to take on more apprentices. My colleagues have made similar pleas since. Yet, at present we are faced with a shortage of tradesmen, and that shortage has been created by the Government's inability to do its job. It is up to the Government to train apprentices.

I warn employers that if they do not train apprentices—I do not agree with all the nonsense about it costing employers money—our nation will be in trouble. If an employer is capable of training apprentices properly they will be an asset to him. I do not agree that an apprentice is a liability to an employer. It is a matter of proper supervision and training. Over the years I have trained hundreds of them.

It is shocking, in our young State, that thousands of young, middle-aged and elderly people who want to work, cannot get a job. The Government must take the initiative. It must get on with the job of building hospitals, which would provide work for quite a number of people. It must get on with rail electrification and with the job of building the bridge in the lower reaches of the river. Such initiatives to help provide employment would be taken by a progressive Government. Jobs must be created to give the people more spending power, which would be self-generating and help us get back onto the road to prosperity.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER (Archerfield) (8.26 p.m.): In rising to speak to this Appropriation Bill I think it timely to make some comment on the value for money we receive from the judicial system. I honestly do not think we are getting value for money in Queensland. The Queensland Supreme Court is regarded widely as being extremely conservative. Its honesty and integrity have never been questioned but, unfortunately, I am not over-impressed with the performance of the District Court. That opinion is shared by many members of the legal profession. The calibre of some members of the Bench is not very high. Their legal expertise leaves a lot to be desired.

Recently, one senior member of the legal profession told me that, in his opinion, one of the present incumbents would be hard pressed to do a simple conveyancing job. While discussing the District Court I will mention the results of a recent case heard in that court. I refer to Finance & Commerce Co-operative Society Ltd. and the decision of the court in relation to Desmond Paul O'Shea, Clarence Edward Coulsen,

Peter Fleming and Hugh Gerard Carroll. Two or three weeks ago those four gentlemen were charged in the District Court—after a delay of almost 19 months—for falsifying a balance sheet. When the balance sheet was falsified it ruined 2,000 Queensland investors in the company. They will be very fortunate indeed to get a return of 10c in the dollar. Thanks to smart legal counsel and a very weak, inexperienced District Court judge they were fined only \$2,000.

As the Treasurer well knows, Desmond Paul O'Shea has assets in the vicinity of \$10,000,000, but he was fined only \$2,000. He could have paid the \$2,000 out of the office boy's petty-cash tin. The whole decision was a disgrace to our judicial system.

I suggest that if an ordinary member of the public had been on this charge he would have gone to gaol, but because white-collar crooks like Desmond Paul O'Shea can pay the best legal counsel and can afford to allow the case to be drawn out for 12 to 18 months, they get off virtually scot-free.

Last week, when I asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General a question about this matter, he virtually said that the Solicitor-General found that there were no grounds on which to lodge an appeal. I say to the Attorney-General through you, Mr. Speaker, that the Solicitor-General should have got another opinion. To my mind, when he gives such an opinion the Solicitor-General is not fit to hold his job. I say categorically to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General that the Crown should have lodged an appeal against the inadequacy of the sentence.

As I said in my question, it was a travesty of justice. The paltry penalty is a serious set-back to the Queensland Police Force in its attempts to control the booming white-collar-crime industry in this State. Next to the prostitution racket in Queensland the white-collar-crime industry is the fastest-growing industry in this State. The decision given, I think by Mr. Justice McCracken, gave the green light to the white-collar crooks in the State to rip off Queensland consumers to their heart's content. As I have said before on many occasions, this is the fastest-growing industry in Queensland. It will continue to be so as long as the Premier keeps saying that in Queensland we operate under the dictum of caveat emptor which, in plain English, means "Let the buyer beware."

The Minister for Mines, Energy and Police obviously subscribes to this philosophy because, on radio 4BC news on 25 September 1979, he was quoted as saying, "No person was forced to buy land on Russell Island. No person has taken action." What inane comments from a senior Minister of the Crown! Of course no person has taken civil action, for the simple reason that the cost is so prohibitive. The cost of litigation in this State has become prohibitive for the ordinary man in the street. What ordinary

person could afford to take civil action? Anyway, why should he when fraud has been committed and redress can be obtained through a criminal prosecution at, I might add, no cost to the person defrauded?

In regard to the silly statement that no person was forced, let me say that of course no person was forced. White-collar crooks do not act in that way. They use false representations to induce people to purchase their land. Anyway, force is not required to commit an offence under the provisions of section 427 (1) of the Criminal Code. I would have thought that a Police Minister who claims to be so in touch with the workings of his department would have known that. Obviously he does not.

As I have pointed out in this House on innumerable occasions, if we are to get on top of white-collar crime in this State we need a highly educated, highly competent Fraud Squad. Unfortunately, this is not so at present.

Detective Senior Sergeant Jack Donoghue was in charge of the Fraud Squad. In my opinion he is a very competent officer and a very good investigator. He was transferred from that squad and placed with internal investigations for the purpose of investigating stolen-car rackets. I point out also that he is the only senior sergeant on internal investigations, together with Inspectors Quinn, Joe Keen, Pat Swan and others. I regard those officers as highly educated, competent and efficient officers.

Sergeant 1/c Terry McMahon was left in charge of the Fraud Squad. He is an exceptionally good officer but he is not quite up to the standard of Detective Senior Sergeant Donoghue. He was promoted to detective senior sergeant and transferred on promotion to Ipswich.

Hasenkam was promoted to detective senior sergeant and was transferred on promotion from North Queensland to Brisbane. I make it quite clear that he knows nothing about fraud. Common sense and good management would have left McMahon on the Fraud Squad. He is an extremely able police officer.

The Fraud Squad is now in the charge of Detective Sergeant 1/c King and/or Detective Sergeant 1/c Plint. Without denigrating either of these officers, let me state that their fraud experience is almost nil. The plain fact of the matter is that the Fraud Squad has been, by accident or design, left to stagnate.

A capable, experienced and competent supervisor would not have let the Deens of slave labour camp fame get off scot-free. Brian Maher would not have escaped; the correct charges would have been laid. I should like to refer briefly to the manner in which Brian Maher was let off. It would almost seem that certain members of the Police Force let him off on purpose.

He had the best legal counsel in this State, Des Sturgess, who charges like a wounded bull. Maher was charged at South Brisbane after I had exposed this white-collar crook's depredations. He was charged under the New South Wales Companies Act. Even a person with the limited legal knowledge of the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General would have had more nous than to charge Maher under that Act. Nevertheless he was charged under that Act.

He was taken before the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate, Mr. Latchford, who was well known for having a nervous tummy, particularly when Des Sturgess was at the Bar table. The charge was struck out. I expected the Crown to lodge an appeal but no appeal was forthcoming. Obviously Brian Maher is an extremely wealthy man who has contributed quite heavily to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation.

Dr. Edwards interjected.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: The Treasurer can laugh.

Mr. Glasson: You're a crook yourself, sport.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: I do not mind taking interjections from some of the heavyweights but that interjection from the paperweight member for Gregory is the second longest speech he has made since entering Parliament in 1974.

Brian Maher was let off scot-free. He should have been charged. There was no appeal by the Crown. It was a travesty of justice. He certainly would not have escaped if this had happened in New South Wales under a decent Labor Government and where there is an extremely capable and competent Attorney-General in Frank Walker. Both episodes are nothing short of a fiasco, and do little to enhance the reputation of the Queensland Police Force.

I make it quite clear that, in my opinion, the squad should be in charge of a competent inspector or a senior sergeant who can give leadership and guidance. An organisation such as this can operate at full efficiency only if the team leader is experienced and competent. I can see the Treasurer nodding in agreement. Perhaps he would make a better Attorney-General than a Treasurer. A capable experienced team leader would also provide on-the-job training. This is most essential, particularly in the Fraud Squad. At the present time, this is non-existent. No member of the squad is capable of organising and carrying out a really worthwhile on-the-job training session.

I can also remember quite vividly that the present Assistant Commissioner (Crime and Services), Les Duffy, was very vocal on his appointment to that illustrious rank in saying that white-collar crime in this State would be dealt with. The fact that the Fraud Squad has been allowed to deteriorate

shows just how hollow his statements were. The whole tragic result in this State is that people get fleeced right and left and the white-collar crooks laugh all the way to the bank and to their big expensive homes on the Gold Coast.

During a speech in this House in 1978 I spoke of my concern about the interlocking directorships of the Northern Permanent Building Society and the building firm of Kern Bros. I will just recap that briefly.

Mr. Lee: Did you ever mention building societies before?

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: The Minister for Industry and Administrative Services is interjecting. He has probably the most junior portfolio in the whole Cabinet. If ever there was a decent reshuffle of Cabinet, he would not be there.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to continue with his speech.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: Regarding the mooted shopping centre development at Lang Park by Kern Bros., it is a fact that the area needs another large shopping complex like it needs a hole in the head. Apart from this, I sound a note of warning to the Lang Park Trust and the Queensland Rugby League organisation for the reasons that I will outline. From my understanding of financial matters, the measure of any company's viability is to relate its current assets to its current liabilities. I hear the Minister for Industry and Administrative Services laughing. I can also remember the events leading up to 1977 when I was exposing the depredations of certain building societies in this State, and the laugh was on the other side of the Minister's face then. Because of my expose of the building society movement and the Minister's lack of expertise and ability in handling that particular industry, he was relegated to his present junior portfolio. As I was saying, the financial affairs of Kern Bros. leave a lot to be desired. If we apply that well-recognised formula to that firm, we see a recipe for severe financial disaster.

Mr. Moore: You are doing a lot with other people's writing.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: At least I can write my own speech. I do not get up and stutter, stammer and splutter like the honourable member for Windsor does.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to come back to the Bill.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: Yes, I will, but I have been severely tested.

This company resembles a finance company or a highly geared land developer that encountered problems and collapsed during the heady land deals of the early '70s. A perusal of its latest balance sheet shows Kern Bros. current assets at around

\$21,200,000 with current liabilities of around \$18,000,000. I think that all honourable members, even the Minister for Industry and Administrative Services with his limited knowledge, would agree that this is a bit too tight for comfort.

It is a bit more disturbing when one reads on into the small print and sees that the company's single biggest item of assets is residential land and commercial and industrial property acquired for development or sale worth \$7,600,000. It is also a fact of life that this property is not readily saleable. To show it under current assets at that figure is totally misleading.

Mr. Lee: Where is it?

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: A search of the Titles Office will reveal that.

To qualify for this definition it should be capable of being sold within 12 months. The notes to the accounts say that the company does not expect a sale before 1984. I think this is a scandalous state of affairs, and I believe that the firm should be the subject of an immediate query from the Stock Exchange. I am pleased to see that the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General is in the House tonight because I feel that the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs should immediately carry out an investigation into the matters I have raised. This land should be classed as a long-term fixed asset.

This is just another indication of the highly suspect management and trading situation of Kern Bros. What disturbs me even more is that the auditors permit it. But it will come as no surprise to the members of this House when I tell them that the auditors for Kern Bros. are none other than our old friends, Hungerfords. As honourable members will recall, that was the company that presided over the accounts of the now defunct Great Australian Permanent Building Society. Heaven help Kern Bros. if they stay with that company. Not only do they show a remarkable lack of management ability, but their auditors, to say the least after the Great Australian Permanent Building Society fiasco, can be classed as questionable. It seems that in this case the accountants have not advised the firm to follow basic accountancy principles. I think it is high time that the accountancy profession was cleaned up. The accountancy profession, along with the legal and medical professions, should no longer be sacred cows. They are as fallible as any other discipline. I know the Treasurer agrees with that.

There should be a hard crack-down on partners of accountancy firms who, by being on the boards of companies that are clients of the firm, have a conflict of interest. Such a situation just invites disaster.

Let us look at the directors of Kern Bros. One of them is Sir David Nicholson, a former Government member and Speaker of this House. Another is Mr. B. E. Riding, a former S.G.I.O. and S.G.I.O. Building Society

chairman, and still a building society director. Another director is Mr. S. J. Ariotti, chairman of the Northern Permanent Building Society. Even that name "Ariotti" has a sinister connotation to it.

I have spoken my piece on the Northern Permanent Building Society in this House previously, but it still leaves a lot to be desired. When I see that that firm and Kern Bros. have a common director, Mr. Ariotti, and I witness how highly geared they are financially, quite frankly I shudder.

Mr. Scott: Would you say it is on the nose?

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: That is saying the least. It is certainly on the nose.

I suppose that these people feel they are so far North that they are out of sight of the registrar of building societies. I say to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, who administers the Corporate Affairs Office, that he should have a good look at the Northern Permanent Building Society. I would be interested to know just how much supervision there is of the societies outside of Brisbane. The annual report of the Northern Permanent Building Society is an exercise in deception. That report is available to any member of this House from the Corporate Affairs Office. The report refers to that society having a charge over the assets of another building society. I would like to pose the questions: Which society and why? I will be asking some questions of the Minister at a later date.

It seems to me that North Queensland is the place to go if one wants to be out of sight and out of mind and to get into the drug business or any other shady business deals.

I will now return to Hungerfords for a moment. Over the years, I have had a lot to say about that firm of accountants. I might have a very suspicious mind but I note that the new chairman of the S.G.I.O. Building Society is Sir Rod Proctor, retired director of Hungerfords. He is also a director of the Jennings housing group. In my opinion that is certainly a conflict of interest. He is also a former director of the failed Alfred Grant group. But apparently all is forgiven, as he is a trustee of the National Party. When one talks of jobs for the boys the National Party leaves political parties in other States for dead.

Who is the Government trying to fool? What chance does the man in the street have of getting straight answers from Ministers about the dealings of Kern Bros., the Northern Permanent Building Society or the S.G.I.O. Building Society when there is such an old-boy network? The National Party network makes the Oxbridge old-boys look like very small potatoes. We all know this Government has a shocking record on company and corporate crime. Is it any wonder when so many of its friends are involved that it cannot afford to dig too

deep? I wonder if Kern Bros. and the Northern Permanent Building Society have hit the National Party can, as they would say at the Queensland Club.

I was also appalled to see on the staff of Kern Bros. our old friend, Mr. Lloyd Vivian Price, former incompetent managing director of the failed Queensland Permanent Building Society and great friend of the Government. Need I say more? Mr. Price is now Manager, Management and Leasing, for Kern Bros. Is it any wonder that I question the business acumen of Kern Bros.?

I would hope that the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs and, to a lesser degree, the Stock Exchange will take note of my words. We all know the benefits of an ounce of prevention taken at the right time. It is certainly better than a lot of cure.

Another financial matter that I wish to raise concerns the conflict of interest where directors or senior officers of a building society are either on the board of or have a very close relationship with the building society. I have previously mentioned Kern Bros. and the Northern Permanent, but apparently nothing has been done. Every time I have asked questions in this House the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has given me an answer, but one that begged the question. I make it clear while I am on my feet here tonight that the directors of the now defunct Queensland Permanent Building Society are being protected by certain high-ranking members of the Government in this State.

Another matter I would like to raise relates to donations to a clandestine organisation. Last week I happened to get a copy of a recent donation list of the National Civic Council. It makes quite interesting reading.

Mr. R. J. Gibbs: That group! It is a shocking group of people.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: Wait till the honourable member hears what I have to say. Every member will be listening with bated breath.

I would just like to mention a few of the more interesting donors for the benefit of honourable members. In "News Weekly" of 15 November 1979, in an article about donations to the National Civic Council fighting fund, the N.C.C. stated that it was appealing for funds "because of the obvious impotence of political parties to solve the great national problems". A few honourable members of this House obviously agreed. For example, Mr. Roy Armstrong, the member for Mulgrave, made a donation of \$20. The former member for Warwick made a donation of \$20. Others agreed to a lesser degree. One—a Minister of this Government who is a very pleasant fellow but is known to have short arms and deep pockets (I am referring to the Honourable Fred Campbell)—made a lousy donation of \$10. The former member for Redcliffe and Speaker of this House, Mr. Jim Houghton,

also made a donation of \$10. I am glad that the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General is in the House, because a senior member of his staff made a very large donation. The Licensing Commissioner, Mr. Leo McQuillan, obviously agreed with the other gentlemen, because he weighed in with \$20.

If I may use the Premier's adage, if one flies with the crows, one must expect to be shot as a crow. The contributions to the National Civic Council, which as we all know is an extreme, Right-wing organisation, proves what I have been saying for years: this is an extremely Right-wing, conservative, out-of-touch Government.

Mr. R. J. Gibbs: Would you have any idea how much, for example, they then donated to the recent re-election in the clerks' union?

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: No, but I believe they did make a substantial donation.

Mr. Austin: Would you like to make a comment on how Mr. Gibbs went with his attack on the clerks' union?

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: He did very well. He made a very illuminating and enlightening address in this House and exposed the clandestine operations of the National Civic Council in the internal affairs of some trade unions.

I would like to close on a lighter note. I understand that the letters of acceptance are back from those people to be honoured in the New Year's honours list.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: Honourable members can laugh, but it is true.

We have all seen the feigned surprise on New Year's day from the blue-rinse set. I suppose it looks good if a person gets up and says, "I can't understand why Her Majesty wants to confer such an honour on me.", except that he happens to be a friend of the Government and probably a stooge who contributes quite heavily to National and Liberal Party coffers at election-time. However, they always say, "Surprise! Surprise! The Queen has remembered to honour someone so far away in the Empire." I understand that I have been recommended for my usual award—the big A. I thank the Premier for his kind thought.

Mr. BURNS (Lytton) (8.50 p.m.): When I was a lad, my father used to always say to me, "You can't trust the Tories." I want to use tonight's debate on this Appropriation Bill to look at some of the promises that have been broken by the Tory parties over the past few years—especially by Mr. Fraser, especially by Mr. Bjelke-Petersen and especially by the Liberal and National parties in the State and Federal spheres. I want to list about 50 promises that have been broken by Liberal and National party politicians in this State in that period.

Honourable members will recall that on 25 February this year the Premier announced that he had thrown his Government's full support behind the Fraser Government. The newspaper report said that Mr. Bjelke-Petersen had asked all members of the coalition Government to work closely with Mr. Fraser.

Let us look closely at Mr. Fraser, because Mr. Fraser is the man whom Mr. Bjelke-Petersen wanted as Federal Prime Minister. He worked assiduously to have Mr. Fraser in office. He spent all his time campaigning for Mr. Fraser and running around the State for him. In fact, he used public money and the people's aeroplane to run round the State to help Mr. Fraser.

What did Mr. Fraser promise? In November 1975, the election before last, he said—

"We have a comprehensive strategy to restore prosperity."

That was his promise—a straight promise. Can anyone tell me that that strategy has worked, that prosperity has been restored? I say that my father was right—you can't trust the Tories!

On 22 February 1979, Mr. Fraser said—

"I believe that 1979 is the year in which the fruits of our policies will become clearly apparent, a year in which the economy will take another step on the road to recovery."

Can anyone tell me that Mr. Fraser's promise of 22 February is correct? My father was right—you can't trust the Tories!

Mr. Fraser said, "We will take politics off the front pages." Do honourable members remember the Garland affair, the Robinson affair, the Withers affair, the Lynch affair, the Sinclair affair, the V.I.P. junket fleet, Mr. Fraser's in-laws and the tax dodges, the Sir Robert Menzies' Memorial Trust, and the extravagant new High Court? Of course you can't trust the Tories!

Dealing with inflation, on 12 September 1978 Mr. Fraser said—

"Inflation at an annual rate of 5 per cent is within our reach by mid-1979. It will go on falling under the policies of this Government."

I ask honourable members to remember the words, "It will go on falling . . ."

On 24 September 1979, one year later, in "The Courier-Mail" Mr. Fraser warned that inflation would get worse before the end of the year. So Mr. Fraser's promises again show that you can't trust the Tories.

Now let us have a look at Medibank. On 27 September 1975, Mr. Fraser said—

"We will maintain Medibank and ensure that the standard of health care does not decline."

That was a positive promise by Mr. Fraser. Within six months of gaining power in 1975, Mr. Fraser modified the scheme. He broke the promise immediately.

In October 1976, a compulsory 2½ per cent health-insurance levy was imposed, with compulsory membership in private health funds for those who would not pay the levy. Twelve months later that scheme was scrapped. Fraser then undertook to pay 40 per cent of scheduled fees, and now the 40 per cent rebate has disappeared. Fraser altered Medibank in October 1976, July 1978, November 1978 and September 1979. On Thursday, 8 November 1979—only a few weeks ago—"The Courier-Mail" headlined "Health Plan No. 7 being considered". So the man who said, "We will maintain Medibank and ensure that the standard of health care does not decline" has scrapped it, destroyed it and, by regular changes, made our health system so confusing that no-one understands it. You can't trust the Tories!

As to interest rates—on 21 November 1977, Mr. Fraser said—

"Interest rates have begun to fall—and they will keep on falling."

On 6 December 1977, he said—

"Once the election is over, we will start to move to the consummation of a 2 per cent reduction in interest rates—and that means about \$500 a year for someone on an average home loan."

Another Fraser promise; another broken Liberal-National Party promise. Families paying off their homes will know that this broken Fraser promise is another reason why you can't trust the Tories.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Kaus): Order! The House is not discussing the Federal Budget.

Mr. BURNS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, under the Appropriation Bill, honourable members have been allowed to speak on any matter. That has been the ruling in this Chamber by every Speaker while I have been a member of this Assembly. I am speaking on matters that affect the Budget, because the promises made in relation to housing, income tax and interest rates all affect the money that is spent in this State. I submit that I am in order according to the procedure that has been followed by former speakers.

The Brisbane "Telegraph" on 1 September 1977 reported that a telex message from the then Federal Treasurer (Mr. Lynch) had indicated that the Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) was instrumental in keeping interest rates at a high level. So much for the Premier's interest in working men and women paying off their homes!

As to taxation—in 1975, Mr. Fraser said—

"We will encourage people's initiative and enterprise, not batter them into the ground with punishing taxes. We will reduce the taxation burden."

In 1979, the Premier warned the Prime Minister by saying, "If you don't cut taxes, we will kick you out." Let us see what happened.

In 1977, Mr. Fraser said—

“We have reduced taxes, revived incentive and restored fair reward for achievement. We have ended the big tax rip-off.”

I am reminded of a cartoon that appeared in “The Australian Financial Review” last week. It showed a man talking to his wife and saying, “This tax reduction reminds me of the time when my wallet was stolen. The bloke who stole it brought it back, all the money in it had gone, and he asked for a reward.” That is a fair comparison to make with the tax deductions that we are getting from Mr. Fraser.

Mr. Fraser also said—

“The Government will bring taxes down further—not increase them.”

This is what independent commentators said about the last Federal Budget—

“The Government has budgeted for an increase of 16.5 per cent in taxation revenue. Indirect taxes are estimated to increase by 17.2 per cent to \$8.6 billion, accounting for 31.7 per cent of total revenue. Individual income tax payments are budgeted to rise by 18.2 per cent to \$15.2 billion.”

You can't trust the Tories!

As to tax indexation, Mr. Fraser said—

“We will fully index personal income tax.”

In Federal Parliament in May 1976, he said—

“The Government's commitment to tax indexation is firm and unequivocal.”

In his Budget speech in August this year, the Treasurer said—

“Tax indexation will not be restored for 1979-80.”

How could he be firm and unequivocal about tax indexation when he could not even keep his promise in either this Budget or any of his previous Liberal-National Party Budgets?

The Melbourne Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research said—

“Taxes outstrip earnings. Income tax has risen faster than wages over the past two years for the majority of Australians. The tax increase has hit hardest at single-income families.”

I turn now to wage indexation. The Government promised full support for wage indexation. The Prime Minister said that the coalition Government “will support wage indexation”. He went on to say—

“Our reforms will maintain the purchasing power of wages and ease the pressure for excessive wage demands.”

The Government, in national wage case hearings before the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, has consistently advocated the awarding of less than full indexation. Workers need not be reminded of Fraser's

plan to reduce the Consumer Price Index by removing increases resulting from Government policy, such as indirect taxes and oil prices.

When speaking of Australia, the authoritative International Currency Review says—

“Formal wage rises have been lagging considerably behind the new surge in prices—with the result that the rate of increase in real consumer spending has been declining.”

You can't trust the Tories!

In relation to unemployment—on 27 November 1975, Mr. Fraser stated—

“Only under a Liberal National Country Party Government will there be jobs for all who want to work.”

Mr. Katter interjected.

Mr. BURNS: The Federal Liberal/National Country Party Government hasn't done it. The member for Flinders supported his father's campaign and he supported the Fraser Government.

On 21 November 1977, Mr. Fraser said—

“Unemployment will fall from February (1978) and keep falling.”

What are the facts? Every single commentator of any note who reported on the last Federal Liberal/National Country Party Budget said that unemployment would be worse. Roman Catholic bishops have made scathing attacks on the Government's unemployment-creation programmes. Even the Confederation of Industry president has said he was ashamed that so little had been done to tackle unemployment.

The Liberal/National Country Party has deliberately set out to falsify the figures. It has continually changed the method of collecting the figures. It has introduced new sets of figures. It has dropped the official figures collected by the Department of Employment and Youth Affairs and introduced a new set collected by the Bureau of Statistics. It has cooked the books. It has slashed funds for the special youth employment training programme.

It has deliberately created two classes of unemployed: the first being its own official unemployed; the second being those who dropped out of the work-force altogether. The second class of unemployed includes children who went back to school because they could not find a job, married women who gave up looking for work, and men who retired early and would like to continue working but found that no jobs were available. Those people are not counted in the official statistics. Their rapidly growing numbers are reflected in a decline in the work-force participation rate from 62.3 per cent in 1975-76 to 60.8 per cent last year. During this period the number of working-age people in Australia has increased by over 500,000, while the number employed has risen by only 68,000.

According to Dr. Peter Sheehan, Senior Research Fellow with the Melbourne Institute, there are now more than 350,000 hidden unemployed. This means that about 12.5 per cent of the potential work-force, or 670,000 Australians, are out of work. It also means that official statistics are becoming increasingly misleading as a guide to the real dimensions of unemployment and the state of the economy.

The Premier suggests that unemployment will be overcome when another couple of mines are opened. I remind him and the House that the total number of employees at 30 June 1978 employed by the giant M.I.M. Holdings Ltd. and its subsidiaries, was 6,998, according to the report, which was 341 fewer than the number employed four years before. That company, I might add, made a profit of \$46,500,000, so when we talk of big money we are not talking of big numbers as far as employment is concerned.

Let us look at another mining company, Utah Development Company. In its financial statement of December 1977, it announced that its net income was \$158,304,000. It also made the point that its total work-force during 1977 was 2,851. So, whilst the company makes multi-millions of dollars, it employs fewer than 3,000 Queenslanders.

Mr. Scott: I wonder what its gross income was?

Mr. BURNS: I do not know. The company's financial statement referred to its net income.

The Premier has promised a large number of mining projects, many of them on a dozen different occasions. The same projects are referred to over and over again.

On 22 July 1979, it was reported that the controversial \$200,000,000-plus Oaky Creek coking coal project had been placed in mothballs, and that about 30 men had been laid off. On 23 August 1979, it was reported that, last year, employment in the Queensland coal industry increased by fewer than 100 to 6,328, despite record production in the same period. These extra 100 employees correspond with an increased production of 2 000 000 tonnes and illustrate quite clearly the low labour intensity of the industry. If the Government is counting on the mines becoming large enough to employ the many thousands of unemployed people in the State, it is living in a fairytale world.

On unemployment benefits, Mr. Fraser said, on behalf of the Liberal and National Parties—

“We will be generous to those who can't get a job and want to work”.

Later, he said:—

“In a situation where there is high unemployment, special attention should be given to the needs and the real personal hardship of those unemployed.”

He was campaigning then. He was not talking about dole bludgers, reducing unemployment benefits, taking people off the benefits, or appointing inspectors to spy on people. He was out looking for votes.

In 1974, the then Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Fraser) said he accepted the principle that as unemployment rose, so, too, should unemployment benefits. That is a statement of fact taken from “Hansard”. It is there for all to see.

The Liberals have already suggested that young, single men and women should receive no unemployment benefit until they are over 25 years of age. When attacked about that in Parliament, they said, “We are not thinking about the over 25s, only those up to 19 years of age.” Working families will have to look after kids from when they leave school until they turn 19 years of age.

The present Federal Government has introduced pinpricking rules to make it harder to qualify for benefits. There has been no increase in unemployment benefits for 18-year-olds since the Government came to power. Recipients with dependants have also failed to receive proper increases although inflation has run rampant during those years.

What is worse is the snide, evil campaign the Government and its supporters have undertaken to convince the majority of Australians that those out of work are bludgers; that they are lazy and uneducated; that it is all their own fault if they cannot get a job. Even now, the Federal Government is talking about bumping up the education programme. That will make our students a little better educated, but it will not help them find new jobs. No jobs are available. If we do not create new jobs, it will not matter what the Government does with the education programme.

Mr. Katter: What is your solution?

Mr. BURNS: The solution has been put forward on a number of occasions. The honourable member should read Mick Young's book in the Parliamentary Library if he wants to read solutions offered by the Labor Party. Not one solution was contained in the Treasurer's Budget, and not one solution has been offered by the Government as a positive proposal on the issue.

I now turn to prices. In opposing the case for control in the wages and price control referendum, Liberal and National Party members in Queensland and their spokesmen at all levels said that competition would keep prices down. I remember the Bread Industry Bill and the milk regulations. Decisions were made by this Government to attack pensioners who were buying a loaf of bread at Jack the Slasher 12c cheaper than it could be bought elsewhere. The Government introduced legislation to outlaw it. It introduced legislation so that the pensioner could not get that loaf of bread at that price.

It allowed the Milk Board to introduce regulations that added 5c and 6c a pint to the price of milk for children. Government members screamed all over the State about the need for free milk for school children. The same members supported the introduction of regulations that allowed the Milk Board to increase the price of milk so that each day a pensioner or a housewife could not go into a shop in the Brisbane suburbs without paying 17c more for a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk. That happened because of the action of the Liberal and National Parties in this State.

In the nine months to June this year, 40 per cent of the rises in prices were due to various Liberal/National Party Governments' actions. The price of petrol is an example, with a barrel of Bass Strait oil, that costs 65c to produce, costing nearly \$19 when it gets to the petrol wholesaler as a result of savage Federal Government tax policies.

A selection of food items at average cost 1975 against 1979—and it was in 1975 that this Government helped to have the Fraser Government elected—shows—

Bread has gone up	..	50 per cent
Milk	.. ..	40 per cent
Steak	.. ..	100 per cent
Potatoes	.. ..	55 per cent
Baby food	.. ..	50 per cent
Canned fruit	.. ..	50 per cent

That does not include health charges. Doctors' fees have gone up 136 per cent in the last seven years, and there have been 221 price rises in the last five weeks in grocery lines. The Government has done nothing about it except to prescribe that certain goods cannot be sold below a given price.

In "The Courier-Mail" on Friday, 9 November, the Premier was concerned that the price of Queensland coal should not be pushed up for the sake of pushing it up. He supports price control for the Japanese but refuses it for Queenslanders. The only price control introduced by the National/ Liberal Government in this House was minimum price control designed to force up the price of bread and milk.

I will now deal with pensions. You can't trust the Tories! Mr. Fraser, in his policy speech, said—

"We are committed to take politics out of pension increases by giving automatic increases in line with price rises twice a year."

Let us never forget that the introduction of indexation of pensions was a major welfare breakthrough by the Whitlam Government. We can all recall the years prior to 1972 when pensioners were at the whim of the political fortunes of the Liberal/National Country Party Governments that had held office for 23 years. The year after an election, pensioners would receive an increase of \$1, the second year nothing or 50c, and

then before an election \$2. Each year, busloads of pensioners travelled to Canberra to plead for more money.

The introduction of twice-yearly indexation by the Whitlam Government provided pensioners with at least the assurance that they would receive an increase twice a year so that the value of their pensions did not diminish and was kept in line with either average weekly earnings under the Whitlam Government or the consumer price index when the present Prime Minister (Mr. Malcolm Fraser) gained office. In the period that Labor was in power, by twice-yearly adjustments, pensions rose to 25 per cent of average weekly earnings.

What did the Liberal/National Country Party Government do? It formalised the six-monthly adjustments into a separate law. It formalised indexation; that is all that it did, yet it failed to do this during its period of government of 23 years. For 23 years it did nothing. After we gained office in Canberra and acted, the Liberal/National Country Party Government formalised the arrangement. They wanted to get back to the old Liberal system again. For a while, the Liberals could not see a way of doing it. Then they abolished the six-monthly pension adjustment last year. Previously, they had tried to abolish the funeral benefit for pensioners, too. Justice has now been restored to pensioners and the Liberal/National Country Party Government claims some sort of credit for it. All it has done is correct an injustice which was perpetrated upon the pensioners of this country.

I now want to talk about Meals on Wheels. Mr. Fraser, Liberal spokesmen and Liberal and National Country Party advertisements said, "We will assist those who help themselves." The Federal Budget provided no increase on the basic 25c per meal plus 5c when an approved vitamin C supplement is added. There was no help for those committees and, when the honourable member for South Brisbane asked the Queensland Minister for Welfare what he would do to assist these people who were helping age pensioners by providing meals, he said, "It doesn't come within my portfolio." That was his interest in the programme. Forget the pensioners; the Government's attitude has always been to worry about them only at election-time. The State should act to help Meals on Wheels volunteers.

Let us look now at tax evasion, a matter dear to the hearts of most Liberals. The Liberal leader announced crack-downs on income tax avoidance after criticism of Mr. Lynch and family trusts during the 1977 election campaign.

Months after the statement, a full-page advertisement appeared in "The National Times" saying, "Use Government Money to reduce your tax", and it went on to say that, amazing as it may seem, the Government will provide money for people to set up a tax scheme.

The Treasurer admitted recently that \$433,000,000 in tax will be avoided under schemes that the Government has declared unlawful, but that the Government does not expect to collect the money this year. He also admitted that a further \$250,000,000 will be lost through tax-evasion schemes which are still legal. The Government lost between \$400,000,000 and \$2,000 million because it acted too late to close previous tax loopholes.

On 30 August 1979, a group of Liberal and National Party back-benchers called on the Federal Government to review plans to clamp down on family trusts, as the tax debate raged inside and outside Parliament. What happened? Even the old "Fruit and Vegetable" news produced by the C.O.D. sent out an article saying that people should not dismantle their family trusts even though the Liberals had suggested they were out to stop tax evasion. We now know that they watered down the proposal.

In addition, six weeks after the Federal Budget the Federal Liberal/National Country Party Cabinet moved to reconsider its decision to limit depreciation on luxury cars to \$18,000. No wonder we say they look after their own! Luxury cars and tax evasion for the rich—dole and misery for the worker and his kids.

I turn now to allowances. The Government promised new assistance for the family unit. Members opposite annually beat their breasts in defence of the family. The family allowance scheme, introduced by the Government, was a wicked hoax. If the old child endowment scheme had been kept and tax deductions allowed for dependent children, the average Australian family would have been dollars a week better off than under the family allowance scheme.

A family with one child loses \$2.60 a week. Similarly, the tables show that a family with two children loses \$4.20 per week, a family with three children loses \$5.80 per week, and so on. If a family has six children, it loses over \$10 per week because of the Government's attitude to family allowances.

This Government has attacked the family in every possible way. It has made it very difficult for single-income families to continue to exist in this country. The Treasurer (Mr. Howard), on 28 August 1979, admitted that single-income families were disadvantaged under the present taxation scheme. He told an Institute of Directors luncheon gathering here in Brisbane that the Government could have eased the tax disadvantage on the single-income family in the 21st August Budget but opted for "previous commitments" instead. Those "commitments" were tax evasion for the rich.

The other day someone mentioned the Australian Assistance Plan. On 27 November 1975, the Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, said—

"The Australian Assistance Plan will be maintained."

It was abolished in 1976.

I look now at sickness benefits. In the last election campaign, Liberal spokesmen said that they would ensure that sickness benefits were indexed so that those in need did not fall behind. That appeared in a Liberal policy statement. The Federal Budget provided no increase in sickness benefit for those who are temporarily unable to work through sickness or accident, who are single and under 18.

In regard to legal aid, Mr. Fraser promised in 1975—

"We will ensure that no person is denied legal aid because of lack of means."

In practice, the legal aid service was foisted onto the States and sharp restrictions on access to legal aid have been imposed. In recent Appropriation Bills in Canberra, payments to the States for legal aid provided in the Federal area were cut from \$7,000,000 to \$3,500,000.

We heard a lot about the fertiliser bounty in 1974. The former Deputy Leader of the National Country Party and Minister for Primary Industries (Mr. Sinclair), speaking during the election campaign prior to coming into Government, quite ironically, in Mackay in Queensland, said—

"I can give an unqualified assurance on behalf of the National Country Party, that in Government with the Liberal Party, we will restore the bounty on superphosphate and ensure that the nitrogenous fertilizer bounty continues."

I repeat: he said:

"I can give an unqualified assurance . . . in Government . . . that the nitrogenous fertilizer bounty continues."

Ask the North Queensland cane farmer if that Tory promise has been kept.

Let us have a look at the Budget deficits. The Liberals said they would get rid of "big government" and look for "little government". In November 1977, Mr. Fraser said—

"We have brought Government spending under control."

The National Farmers' Federation this year said—

"It has been overlooked that despite the Government's efforts the size of the Government sector . . . is higher now than in 1978, 1977, 1976 or at any time during the Whitlam Government. It is not 'smaller government' that the present Government has sought and which farmers support."

That is a quote from its own supporters, the National Farmers' Federation. The total receipts for the last Labor Budget were \$15,300 million, and in this Fraser's Budget they are \$26,300 million.

I move now to the subject of roads. The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads is not here. I think he is in New

Zealand at present. The point is that all through the years of the Whitlam Government he complained and cried tears of blood over the alleged failure of the Whitlam Government to give him all the money he wanted. He told people to vote for Fraser, Nixon and the rest of his National Party colleagues and Queensland would then have plenty of money for its roads. Let us look at what happened.

The 1978-79 Budget papers stated—

“The Budget provides for \$508 million—an increase of 7 per cent or \$33 million over 1977-78 to be made available to the States under the State Grants (Road) Act 1977.”

The 1979-80 Budget speech disclosed that inflation for the year 1979 was 8.8 per cent, so it did not even keep up with inflation.

The 1979-80 Budget papers stated that the Government had announced that road grants would again be maintained in real terms in 1979-80 when \$546,000,000, an increase of 7.5 per cent on the 1978-79 Budget speech, showed that the promise is, once again, to be broken. The Treasurer announced that for 1979-80 as a whole the C.P.I. is presently estimated to increase by a little over 10 per cent. So on one hand he is saying that he will give a 7½ per cent increase in road money, but on the other hand the cost will go up 10 per cent. The Liberal Treasurer says he is maintaining the level of expenditure, but I say that the Tories cannot be trusted.

In relation to health insurance, Government members promised to retain all tax deductibility for health insurance schemes. That was rejected this year in the Federal Budget.

Let us have a look at overseas borrowing. I can remember all the stories in this Parliament about that subject. In 1975, every Liberal spokesman in the nation attacked the Labor Government proposal to borrow \$4,000 million to buy back Australian mining and mineral resources that had been sold out to foreigners. The Liberals promised that international reserves would be built up and overseas borrowing reduced. Liberal leaders were most violent in their criticism, but since July 1976 they have changed their mind and borrowed \$4,000 million.

In 1976, the Government borrowed \$279,000,000. In the financial year 1976-77, it borrowed \$459,000,000 but in 1977-78 it borrowed \$1,760 million. In September 1977, the Government received loans from the United States and Germany involving amounts up to \$518,000,000. In 1978-79, this Liberal Government borrowed \$1,566 million, with almost monthly borrowings. Let us look at them. In August, it borrowed \$192,000,000 from Switzerland and \$120,000,000 from West Germany. In September, it borrowed \$127,000,000 from West Germany. In October, it borrowed \$187,000,000 from Japan, and in November \$183,000,000 from Japan.

I could go on and on. In June 1973, the cost of overseas borrowing was \$96 for each man, woman and child in the country. In June 1974, the amount was \$77; in June, 1975, it was \$88; and today, it is \$355 per head. There has been a dramatic increase in the burden of overseas borrowing on the Australian people. I will suggest that in the next couple of days Mr. Fraser will again be saying to State Government and local authorities that they should borrow overseas. As he passes the load away from his own responsibility and back onto us to pay the interest rates, the national debt will increase.

Let us now have a look at the farmers whom they profess to represent. People in the country areas for years have voted Liberal/National Party because they live in the country and they believe they should support country representation.

The Federal Budget slashed \$24,000,000 from the rural adjustment funds. It cut the 1979-80 allocation of funds to the Commonwealth Extension Service Grant by 50 per cent. It has failed to hold prices, as this example will show—

	1979	1969
	\$	\$
1 tonne single super	56	17.65
1 tonne urea	187.55	59.13
Tractor 60 hp.	9,312	3,325
Utility	6,500	2,600

I turn now to the question of Aborigines. The Prime Minister promised in 1975 to maintain present levels of assistance to Aborigines. In the first year of his Government, expenditure was cut by \$24,000,000.

There is also the matter of sub-normal children. The Liberal/National Party continually talk of their concern for the disadvantaged, but the Queensland Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association president (Mr. W. G. Woolcock), has said that his association's operations were jeopardised by the Federal Liberal/National Party Government's cutting funds.

When will the Liberal/National Party stop its policy of penalising voluntary organisations that help the sick, the injured and the infirm?

Let us have a look at the State Government. In 1957, Mr. Nicklin and Mr. Morris promised coalition harmony and an end to factional fighting and personalities. I am indebted to the member for Toowoong (Honourable C. R. Porter), who was the campaign director at that time, because this is under his name. By 1960 he said it had happened. They promised an end to government by “fear and favour” with just and impartial administration, based on unquestioned ministerial integrity. It makes me laugh. That was the Liberal and National Party promise on coming into Government.

They promised to restore the dignity of parliamentary procedures and thereby parliamentary prestige. Mr. Porter promised

that. This year the Speaker of this Parliament resigned, saying that the House had deteriorated—and it had deteriorated because of the actions of the Government. Ministerial lurks and perks of this Government far exceed those in any other similar State parliamentary democracy.

Mr. Porter: That is absolute nonsense.

Mr. BURNS: The rubbish that the member for Toowong put down as promises, and then had the hide to suggest had even been carried out, makes it a joke.

In 1957, Mr. Nicklin promised the State a Bill of Rights. After the Parliamentary Counsel and a southern constitutional lawyer had produced the Bill, it was introduced in December 1959 and never reached its second reading. In the 1957 campaign, the National Party leader, Mr. Nicklin, said that working hours, wages and industrial conditions were matters for cold, calculated decision by the Industrial Commission and were not a red-hot plaything for politicians. What did the Government do here today? Today provided a classic example of how that promise has been broken.

In 1960, the then Premier promised that the Liberal/National Party Government would not increase the size of Cabinet. He promised small government. He said there would be no Cabinet increases. At that stage they had 11 Cabinet Ministers. Now they have 18. Quite truthfully, they perform worse than the 11.

In the 1960 campaign, Mr. Nicklin and Mr. Morris promised to take action on a new State for North Queensland. Where is the boundary? Where is the new capital that was promised by Nicklin and Morris on behalf of the Liberal and National Parties?

In May 1972, Sir Gordon Chalk, then Liberal leader, promised that Brisbane rail electrification would be undertaken under a five-year plan so that all of Brisbane should have been travelling on electric trains two years ago. They have only just started running, and it will not be finished until 1984 or 1985, if ever.

During the Redcliffe by-election campaign the Premier virtually promised to complete the Brisbane-Redcliffe rail link by 1982. Remember? He told them that he would have it built in time for the Commonwealth Games, because Redcliffe was going to be a major accommodation area. After the by-election, when his candidate ran third—he was wiped out—he reneged on the promise.

On 25 April 1969, the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police (Honourable R. E. Camm) said that the Government pledged itself to protect the Great Barrier Reef. I cannot help laughing when I read some of these. They are such jokes. He was referring to oil-drilling on the Barrier Reef. Since then he has made 10 years of statements saying that we should start to do something about drilling the reef.

Dr. Edwards: That's a lot of rubbish.

Mr. BURNS: Yes, he has. He has been continually proposing it by statements such as, "We won't be able to continue to protect all areas of the reef."

In May 1972, the Government promised free pre-school education for all 4-year-olds. Seven years later we are still waiting for the completion of the scheme. If the Government is asked now about pre-schools in some areas, it cannot say when they will be built.

In his 1977 policy speech, the then Liberal Leader, now Sir William Knox, promised 40-bed hospitals at Salisbury, Sandgate, Wynnum and Ferny Grove. I might advise the Treasurer that the then National Party member for Wynnum, Mr. Lamond, was telling people about the medical staff—

Dr. Edwards: Wait and see.

Mr. BURNS: Is the Treasurer going to tell me that what Mr. Lamond said is right?

Dr. Edwards: Yes, I am.

Mr. BURNS: Good, because that will give us out-patient facilities which the Treasurer has said we won't get.

Dr. Edwards: I didn't say that at all.

Mr. BURNS: Mr. Lamond said it, and the Treasurer has just said that what Mr. Lamond said is right. He can't withdraw that statement. He does not know what Mr. Lamond said. These people were out making promises on behalf of the Liberal and National Parties—

Dr. Edwards: Our policy was that we would provide a 40-bed hospital at Wynnum, and you know full well that the plan is almost completed.

Mr. BURNS: Tomorrow I will show the Treasurer a Press statement by Mr. Lamond, who said that the Wynnum people would get a medical superintendent, out-patient facilities—

Dr. Edwards: That wasn't the Government's promise.

Mr. BURNS: He was a Government member—and the Government did not deny it at the time.

Dr. Edwards: You made a lot of promises, too.

Mr. BURNS: The Treasurer can answer that later on.

Let us have a look at the State Bank, which the Treasurer has promised us so often. Remember the State bank? Federal Liberal and National Party leaders are now suggesting that we ought to allow more foreign banks to operate here and that we ought to have more foreign bank control of the money of this country. Nothing is said now about the State bank.

What about working conditions? One Liberal policy statement produced in the last election was that workers would have nothing to fear from the election of a Liberal Government. Since then Mr. Howard has suggested the removal of the 17½ per cent holiday pay loading. The Liberal and National Parties have undertaken a campaign to remove penalty rates. In other words, if a person then worked overtime or at the week-end, he would only be paid the ordinary rate.

Dr. Edwards: That's a lot of rubbish.

Mr. BURNS: That is what the inquiry was about. The Government would not have had the inquiry for no reason at all. The Treasurer could not say that the Government wants to retain penalty rates. Let him get up in this Chamber and say that he believes in their retention. The Liberal and National Parties have appeared against the workers' interests in every case before an arbitration commission.

Liberal and National Party politicians promised to curb wasteful expenditure.

Dr. Edwards interjected.

Mr. BURNS: I am pleased that the Treasurer is interjecting, because on 22 July 1979 it was reported that he had appointed the Federal president of the Young Liberals to a State Government paid position as administration officer only nine days after he had announced a continued zero growth in the staff of Queensland's Public Service. It is all right for Young Liberals, but it is not all right for working-class kids to get a job.

When the Premier is talking about buying a new aeroplane, there is talk of having teachers carry out the garbage in schools.

Road accidents occurred today while the strike was on. The Government could find 700 policemen to turn out for street marches, but it could not find one to handle pedestrian crossings in this city. No policemen were put to work on dangerous crossings, because it was not in the Government's interest to do that. It welcomed any inconvenience or danger for its short-term political advantage.

Let me get back to some of the broken promises and why I say, "You can't trust the Tories!" In March 1969, the Premier was promising a wool-selling centre at Longreach. Has the honourable member for Gregory now got in his electorate the wool-selling centre that was promised 10 years ago?

On 2 May 1978, the Premier announced the planning for a giant coast watch from volunteer organisations across Northern Australia.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. BURNS: I have them jumping now, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have never heard any more of that coast watch organisation to keep out drugs.

The Premier promised tax reductions, but his colleague the Federal Liberal Treasurer has said that Mr. Bjelke-Petersen had the power to reduce income tax for Queensland if he wished to do so. The Premier failed to respond, so his promise in that respect was just so much hot air in another election campaign.

In his 1976 advertising comment "The Premier Reports", which was paid for by the public of this State, the Premier said—

"Queenslanders can be well pleased at the outcome of the Premier's Conference in Canberra."

He said that there would be no begging Canberra for a fair deal, that Queenslanders would know exactly how much money the State would receive. I thought I heard the Treasurer complain earlier tonight that the Government of this State was not getting a fair deal, that it was not getting the money to which it was rightly entitled.

Dr. Edwards: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition supported what I said.

Mr. BURNS: I am not disagreeing with that. I am saying that the Leader of the Government, the Premier, said that the State would not have any more of those problems. He promised that in advertisements paid for out of the people's money in 1976. The Treasurer has told us tonight that the Premier did not tell us the truth, that he misled the people of this State.

As honourable members are aware, in a letter to State Premiers on 12 July this year, the Prime Minister said—

"I must reiterate that the Commonwealth considers that the current guarantee formula is too generous, and makes the obvious point that any proposal for continuation in its present form would not be acceptable. I would also wish to reiterate that an important aspect of the tax sharing arrangements is the emphasis on responsibility for the States, including responsibility for raising revenue themselves in line with their own priorities."

In other words, State taxation.

In the February 1976 edition of "The Premier Reports", the Premier promised a new era for local government, a new deal for municipal and shire councils. On 21 March 1979, the Treasurer had to admit, in answer to questions, that local authorities were experiencing difficulties in raising their loan programmes. If necessary, I can produce the relevant copy of "Hansard". Every local authority in the State has expressed concern about the way in which its finances and the rates paid by its ratepayers are being affected. In 1976, the Premier said, "Don't worry. Now that I have my

colleagues Mr. Fraser and Mr. Anthony down there in Canberra, everything is going to be hunky-dory."

On 12 July 1977, it was announced in "The Courier-Mail" that the State Government had approved the Burdekin River hydroelectric scheme. I attended the symposium held in Ayr this year, and the Water Resources Commission played down that promise and gave the hydroelectric proposals a low priority.

I think I have shown honourable members more than 50 broken promises. If I went back through the history of the Government, I could produce another 50. They do not take into account the promises made by back-bench members, who go out into their electorates and say that the Government is going to build bridges, dams, schools, and so on.

It is no good the Deputy Premier's saying later that what Mr. Lamond said in Wynnum is not so, because at that time Mr. Lamond was campaigning with the Premier in Wynnum, attending luncheons organised by the National Party.

(Time expired.)

Mr. POWELL (Isis) (9.30 p.m.): We have just been treated to the ravings of a politician who is totally devoid of any original thought. From the rubbish that we have heard from Opposition members, it is quite obvious that they haven't an original thought in their heads. One of the stupid statements that were made was that the Queensland Government has not reduced income tax. Of course it hasn't! It doesn't collect income tax. So how could it reduce income tax? Quite obviously, Queensland is the lowest-taxed State in Australia.

My contribution will, I hope, be constructive, and totally unlike those made by members of the Opposition. I want to address myself to the Local Government Grants Commission and the third interim report that has been received from that body. I preface my remarks by expressing the hope that nothing that I say by way of constructive criticism is taken personally by any member of that commission. The commission works within certain guide-lines and I am criticising not the commission or the members of that commission but those guide-lines.

The Local Government Grants Commission works within the guide-lines of two elements, namely Element A, which is to comprise 30 per cent of the available funds, to be distributed on the basis of five-sixths according to population and one-sixth according to area, and Element B, which is to comprise the remaining 70 per cent of the available funds, to be distributed upon the recommendation of the commission according to the financial needs of the individual authorities. As in the case of every other commission and body set up by the Government to advise it, the Government does not have to accept the advice of the Local Government Grants Commission.

For the purposes of my argument, I want to discuss two groups of local authorities, both of which affect my electorate. Firstly, I want to discuss the cities of Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay and Maryborough. Secondly, I want to discuss the city of Gympie, the town of Hervey Bay, the town of Warwick and the shire of Woongarra.

Dealing firstly with the larger cities—Bundaberg received a total grant of \$344,000; Cairns received \$640,000; Mackay received \$275,000; and Maryborough received the same as Bundaberg, namely, \$344,000.

When we look at Element A, which is taken on population and size, we note that Cairns received the highest of the four cities in that category. It received \$156,219, whereas Bundaberg received \$140,246, Maryborough received \$96,325 and Mackay received \$94,925.

It is in Element B, the 70 per cent, that the greatest discrepancy is found, and it is in that area of the report that I find the greatest criticism. Of those four cities, Mackay is completely landlocked and, according to the Bureau of Statistics, has a population of 22,000; Cairns has a population of 36,200; Maryborough, a population of 22,050, and Bundaberg a population of 32,500. It must be accepted that the cities of Bundaberg and Cairns have roughly similar populations. The area of Bundaberg is 45 sq km and that of Cairns is 56 sq km. It is reasonable that the Element A amount for Cairns ought to be larger than that for Bundaberg. Bundaberg, like Cairns, is a very progressive and fast-growing city, so I do not believe that Bundaberg should receive half the amount that is given to Cairns.

The disabilities faced by all fast-growing cities are similar. Bundaberg and Cairns are growing at roughly the same rate. The neighbouring shires must be discounted. In any event, the growth rate in the shires adjoining Bundaberg and Cairns is approximately the same.

If we go deeper into the matter and look at the figures that were recently released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, we find that the city of Bundaberg has a total loan commitment of \$7,688,000. Maryborough has a total loan commitment of \$6,188,000; Cairns has a commitment of \$18,780,000 and Mackay \$11,384,000.

It is fairly obvious that the Grants Commission has looked carefully at the loan raisings in local authority areas, and that is why it has come down heavily in favour of Cairns. On comparing Maryborough and Bundaberg it will be seen that Bundaberg has a population of 32,500, and Maryborough has 22,000. There is no way in which the two cities should receive a similar amount overall or that Maryborough should receive a greater amount of Element B. The Bundaberg City Council loan raisings are greater than those of Maryborough; Bundaberg is

a fast-growing area while Maryborough is not. It is important that these matters should be taken into account.

On going through the figures available from the Bureau of Statistics it is seen that Bundaberg provides greater services. While Bundaberg is a developing city, it may have problems in providing water and sewerage services. In the circumstances I do not believe that Element B has been recommended correctly for Bundaberg compared with the other three cities.

Moving on now to Gympie, Hervey Bay, Woongarra and Warwick, which I have selected because each has a similar population, I point out that Gympie has a population of 11,500, Hervey Bay a population of 11,800, Woongarra a population of 10,250 and Warwick a population of 9,310. In area, Gympie is 18 sq km, Hervey Bay 1,608 sq km, Woongarra 732 sq km and Warwick 26 sq km. When I ascertained how much each received from the Local Government Grants Commission I saw that Gympie received \$214,000, Hervey Bay \$134,000, Warwick \$197,000, and Woongarra a measly \$126,000.

My point is that Element A is based on an almost fixed formula, while Element B allows for movement—an area where some weightage ought to be given in favour of districts that are growing very quickly. Both Hervey Bay and Woongarra are growing very quickly, yet they received the lowest amounts of the four that I have mentioned. Both Gympie and Warwick have static populations. They do not have a major growth factor. Widgee Shire surrounds Gympie, and has a growth factor, but I am not using it for comparison purposes.

Hervey Bay has about an 8 per cent growth factor yet it received only \$134,000, whereas Gympie, with a very small growth factor, received \$80,000 more than the Hervey Bay Town Council. There is a great discrepancy.

If the Local Government Grants Committee were to look carefully at the services provided it would find that Hervey Bay provides services similar to those provided by the Gympie City Council. Hervey Bay does not have a flash, rather large civic centre. Because it is a new area these things will come later. The Hervey Bay Town Council has been very frugal in spending its money. It is very careful with its rate revenue.

The type of people living in an area must be considered carefully. A considerable number of retired people and pensioners live in the Hervey Bay Town Council area. Such matters must be considered by local authorities when they are raising their rates. The Local Government Grants Commission should take careful note of the number of elderly and retired people in a local authority area when considering the amount of money that should be given under Element B. It should not be encouraging local authorities to throw their money away on what might

be regarded as luxury items. It should be concentrating on the rate-revenue-raising possibilities of the shires in question.

I could go through most of the local authority areas in the Wide Bay/Burnett division and show that each has not received a very generous allowance under Element B. It is high time that this Government looked very carefully at the guide-lines that have been given to the commission. I reiterate that I have no intention of unduly criticising the members of the Local Government Grants Commission. They are following the guide-lines handed to them. What I am asking is that their guide-lines be either more liberal or stipulated differently so that recognition is given to the vast growing areas with growing pains and the areas containing a large population of retired people or pensioners.

The other matter that I wish to raise is education spending. Many members and a large number of people in the community have complained because the State Government has decided to reduce the amount of money available for teacher aides in Queensland. A fair sort of debate has been raging in the community. It has probably raised more heat than light.

Opposition members have been telling us that Queensland spends the lowest amount per capita on education in Australia. They do not back their statements with figures. I should like to present some figures that I had the Parliamentary Library prepare for me.

The per capita recurrent expenditure on pre-school education in each State was as follows: Queensland \$724; New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, no figures available; Western Australia \$93. The capital expenditure in Queensland was \$287. That gives Queensland a total \$1,011 per capita on pre-school education. The only other State for which figures were obtained was Western Australia which spent \$170.

Primary school education is the cause of some question marks in the community. The recurrent expenditure per capita for each State was: Queensland \$1,029; New South Wales (the great Labor State) \$890; Victoria \$1,032; South Australia (another great Labor State) \$823; Western Australia \$838. Capital expenditure (for which Queensland is criticised so much) was: Queensland \$167; New South Wales \$157; Victoria \$143; South Australia \$119; Western Australia \$169. Grand totals in primary school education per capita were: Queensland \$1,196; New South Wales \$1,047; Victoria \$1,175; South Australia \$942; Western Australia \$1,007.

The secondary education per capital recurrent expenditure was: Queensland \$1,561; New South Wales \$1,498; Victoria \$1,870; South Australia \$1,523; Western Australia \$1,581. Capital expenditure was: Queensland \$265; New South Wales \$228; Victoria \$206; South Australia \$272; Western Australia \$310. The grand totals for secondary education expenditure per capita

were: Queensland \$1,826; New South Wales \$1,717; Victoria \$2,076; South Australia \$1,795; Western Australia \$1,891.

The totals for per capita recurrent expenditure for pre-schools, primary schools and secondary schools were \$1,169 in Queensland; \$1,113 in New South Wales; \$1,352 in Victoria; \$1,067 in South Australia; \$1,006 in Western Australia. The totals for capital expenditure were: \$203 in Queensland; \$183 in New South Wales; \$168 in Victoria; \$173 in South Australia; \$204 in Western Australia. That makes a total as follows: \$1,372 in Queensland; \$1,269 in New South Wales; \$1,520 in Victoria; \$1,240 in South Australia; \$1,210 in Western Australia.

Those figures show very clearly that Queensland has a very proud record in expenditure on education. Of course, the figures are for 1977-78, which I forgot to mention earlier. They are the latest ones available. Therefore, the criticism that is levelled at the Queensland Government, that our spending on education is lower than that of the other States, has been proved, once again, to be fallacious, like the rest of the Opposition's arguments. It is a shame that it does not stick to the facts instead of making a lot of half-truths and innuendoes, as its previous speakers in this debate have done.

I turn to the subject of teacher-aides. I happen to be one of those who can remember the time when there were no teacher aides in schools, and when the teacher-aide system was being introduced. I can remember that the request of the teaching service was that if teacher aides were to be introduced into Queensland schools, they should be introduced into the smaller schools where there was a multi-grade situation. I think everybody understands that in the one-teacher, two-teacher, three-teacher right up to the six-teacher schools there has to be a multi-grade situation to some degree. It was recognised that teachers in those schools had a heavier burden placed upon them than did teachers in the single-class situation. It was also recognised that the teacher aide was most needed in those schools that had roughly the equivalent of classes 6, 5, 4 and 3. I agree wholeheartedly with that concept. I cannot find any argument with it at all.

However, when the teacher-aide system was introduced into Queensland schools, it was introduced on an across-the-board basis. The number of hours for the various schools was set. One wonders whether that was done so that there was a bias in favour of the large primary and secondary schools in which each teacher had only one grade in front of him. Some years ago, teachers in the larger schools did have fairly large classes and that, of course, was a limiting factor. However, because of the progressive attitudes of the Queensland Government, the class-size situation has improved.

I do not think it has been spelt out clearly enough that the thrust of the Treasury and Education Department in this field has been to lessen the amount of money spent on teacher aides so that more trained teachers could be employed and the pupil-teacher ratio could be improved.

Mr. Scott: A spurious argument.

Mr. POWELL: The noisy gentleman on my right says that that is a spurious argument. He probably knows nothing about this matter at all. That particular thrust ought to be supported. I am very suspicious of trained teachers who say that they need a lot of assistance from teacher aides. When they say that, they are acknowledging their own shortcomings. A teacher's job is not an easy one and, as a teacher, naturally I accept the need for and applaud the use of teacher aides. But I also say that the teacher aide is less necessary in the larger schools than in the smaller schools. In secondary schools, teachers already have a preparation and correction period, and teachers in primary schools do not have such a period. Therefore, there is even less cause for teacher-aide hours to be as high as they are in secondary schools. Consequently, the claim that the Government is lessening the standard of education in the State by cutting the hours of teacher aides, particularly in the larger schools, is completely false because, in fact, it should have absolutely no effect at all. It will mean that some teachers will have to do more work than they have been doing to date.

As I go around the schools and talk to teachers, I find that they are quite happy with the proposition that more teachers should be employed within the system. They certainly appreciate teacher aides. I applaud the attitude of Cabinet, which it expressed only yesterday, that teacher aides already employed will not have their hours reduced. Surely it is unfair to take something away from a person who is already employed.

However, I view with a great deal of concern the determination of the Education Department to carry on with the cuts in the provision of replacement teacher aides and teacher aides to new schools. I have a new school opening in my electorate in 1980. It will be a class 3 primary school. If one looks at the scale supplied by the Minister for Education, one finds that that class of school has been very badly done by in the supply of teacher aides. I hope that the Education Department and the Treasury will look at this matter a little more sympathetically, particularly in small schools in a multi-grade situation, because they are the ones with the problem of so much preparation and correction.

The other areas of rumoured cuts in spending were those of cleaning, clerical and

school administration. I disagree wholeheartedly with the proposal that clerical and administration assistance to grades 1 and 2 secondary schools should be cut. That is not work that should be done by teachers. The assistance is in plain clerical and administration work, work that should be done by people trained in clerical and administrative matters. Teachers are trained to teach; they are not trained to administer. I have already said that I have no great argument with cuts in spending on teacher aides, but it is absolutely foolish to cut the amount of money being spent in an area that is not professional. I reiterate that teachers are not trained to do administrative or clerical work. That work should be retained for people who are trained to do it. I urge the Minister for Education to look very carefully at where the cuts are made, because the clerical assistance in the class 2 and 3 primary schools and in the grade 2 and smaller grade 1 secondary schools is extremely valuable. Teachers in those schools do not want to be burdened with the extra administrative and clerical work that is being thrust upon them by the Education Department because it continually wants to change assessment procedures in secondary schools.

Special education is another area that must be considered. There was absolutely no indication in the Budget papers that there would be any cuts in the special education area. If there are, it is disgraceful. The special education people have been providing an extremely valuable service, especially in country areas. They give valuable help in city areas where parents and children can easily get to them, but in country areas where only two or three children may need specialist and remedial teaching they play a particularly vital role. To my mind any cut-back in that area at all will be detrimental to the future educational prospects of those children and their mental health, and add to the problems that their parents have to face.

There is no doubt that the Education Department's thrust ought to be equal education opportunities for each and every child in the State. Any cut-back that affects that aim ought to be considered very carefully indeed.

The Education Department should be looking far more carefully at the staffing establishments in the large schools in city areas compared with those in country areas. If a large number of teachers are to be congregated in city areas to the detriment of country areas, that is to be greatly deplored. That applies particularly to the specialist field. I absolutely refuse to accept that there should be any cut-back at all. I believe that the money is being spent wisely and well.

I would hope that the Government takes into consideration the changing of the guidelines laid down for the Local Government

Grants Commission, and that the Education Department, when it examines its Budget in the future, pays a great deal of attention to the quality of teaching, the quality of teachers and the fact that teachers ought not to be called upon to do clerical and administrative work when they are not so trained.

Mr. WARBURTON (Sandgate) (9.56 p.m.): Some weeks ago I directed questions to both the Premier and the Treasurer about the power of the State of Queensland to give tax rebates. Those questions were relatively close in text. Both the Premier and the Treasurer showed an abysmal ignorance of the facts. Tonight it was somewhat pathetic to hear the honourable member for Isis, in his brief reference to the powers of the States to impose taxes or give tax rebates, make a comment very similar to that given to me by the Premier in answer to my question, when he said something like this: "If we don't impose taxes—if we don't collect taxes—then we can't in fact give tax rebates."

As a result of what I have said following my questions to the Premier and Treasurer, I hope that they have taken the opportunity to educate themselves about Fraser federalism, and particularly Stage II of Fraser federalism. I hope that they have become familiar with the Act dealing with tax-sharing arrangements, which I believe was introduced in 1978 and followed a deferral of the Bill to give the Premiers and the States a greater opportunity to have a look at those matters. There is such legislation on the Commonwealth statute-book. There is no question that under Stage II of Fraser federalism Queensland has every right to give tax rebates to each and every working persons in this State, indeed each and every resident, if it so desires. It does not have to introduce legislation for that purpose. It can do so in co-operation with the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth has invited each and every State to enter into such a partnership.

The imposition of additional tax would require legislation of some type, again in co-operation with the Commonwealth. It is absolute rubbish for members on the Government benches to suggest that the Queensland Government cannot give tax rebates to the residents of this State. I hope that the member who made that comment is listening at the moment.

Another matter that concerns me was the Treasurer's reference to teacher aides. Reference was made to it by the previous speaker, and an appropriate answer was given by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Treasurer endeavoured to make the point that the change in attitude was brought about because it had suddenly been discovered that the department had been able to save some money.

The attitude of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—and it is also my attitude—was that the matter has received a great deal of publicity recently. I see that the Treasurer is shaking his head. The honourable member for Lytton spoke for quite some time about the broken promises of Tory Governments throughout the land. I remind the Treasurer that, as recently as 27 November, which is only a few days ago, the Minister for Education, in answering a question by the honourable member for Merthyr, said—

“The following guide-lines have been laid down for schools in effecting the reductions in teacher-aid hours.

“The rearrangements and reductions for individual aides should be determined by a committee set up in each school to advise on the appointment or dismissal of aides. This committee is to consist of the principal of the school, a member of the staff of the school and a representative of the parents and citizens’ association.

“In making reductions where two or more aides are employed in the school, special consideration must be shown to those who are sole supporters of a family unit or single persons and, where necessary because of the circumstances, these aides are to receive preferential treatment in the allocation of adjusted hours.

“Where aides retire or resign voluntarily, the committee may wish to redistribute the hours available without replacing the aide. This would apply particularly in schools where the available aide hours were less than 30.

“In future, no distinction will be made between the hours available for general teacher aides and library aides. A redistribution of the available aide hours may be necessary in the best interests of the school.”

I make the point to the Treasurer that it seems quite remarkable to me that only a few days ago the Minister for Education could make such a statement.

Dr. Edwards: That policy will be retained for new appointments. Because of savings within the department—and we promised this all the way through—no-one will be put off.

Mr. WARBURTON: Nevertheless, it is somewhat surprising that a few days ago the Minister for Education could make a statement on what I regard as a very definite decision taken by the State Government. I hasten to add that, in my opinion, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was absolutely correct in what he said, and I believe that in recent days the pressure on the Government in relation to teacher aides has been such that it has relented. It does not gain anything by not being prepared to admit that it is prepared to at least consider the thinking of other people and take notice of their attitude. It is a pity that it did not do so on the industrial scene, also.

I wish now to make some comments about the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The amount required for the service for the

current financial year is \$4,309,093, which is \$706,880 above the amount expended in 1978-79. Although the salaried staff is to be increased by five, the service remains heavily under-staffed, partly, I believe, because it was formed during an earlier period of State Government cut-backs.

I suggest that the total Vote of \$18,710,677 for Culture, National Parks and Recreation 1979-80 is a drop in the ocean when the total expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund is to be almost \$2,000 million. When we look at the funding of this ministry, we can only make the comment that it has been treated very badly indeed. As I indicated a short time ago, although there has been an increase in funding, which, no doubt, is acceptable and will be welcomed by the departments, it started off with a very low budget indeed. I hoped to see a much more significant lift in order to enable it to carry out the various works that I would like to see carried out under that ministry.

With only seven wildlife rangers and two police officers attached to the Fauna Squad to serve the whole of Queensland, the position is absolutely untenable. The service requires a very substantial injection of funds to allow it to function at an acceptable level of efficiency. It is simply not good enough for the Government merely to pay lip-service to planning and environment, in which the preservation of national parks and wildlife is only a part. Unless the ministry that administers the National Parks and Wildlife Service becomes more attuned to the real hard-core issues of the environment and conservation—it appears that that will not be so under the present coalition Government—the service will continue to struggle along as best it can.

It is significant to note that expenditure from the Loan Fund has decreased from \$1,989,570 in 1978-79 to \$1,600,000 in 1979-80. Expenditure on capital works and development for national parks dropped from \$854,356 to \$800,000. Expenditure on capital works and development for regional centres dropped from \$329,141 to \$260,000. Loan moneys for the acquisition of national parks is reduced from \$815,000 to \$540,000. So all is not well in relation to Loan Funds, and this will certainly be detrimental to activities in the forthcoming financial year.

The failure of either of the Queensland coalition parties to have any publicly stated policy relating to the environment is reflected in the present set-up within the ministry. At the time when the Great Barrier Reef region was being seen as a possible mining area by the Premier and a number of his Ministers, particularly the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police and the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads, there was not one member in the Queensland Government who was either prepared or equipped to put forward a contrary point of view.

Similarly, when the honourable member for Cooroola, in his capacity as chairman of a National Party committee, spoke out and gave his and his party's support to sand-mining on Moreton Island, not one word to the contrary did we hear from any Queensland Minister. That is a sorry state of affairs.

The design of the ministerial portfolios is such that no buffer exists against the anti-environmental utterances and activities of Ministers. The divisions of responsibilities within the ministry are such that environmental concerns are conveniently chopped up and distributed in such a way as to ensure that no one person in the Cabinet is directly responsible for planning in the environment.

In Queensland, environmental monitoring and control are dispersed through a variety of agencies within various Public Service departments. For example, the Clean Waters Act is administered by the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads, who is advised by the Water Quality Council, and the Clean Air Act is administered by the Minister for Health, who is advised by the Air Pollution Council.

Most State Governments have seen the merit in establishing specific ministries in recognition of the importance of integrated planning, conservation and pollution control. New South Wales has a Minister for Planning and the Environment, Victoria has a Minister for Conservation, Western Australia has a Minister for Conservation and the Environment, and South Australia has a Minister for Planning. I simply indicate to honourable members that that is the situation in other States. They are to be commended on their approach to such important matters.

The responsibility for generating regional land-use plans has usually been allocated to statutory bodies more or less independent of the Public Service. Such bodies include the Planning and Environment Commission in New South Wales, the Land Conservation Council in Victoria, the State Planning Authority in South Australia and the Conservation and Environment Council in Western Australia. Queensland has no such body.

Public participation in planning has been of great consequence to conservationists and many other people throughout Queensland who have had to cope with unfettered attacks by the Government so far as environmental matters are concerned. Regional planning authorities frequently encourage participation in developing regional plans. That is the case in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. In Queensland, public participation is very sadly lacking.

On the matter of public review of environmental impact studies, many States ensure that the public are able to study and examine these studies. In Queensland, no legal provision whatsoever exists to ensure public participation in reviewing environmental impact studies.

New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia ensure the provision of adequate national parks during the development of regional plans. They have a regional planning system that works. In Queensland there is no such approach.

Most States have a vested responsibility for pollution prevention, monitoring and control through statutory bodies, authorities or departments. These include the Pollution Control Commission in New South Wales, the Environment Protection Authority in Victoria and the Environment Protection Authority in Western Australia. However, again, Queensland has no such agency overseeing pollution prevention, monitoring and control.

To carry on in another vein—and many honourable members have spoken about this on other occasions—if the people of Queensland are to receive value for money, it is important to recognise the necessity to institute a system whereby the processes of investigation, planning, evaluation, execution and review of land-use options allow proper environmental objectives to be put into effect. When we talk in terms of developing national parks and wilderness areas, we should realise that the benefits to be derived are not necessarily the immediate values to be placed on them by contemporary society, but their worth for future generations.

Mr. Austin: Who wrote that for you?

Mr. WARBURTON: The honourable member is always quoting various parts of A.L.P. policy that he dislikes. I am referring to some of the A.L.P. policy relating to the environment. When the honourable member was absent from the Chamber I said that it is a sad day, indeed, when we note that both the Liberal and National Parties have no publicly stated policies in either of these areas. I make it very clear that the A.L.P. has a definite policy, and that we are prepared to put that policy, which I consider to be one of the best to come to my knowledge, to the people of Queensland as soon as the Government provides the opportunity.

Queensland, more than any other State, needs a Ministry of Planning and the Environment, with oversight of a Natural Resources Utilisation Planning Committee, a Queensland Heritage Commission, which is of utmost importance, a Department of National Parks and Wildlife (and, in my humble opinion, fisheries should be included in that department) and a Department of Environmental Monitoring.

The Natural Resources Utilisation Planning Commission would be a body empowered to carry out investigations and to make recommendations to the Minister with respect to the use of public lands in order to provide for the balanced use of land in Queensland.

In making any recommendations, the commission would have regard to the preservation of areas as wilderness, the preservation of areas that are ecologically significant, the conservation of areas of natural interest, beauty or historical interest and the creation and preservation of areas as national parks. Should the Natural Resources Utilisation and Planning Commission consider that environmental impact studies were required for any proposed development, it should have the power under some form of legislation to have them conducted.

If we are to put a stop to the type of conflict that we have seen on too many occasions in this State between the Government and persons or groups of persons who have shown concern for the environment, we need to have the public kept fully informed and able to participate to the fullest extent in matters affecting, or likely to affect, our environment. I cannot stress that point too earnestly. It is of the utmost importance that we have public participation in all aspects of the environment. Unfortunately, that participation is sadly lacking in Queensland.

The importance of the development of properly managed national parks cannot be underestimated. Such development goes hand in hand with our bid to improve and promote the tourist industry. If local authorities are to get any return from the loss of rateable lands that are required for national parks, those parks must be open to some sort of control and well-managed public usage. We have heard this matter raised in this House by numerous honourable members. There can be no doubt about the dollar-earning capacity of our State if our national parks can quickly develop the type of allure that is required and if the Government ensures that our parks are reasonably accessible. There is no hope at all of this happening unless the Government departs from its tired old ways or, alternatively, a Labor Government is given the opportunity to carry out its publicly stated programme relating to the matters to which I have referred.

The other point I want to make in the platform I have talked about or the policies I have enunciated is that the programme that I am referring to is pointed directly towards easing the unemployment problem, which this Government exacerbates by its inaction. Little has been said in this House about unemployment except that in previous debates the Treasurer has alluded to the fact that some of the finance he has so conveniently found will be put to good use giving many more hundreds of people jobs in the State of Queensland.

Dr. Edwards: An additional \$98,000,000.

Mr. WARBURTON: That is certainly very acceptable. I hope the Treasurer succeeds. However, I hasten to say to him that it appears to me that the money that he has been talking about on occasions will simply

allow him to continue with the type of work-force structure that he has now. Unfortunately, I cannot see him adding many people to the work-force as a result of the expenditure of the additional money that he says he has.

I believe it is the Queensland Government's responsibility to see that our national parks are ready to accept the tourist. Why cannot we learn from the experience of others? This is where I want to introduce some ideas to the Government, to overcome Queensland's disastrous unemployment situation. I repeat: why cannot we learn from others?

There is a story to tell. For example, the Government has said time and again that it is sincerely desirous of developing our State's national parks. It has certainly expanded the areas that have been set aside for national parks, although we can be somewhat critical of its failure to develop management plans as quickly as some people wish. If we are desirous of developing these national parks, certainly the Government should examine the success story in North America. I refer to what was called the Roosevelt plan, which came about after the years of the great Depression in 1933 to 1940. This is not old hat; this is not something that cannot apply to the present day. We have economic problems, and I think that we have to look at any suggestion that comes forward to try to overcome the unemployment problems.

What Roosevelt did was to provide useful and exhilarating work for 300,000 people in that country's national parks and forests at that time in the Depression period. Today, those facilities are acknowledged as being the world's best. When we talk about national parks of world fame, I do not think there is anybody who is interested in this sort of thing who has not heard of Yellowstone or of some of the other great national parks throughout the American continent. Their facilities are acknowledged as the world's best, with the numbers of visitors to those national parks being reckoned in millions. The authorities in America have great difficulty in assessing the numbers of visitors from year to year, but in 1972, which was the last occasion on which they made an assessment, the number of visitors to the North American national park system was estimated at the staggering figure of 212,000,000. In other words, 212,000,000 people visited those national parks that were developed under the Roosevelt scheme during the Depression period.

The development of the national park system in America required a great diversity of skills, and this is important. I am not talking about pushing people only into labouring jobs because, I reiterate, this type of national park development requires a diversity of skills. Roosevelt achieved a number of objectives. His actions not only ensured the preservation of a major part of that country's heritage and boosted the tourist potential, which we are all interested

in, but also, above all, put unemployed people to work. He restored their pride and gained the nation's respect for what he did.

Many of Roosevelt's emergency relief programmes were conservation orientated. Within three months, the 300,000 workers were housed in what he referred to as 1,000 camps in the national forests and parks. They helped to develop camp sites, buildings, trails, bridges, etc. They installed utility systems, and visitor-use facilities and constructed or improved roads. They restored historic buildings and monuments. On that occasion Roosevelt found the huge sum of \$220,000,000 to inject into the project over the period of seven years between 1933 and 1940.

Mr. Moore interjected.

Mr. WARBURTON: In other words, he showed some initiative and enterprise, which is more than I can say for the honourable member for Windsor. He accepted what I regard as the Government's responsibility at a time when the rate of unemployment was the worst in his nation's history.

The States of New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania have all on occasions diverted numbers of their unemployed, and special funds, to the development of national parks. They have certainly not done it to the extent that Roosevelt did in the period of the Depression between 1933 and 1940. But that is a story that deserves to be read, and one that the Government should heed. Most of the 300,000 people in Roosevelt's scheme were young people, many of whom had advanced education. My understanding is that after most of the work was completed some of the young people were able to continue on to become botanists, geologists and so forth, and to continue their work in the area of national parks that they had come to like so much. There is no question that others had to go back into various areas of the work-force following those bad years.

However, we cannot kid ourselves that there is not a like situation with us today. Certainly the stage of deep depression that Roosevelt found his nation in between 1933 and 1940 has not been reached. I ask the Treasurer to look closely at that situation. It is a logical direction in which to divert funds. If the Government were to adopt a scheme similar to that of Roosevelt, it would be doing something constructive to help ease the unemployment problem.

In saying that, I believe that, in particular, the young and certainly the unattached people in our society who find themselves out of work would welcome the opportunity to venture into this type of employment where a diversity of skills is required. That is very important, because too often in schemes that are mooted to help the unemployed the work required of these people is the ordinary type of labouring work, which naturally would not suit many people and

which some people could not cope with. However, the type of work I envisage would certainly cater for a diversity of skills and would encourage people, if they so desired, to continue with some form of education.

What I have said is not something that has just been dreamt up; it is quite factual. History shows that Roosevelt's scheme was tremendously successful. As a result of that foresight, as a result of pouring that finance into national park development, and as a result of easing the very serious unemployment situation in the process, the American nation now has the most well known and frequently visited national parks in the world.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (10.29 p.m.): I rise this evening to speak about a matter that is of growing concern to me and should be of growing concern to all members of our community. It is time that the Government took action to ensure that Australians become masters of their own destiny. In particular, the control of our economy is increasingly coming under the control of international companies.

This is not a problem solely of our age, but one belonging to earlier decades. However, in the age in which we live it is a problem that is growing to immense proportions. In fact, the control of our States and nation is passing out of the hands of our Governments directly into the hands of the multinationals.

I shall not cast the net so wide as to cover all facets of our life controlled by the multinational companies, but I do wish to dwell briefly on the food-processing monopolies that are increasingly gaining in strength within our economy and affecting the way we live. Food-processing monopolies, of which there are only a few in this country, are taking over the small processors and controlling the working conditions and the number of jobs available for Australians. They are gaining greater control over Government decisions. They definitely control to a very large degree the prices that primary producers receive in the market-place. They definitely control the health of our community by deciding the contents of processed foods being sold. There is very little Government control, if any, over what is contained in processed food. Just the other day an honourable member referred in this House to the rubbish that is put into processed foods and the fact that Governments are prepared to take little or no action to protect the health of the community. There are many environmental and other factors which these monopolies are inflicting upon the welfare and standards of the community in general.

Power needs to be taken away from these czars of the shadowy world of the international corporate body. I wish to look at one particular group of companies, which is increasingly gaining in strength in the Australian food business. I refer to the group of companies taking in Henry Jones (IXL)

Limited and, I suppose I could add, Provincial Traders Ltd. In their financial year ended 29 September 1978, Australian canned and frozen foods contributed 41 per cent of group net operating profit, overseas food interests in South Africa provided 26 per cent and special businesses, including timber, hops, media and jam, provided 33 per cent.

This is a major international company controlling the food industry of this nation. In fact, Henry Jones (IXL) Limited proudly boasts that there are only three major frozen food processors in this country, of which it is the principal one. It is interesting to note that the C.B.A. Bank has a 50 per cent shareholding in Henry Jones, of which there are 27 subsidiary companies. They cover a wide spectrum of food processing. Their competitors are Wattie Pict, Edgells and others. This group of companies has had and will have a major effect on Queensland primary producers.

A sad item appeared in "The Courier-Mail" on Saturday last, 1 December 1979, in the Public Notices section. Notice was given that a petition had been filed in the Supreme Court of Queensland for the winding-up of the Lockyer Valley Fresh Foods Co-operative Association Limited. It is interesting to note that the banker of that co-operative is also the C.B.A. Bank. In 1975-76, when the canning industry of Australia was in extreme difficulty, particularly in southern States, we saw headlines such as "Co-op canners and IXL on opposing sides"—IXL is Henry Jones—and "AIDC versus IXL". Since that time that firm has grown from strength to strength, and will continue to do so. It does not care about the community in which it makes its profits. It is interested only in the profits that it makes. That is borne out not only by its annual reports but also by reports on its activities that have appeared in the Press.

It also is relevant to look at the Government's treatment of the Lockyer Valley Fresh Foods Co-operative Association Limited. I have raised the matter in the House previously, so I shall not go over all the details again. However, I make it clear that I believe that the shadowy world of finance has crushed that co-operative.

It is the only instance in this State, or, to my knowledge, in this country, in which farmers involved in vegetable growing have got together and made a success of such a venture. Initially, the co-operative received a relatively small amount of financial assistance from the Commercial Bank of Australia, which looked upon it as a motley group of farmers who were tinkering around with the processing of vegetables. However, because of the initiative shown by the farmers, the co-operative was able to make significant inroads into the frozen-vegetable market in this country without advertising. Initially, it had packaging and production problems, and with only a small financial base to work from, it made some financial

blunders. Unfortunately, that was one of the reasons for its downfall. The Treasurer has told honourable members that that was why the Government was not prepared to consider providing assistance to the co-operative.

I wonder how much information was supplied by the Commercial Bank of Australia to Treasury officials when they were seeking information on which they could decide whether or not to recommend that a guarantee be given to the Lockyer Valley Fresh Foods Co-operative Association Limited. I suggest that because the C.B.A. is a major lender to Henry Jones (IXL), which now includes Provincial Traders, and also a major shareholder, it definitely gave a biased opinion to the Government against the Lockyer Valley Fresh Foods Co-operative.

Dr. Edwards: No information was provided by the C.B.A. The honourable member knows full well that it was provided by the Lockyer Valley Fresh Foods Co-operative. The Government had no power to go to the C.B.A.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Surely the Government would have sought advice from the co-operative's bank.

Dr. Edwards: The information was provided totally by the co-operative.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I accept that.

The Treasurer went overseas to protect the Greenvale project. Of course, that project involved much more money and many more jobs, but surely the honourable gentleman could have done much more to protect an industry which, in the relatively small township of Laidley, had on its books 90 full-time or part-time employees. Perhaps he could have got the creditors and others round a table and negotiated some sort of a settlement under which the industry could continue to operate.

The situation now is that, because the Lockyer Valley Fresh Foods Co-operative has collapsed, the kibosh has been put on a similar industry starting up in this State for some time. That is a very sad state of affairs for the West Moreton area, in which an increasing number of job opportunities is required to assist in overcoming a serious unemployment problem.

The Henry Jones (IXL) group does not care where it leaves its debris. In "The Queensland Times" of 26 November, the member for Lytton (Mr. Burns) reported the loss of 60 jobs through the sale by Henry Jones (IXL) of Provincial Traders' poultry division to Ingham's Enterprises. The article said—

"Last night, Mr. Burns said PTL's plumbing division, J. R. Wylie and Sons, was being 'wound down'."

Such companies do not care who they squash or what problems they inflict upon household budgets. Their only interest is in profit. It is time they were pulled into line and some of their unfettered powers taken from

them, and Governments should have more power to control the financial banditry that they practise on the economy.

I turn now to another sector of this group's operations, namely, its interests in the pineapple industry. Strong rumours are circulating to the effect that the Henry Jones (IXL) group is planning to set up a cannery and plantations in northern New South Wales and to mix the pineapples grown there with imported pineapples from its South African holdings. It is planned to import large quantities of semi-processed bulk pineapple from South Africa, where the bulk pineapples are produced by cheap black labour.

The problem is, of course, that the imported product costs less than half the price of the Australian product. The fruit can be landed in this country for \$55 a tonne, compared with the cost of the local product of \$155 a tonne. Quite naturally, this company will create tremendous difficulties for our local pineapple industry, which employs thousands of people directly and thousands more indirectly.

I am informed that, to operate efficiently, a cannery needs an annual throughput of 20 000 tonnes of pineapples. Approximately 10,000,000 pineapple plants are required each year to produce that quantity. The quantities of pineapple plants that Henry Jones (IXL) Provincial Traders is buying throughout the country is nowhere near that required to give 10,000,000 producing pineapple plants.

Both the State and Federal Governments should immediately investigate these rumours and stop the operation of this group. There is no doubt that the continued unfettered import of pineapples will bring about the demise of the Queensland pineapple industry.

I now want to quote from some Press articles concerning the pineapple industry. Firstly, on 15 January 1976, under the headline "Union acts to stop African pineapples" it was reported—

"The Storemen and Packers Union took action yesterday to turn back a ship loaded with canned pineapples bound for Australia."

On 14 February 1979 the same union was reported as saying that the Queensland pineapple industry was under serious threats by Filipino imports. Three days later, on 17 February, the Press reported that Senator Bonner called for a pineapple imports ban.

I point out that, because of a shortfall in pineapple production last season, Golden Circle did import high-quality pineapples from Hawaii to enable it to meet its commitments.

Anyone who reads the annual reports of this group of companies can see the serious plight in which the producers in Australia will find themselves unless both the State and Federal Governments step in to control those activities that are detrimental to this

nation. We face the prospect of becoming nothing more than the serfs of the international czars, who have no responsibility to anyone in this country or any other. They are driven by the profit motive. They have no concern whatever for the social debris that they leave behind. It is time that the Government looked into the Henry Jones (IXL) monopoly and did something about reducing its control.

Mr. PREST (Port Curtis) (10.45 p.m.): I support the remarks made by the honourable members for Bulimba and Lytton about Queensland being worse off today than it was under the Federal Labor Government between 1972 and 1975. The present Tory Federal Government has cut back on the assistance granted for education, local government and main roads. Those are three of the main areas that concern us.

I am concerned particularly about main roads in Queensland. Because the assistance given by the Federal Government this year is somewhat down, it will not pay for the necessary road maintenance work in Queensland. The amount allocated by the Federal Government under the States Grants (Roads) Act of 1977 increased this year by 7.5 per cent, but inflation will be running at 10 per cent. In 1978-79, the allocation was increased by 7 per cent, but inflation was running at 8.8 per cent. In the two years since Labor was defeated in the Federal sphere, the Queensland Government has become 6 per cent worse off than it was under the Whitlam Labor Government.

Motorists in Queensland are being ripped off in no uncertain manner. The Queensland road system is extremely extensive. It is very costly to construct new roads and maintain existing ones. Recently, when I travelled on the Marlborough-St. Lawrence section, I noted that insufficient money was being spent on it to seal a section that had been repaired last year. It is evident that major expenditure will be required to bring this road back to a standard suitable for sealing. It is wrong that road construction should be brought to a peak and that insufficient money is then allocated for sealing it. When a road deteriorates, it becomes very costly to restore it. At the same time, it is very costly to shift construction camps and bring them back to complete the job.

Roads in country areas should receive more attention than they are getting. Country people pay their taxes. Indirectly, they probably pay more than city dwellers. New motor cars do not last very long when driven on badly corrugated roads. The Government should be more considerate of country people who travel on unsealed roads, some of which are barely formed.

We are concerned because local government and semi-government bodies are finding it difficult to raise loans to cover the works programmes approved by the Treasury. By

the end of this financial year, many of them will be looking to the Government to help them fill their loan programmes so that they can complete their works programmes. As the honourable member for Isis said, some local authorities are not happy with their allocations from the States Grants Commission this year. In some instances they have just cause for dissatisfaction.

Dr. Edwards: Some of them are very happy, of course.

Mr. PREST: I am talking about the ones that are dissatisfied.

The allocation under Element A is all right. It is on a population basis. That amount of money can go into the General Fund. But the amount allocated under Element B should be used for specified projects. These people put in the same sort of programme each year claiming deficiencies in the provision of amenities or facilities for the town, city or shire, but they do not spend that money in that area. They put it into the General Fund to hold rates down. The major share of that grant is going to the people with the most property, that is, the industrial companies and the big land-owners.

Mr. Powell: Should it not also be for rating assistance where areas have large numbers of retired people?

Mr. PREST: That is so. As I said, the amount received under Element A can be put into the General Fund. There must be equalisation. This is what the Grants Commission is all about. It brings local authorities into line or puts them on an equal footing. Therefore, a lot of this money should go to specified projects and should not be put into the General Fund.

During the year we have heard that the Government will be looking to cut some of the subsidies that have been made available to local authorities over the years.

Dr. Edwards interjected.

Mr. PREST: I am very pleased to hear that. The Treasurer is shaking his head and indicating that it is not true. I happened to be at a local government conference in Springsure a few months ago, at which the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads said that that was being considered.

Dr. Edwards: A review is being undertaken. The Government is making a total review because of the inconsistency in the rate of subsidy paid on many kinds of projects. At the request of local government throughout the State, a review is being undertaken, but that does not necessarily mean that less money will be available.

Mr. PREST: We sincerely hope not.

Two of the matters I am concerned about are air pollution and noise pollution. This

morning I asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads the following question—

“(1) How many air pollution monitoring stations are in Queensland?”

(2) In what areas are they situated, and when were they set up?

(3) How many inspectors or operators are in Queensland . . .”

It must be remembered that this Act was passed in 1963. In the Estimates, \$698,000 has been set aside to defray salaries and contingencies in connection with air pollution control. According to the Minister's answer, there are 61 monitoring stations located at Brisbane, Bowen, Townsville, Mt. Isa and Gladstone and—

“The technical and scientific staff of the division of Air Pollution Control comprises twenty-one officers. Twenty are based in Brisbane. One is based in Townsville.”

Air pollution is a very serious problem and will continue to worsen in other areas of the State. As I said, this legislation has been in force for 16 years and at present only one officer is stationed outside Brisbane.

The Noise Abatement Act was passed in 1978 and came into operation in June that year. This morning I asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads—

“(1) How many inspectors have been appointed; (a) for Queensland, and (b) in each division of the State?”

(2) Where is each inspector stationed, and on what date was each appointment made?”

The Minister replied that one inspector and one technical officer have been appointed in the whole of Queensland.

It was also stated in the answer—

“The present office staff to service the Noise Abatement Division comprises a secretary to the Noise Abatement Authority and a stenographer, both stationed in Brisbane. Additional staff will be sought as need arises.”

I am bewildered that the Government thinks that one inspector and one technical officer will be able to control noise pollution in the State of Queensland.

I see that \$134,204 has been appropriated to defray the salaries and contingencies of the Noise Abatement Authority. We also find that this inspector, who was appointed in June 1979, had built up in excess of 100 hours' overtime by 10 October 1979, and that he could not attend to all his duties because he was overworked. He was not paid overtime and he had to be given time off in lieu of payment. At that time his union, the Public Service Board and the Director of Local Government were trying to solve the problem of how this inspector was to be paid. We were told today that the matter is currently under consideration by the Public Service Board. I think that that is an intolerable situation, and that it should

not be allowed to continue. As I have said, this Government has appropriated \$134,000 to defray the salaries and contingencies of the Noise Abatement Authority. I am quite certain that the Noise Abatement Act will be similar to the Air Pollution Act under which only two offences have been brought to court in more than 16 years.

Mr. Davis: In other words, noise pollution was a lot of hot air.

Mr. PREST: That is true; I agree with the honourable member. This Government brings Bills into the Parliament and makes them law, but it does not provide for their operation. They are laughed at by everybody.

Mr. Frawley: Rubbish! What about the Rabbit Control Fund?

Mr. PREST: It might be rubbish to the honourable member, but it is not rubbish to those people who have a problem with noise and air pollution.

Mr. Frawley: Tell us about the time you had your hand in the till at the Gladstone council.

Mr. PREST: I do not know anything about having my hand in the till, but I do know that at the time when \$12,000 was knocked off there was a National Party candidate against me. I believe that some of those funds ended up there, and also that the member for Caboolture got some of them.

I consider that there is a problem at the present time in the Harbours and Marine area. On 15 September 1979, the Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism (Hon. M. D. Hooper) said it was possible that a \$2,500 haul of illegal crabs seized in Brisbane that week had been consigned from Gladstone. He said that the Boating and Fisheries Patrol was being hampered in its efforts to wipe out the illegal crabbing racket by lack of patrol officers.

But what has the Government or the Minister done? Only yesterday I was speaking to officers in the Harbours and Marine Department in Gladstone. I was looking for a certain officer who has taken out a summons on behalf of his department against a fisherman. I was told that he was on holidays. When I asked whether anyone was acting in his position, I was told that relief was not provided. So the patrolmen are hampered by lack of staff. When they are on leave no relief is provided. That is a crying shame. It is a lot of hog-wash to say that the Government is trying to clamp down on the illegal crab racket. I do not think the Minister is in any way concerned because he is not doing a thing towards stamping that out.

The Government has also caused problems in the boat-building industry. A regulation brought in on 25 September provides that trawlers cannot be built unless they were started, or the owners had signified their

intention to build, and approval was given, before 25 September. Boat builders who were in the process of drawing up plans and making a start for prospective buyers and builders have come to me about this. They have now been told that they cannot get approval, that the boats will not be registered or licensed. The Government says it is concerned about unemployment, but the owners of small shipbuilding companies are very concerned because they will have to pay off staff with the introduction of the new regulation.

The holders of fishing licences, some of which were granted only on a temporary basis, have been told that if they have not put in \$5,000 worth of fish this year, their licences may not be renewed next year. Another provision to be introduced is that fishing licences for boats built from now on will state where that boat can operate and what type of fishing it can carry on. Unfortunately, interstate boats will be allowed to operate in Queensland waters. Those measures are causing problems for our own local fishermen. People who have been employed on boats and now want to go out on their own have now been denied that opportunity, but interstate boats will be allowed to operate in Queensland waters.

Of course, the Japanese and Taiwanese fishing boats are still being allowed to rape our fishing grounds almost unhindered. Those grounds should be totally for Queensland fishermen. Protection should be given to the fishing industry, but that is not being done. Finance should be made available so that fishermen could borrow money to buy bigger boats that would enable them to fish in a greater range and take a larger catch on board. Local fishermen are hampered by the size of their boats but now they are unable to build bigger ones for trawling purposes. They have to remain with the type of boat they have and be restricted to the inner reefs off the coast.

Fishermen in my area are disturbed at what may happen about marine parks. They believe that professional fishermen will be kept out of marine parks once they are declared. They say that some of the areas to be declared marine parks are the best fishing and breeding grounds in the area. Instead of helping the local fishing industry, the Government is causing great problems.

The local facilities to receive the catches of Queensland fishermen should be improved. For some years requests have been made for new wharf facilities in the port of Gladstone, but nothing has been done. The former Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism (Mr. Hodges) promised that they would be provided as soon as money became available. However, we have been told that no money is available in this Budget. I sincerely hope that some improvements will be made to the facilities at the Gladstone Fish Board for the benefit of the fishermen in my area.

I am very pleased that the Government believes great progress will be made in our rail system. I sincerely hope that, concurrently with an increase in the tonnage carried, some of the railway buildings will be upgraded. The Gladstone Railway Station should be of a very high standard. The car park is a disgrace. The daylight rail tours pass through our centre. Passengers are taken by bus from the unsealed car park at the front of the station for a tour of the city. If progress is to be made, such facilities should be upgraded.

Mr. Davis: Clear the track from there to Brisbane. Fourteen hours—what a joke!

Mr. PREST: That is so. The trains must be speeded up.

With the proposed improved facilities there will be greater responsibility on the railway work-force. At a function last Saturday night a traffic superintendent said he wished to get the co-operation of the railway workers because what the railway was doing would create jobs and do wonders. I am a believer in the railways. However, I would like to see amenities upgraded and accommodation for all railway workers improved. For too long they have put up with bond-wood huts and other accommodation that would not be tolerated under any other award. Considering the great opportunities for the Railway Department, I sincerely hope that the wages for workers are increased accordingly.

We have heard much about cuts in teacher aides, supply A teachers, janitor/grounds-men, cleaners and clerical staff. In primary schools, cuts in teacher aides were to be from nothing in very small schools to 33½ per cent in class III schools (down 20 hours a week). Larger schools were also to be severely affected, being down 25 hours a week. The cuts were to be 30 per cent and 25 per cent for enrolments of 601 to 1,000 and in excess of 1,000 respectively. There were to be cuts in pre-schools.

Dr. Edwards: Haven't you read today's paper?

Mr. PREST: If changes have been made, they would only have been brought about by pressure—pressure from parents and citizens, pressure from the Queensland Teachers' Union and pressure from the public. We have heard that cuts are not going to be made in teacher aides, supply teachers and so on at the moment. However, as the cleaners and clerical staff leave, the cuts will be put into effect.

We should not go back to the dark ages of 1972 and 1975, when the bigger boys or parents and citizens were looking after the grounds. People were doing voluntary work. Surely we want to stay abreast of the times and prepare our children to a standard where they can take their place in society after leaving school. We do not want to

prepare children to stand in dole queues. In my opinion, that is one of the major problems that must be overcome.

If we neglect education, we neglect our responsibilities as parents and as members of Parliament. Therefore, I believe that the Government should be doing more to honour its promises to provide pre-school education for all children throughout the State. Even today, many children will not have access to pre-school education.

Mr. Powell: Have you any idea what the figures are?

Mr. PREST: No, but I know that in my electorate the Minister for Education promised that a pre-school would be built at South Gladstone in time to take enrolments for 1978. It is now almost 1980 but no pre-school has been built. He stated also that pre-schools would be available at the Gladstone Central and Gladstone West State Schools for an intake of pupils in 1979. In 1980, a pre-school will be available at Gladstone West to cater for 100 children. They will be selected from an area in close proximity to the school.

Mr. Powell: I would say that it is poor representation.

Mr. PREST: The honourable member would be better off in the Scouts. He would enjoy that much more. When one hears the honourable member for Isis expressing his opinions on education, it is easy to understand why people in industry say that children are not being prepared to enter the work-force. If the honourable member was any younger, he would be called a juvenile delinquent.

The Government is also neglecting the Works and Housing portfolio, and police stations and police and teacher accommodation are sadly lacking. Court houses that have been in need of upgrading for a long time have been neglected. The Opposition realises that the Works Department has a wide range of responsibilities, but an effort should be made to overcome the problems to which I have referred.

I have here a copy of a very glossy booklet entitled "Queensland Development".

Mr. Powell: A good book.

Mr. PREST: It is a very good publication and has achieved good publicity for the Government. Unfortunately, recently I received a letter from a local authority—it wrote not only to me but also to the State Public Relations Bureau—claiming that the booklet was very misleading. It mentioned instances in which the booklet states that certain work has been carried out where in fact there has been no activity, and other instances in which the estimated cost of schemes to be implemented has been very much over-estimated.

I am concerned particularly about a statement in it relating to the Rundle oil-shale project in the Calliope Shire. It says that \$2,000 million will be spent on the project

and that by 1981-82, \$200,000,000 will be spent on stage I, which is the installation of a plant with a production capacity of 23,000 barrels a day.

In answer to a question asked by the member for Nudgee, the Treasurer said he had some reservations about the project. He said that the companies were still moving to be in a position to start development as soon as possible and had approached possible customers and participants. I believe that his cautious use of the word "possible" signifies that a lot of "ifs" are associated with the project and that its feasibility has yet to be established.

I believe that the Rundle oil-shale project could be another Poseidon, with investors sending company share prices sky-rocketing on the basis of pure speculation rather than proven economic viability.

In speaking to his Estimates, the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police said that the establishment of any plant to extract oil and other fuels from raw materials could involve the expenditure of millions of dollars. He added that no such plant could be successful without some measure of Government support and the guaranteed marketing of its products.

He went on to say that the OPEC countries could reduce the price of crude oil to make the operations of such an extraction plant uneconomic. I wholeheartedly agree. If the OPEC countries saw a shale-oil plant as a threat to them they could immediately drop their price of oil, thereby turning a shale-oil project into a white elephant. Those people who buy shares in the Rundle project should be very careful. I do not believe it will be a goer in the early 1980s. It will take time to develop. As I say, I agree with Mr. Camm that the OPEC countries could reduce their price of oil to those nations that signify their intention to buy oil from the Rundle project.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (11.18 p.m.): A debate on financial matters gives honourable members an ideal opportunity to raise matters that are important to their electorates. It would not matter if we had a magic wand; we could not satisfy everybody. There will always be needs and there will always be priorities.

Over the past 10 years, I have considered the expenditure incurred in this State, and I have noticed that members constantly complain about things not being done in their electorates. It is very easy to understand why members are parochial.

Tonight I want to speak to a general matter that has caused considerable concern over a lengthy period. I might add that concern has been expressed not only by

people like myself but also by those who have the expertise to know what is happening.

I refer to a statement that appeared in "The Sunday Mail" on 13 August 1978 attributed to Mr. M. J. Callaghan, the general secretary of the Police Union. He stated that Queensland faced a lawless society in which mob control would be normal and the law of the jungle would be the only respected authority. Those are harsh words and they must make every thinking Queensland stop and wonder what is going to happen in the future. He has clearly stated that we face a lawless future.

He went on to say that the fight against crime involving violence, juvenile delinquency and white-collar criminals already was being lost. Those are words that I hope the Treasurer and members of the Government will heed. He went on to say that many things were needed in the Police Force if it is to do anything to combat the menace. He referred briefly to motor vehicles, policemen in outlying centres, renovation of buildings, facilities and so on. The essence of his comment was that Queensland faced a lawless future. The other aspect is that the fight against crime is almost lost.

I noted another release of more recent times by the Assistant Commissioner (Crime and Services), Mr. Les Duffy, who said that there is a real problem in street crime. He made the point that some 30 years ago assault, robbery and mass rape were unheard of to any large degree, but that that is not so today. He also commented on how this country is following other countries throughout the world, and made the point that it seems to be predictable that the crime patterns experienced in America and the United Kingdom will not be experienced in Australia until about 10 years later. I suggest that the problems confronting America and the United Kingdom 10 years ago are with us now. We must be cognisant of that, because Australia's crime pattern certainly follows the pattern in overseas countries. That is true in every way, not only in the quantum and severity of crime but also in its variations.

Another comment made by Assistant Commissioner Les Duffy on 4 October 1979 was that women thugs now have to be contended with. There is therefore a variation in the types of persons involved in crime. He pointed out that gangs of women are molesting, robbing and sexually assaulting men in an emerging new crime trend.

My point is that there is here a very serious problem that has been recognised by the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Lewis. I refer to his annual report on page 2, where he says—

"I am still considerably concerned at the overall crime picture in the State."

I wonder if Cabinet Ministers and those people who have a say in the final distribution of money have paid much attention to what Mr. Lewis said. He went on to say—

“The total number of offences recorded in the past 12 months was 147,381 . . . This was an increase of 12,512, or 9 per cent, which was much higher than the increase of reported offences of 7,722 or 6 per cent of 1977-78.”

He then listed the categories of crime and made the disturbing statement that the clear-up rate fell slightly from 42 per cent to 40 per cent. He stressed that the force must be provided both with numbers and equipment to meet the challenge posed by the current crime trends.

It could well be said that the Government has taken these points into consideration as I note that there is to be an increase of 2½ per cent in the strength of the force. That is commendable, but nowhere enough in the light of the remarks made by those in the know—those in the front-line of the battle against crime.

Mr. Lewis's report goes on to stress—

“The high incidence of involvement by young people in criminal offences, mentioned in my last report, is still causing me concern.”

Later he referred to juvenile crime, and then moved into the area of drug offences. He wrote—

“I regret to report that the growth of drug use and abuse in Queensland shows no sign of abating . . . There was a 24 per cent increase in the number of offences detected as a result of police action.”

I have developed very quickly a clear picture of crime trends in Queensland. To be statistical, I will turn to the selected crime categories dealt with on page 5 of the report, where the commissioner said—

“Homicide showed a disturbing increase from 121 to 167 this year, serious assaults were up from 721 to 945, stealing and unlawful use of motor vehicles rose from 5,617 to 5,892 . . .

“I am deeply concerned at the persistent high level of breaking and entering offences.”

In whatever category we look into the selected crime area, there is an increase, and the Commissioner of Police said that he is deeply concerned about it. He referred to the high incidence of certain types of crime. He is concerned at the overall crime picture in this State yet, when it comes to the allocation of funds, really little has been done to cope with the problem.

It might be said that money does not solve everything, but a lot of evidence shows that when money is spent on combating crime, results are obtained. In 1976, it was estimated that crime in Queensland cost the State the exorbitant sum of \$220,000,000.

This was the cost simply of the machinery of law enforcement, insurance against burglary and the value of stolen money and property. It did not include the loss of profit suffered by victims of crime and their employers, replacement of damaged property, security costs and many social costs. That is a massive sum of money.

I state this because it is important. It is easy for Opposition members to kick the Government, but in 1976, based on a survey carried out in 1972-73, Queensland had the second-lowest crime problem in the nation and the second-highest per capita expenditure on law enforcement. That is an interesting correlation. If it is taken further, it will be found that Tasmania had the lowest crime problem and the highest expenditure on law enforcement. I suggest that there is a very clear correlation between moneys expended on law enforcement and the combating of crime and the results achieved.

The fact is that there is a serious crime problem, one that I do not think enough members of the Government are aware of or are concerned about. It is very easy to talk about young offenders, drunks, statistics on the number of Aboriginal people apprehended and domestic problems, but in doing this we are not getting down to many of the real problems. We are not giving our Police Force the opportunity to combat this problem.

One previous speaker, I think it was the honourable member for Bulimba, mentioned that only 27 officers were involved in combating the drug problem in Queensland. While the other 3,000 members of the Police Force naturally involve themselves in this area, that is too few for such a serious problem. The report of the Commissioner of Police shows it to be increasing by at least 24 per cent a year and costing this State many millions of dollars. It is a problem that is destroying the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of young Queenslanders.

The police are unable to combat prostitution and massage parlours, mainly because of lack of manpower. Whatever the area of crime, the police are undermanned and unable to do their job. It is time that something was done for the police, not only from the point of view of manpower or, as recently mentioned in the Press, the use of computers to combat crime, but to encourage community support.

I agree with Vern MacDonald and a few of the other experts in the police field that the greatest need at the moment is community support. It is some years ago that the then Minister for Police, Mr. Hodges, put out a special release on the apathy of the public towards law enforcement in this State. I concur with his remarks. The general public are apathetic and, unless something is done about it and attempts are made to develop a social consciousness among the community, Australia will end up like the United Kingdom and especially like

the States of America where people are not game to do anything about crime. People in the streets of New York will walk by when someone is being assaulted. They just take no notice of any crimes that occur. They want no part of them. They do not want to be involved.

That is the sort of situation that will develop here. Australia may be a few years behind these other countries, but the situation is such that it will soon be like them. This has happened in the types of crime that have come here. It has happened in so many other areas, such as the involvement of women in crime and the decreasing age of juveniles involved in crime, and it will be reflected, too, in a total lack of community involvement and community willingness to help the police. I have spoken to some police officers and they have told me that they have known of instances where one police officer has had to take on 13 or 14 young louts—they used the term “louts”—and other people have just stood by and watched; no-one was prepared to help. It may be that these people did not want to involve themselves because it was none of their business, but I believe that law enforcement is the responsibility of everybody, and that when it comes to crime, somehow we have to create a community awareness and responsibility.

This applies not only in the area of assaults and bashings in the streets, but more so in the area of drugs. Recently I had the opportunity to travel in other parts of the world. I took the opportunity to speak to the children in one class at a school. There were some 40-odd students in that class. I asked them to be very frank with me and tell me how many of them knew of other young people in that school who were on drugs. Every young person in that classroom put up his hand. We then discussed the matter further, and found out that they believed there were some 300 to 400 young people in that school of about 1,300 pupils who were regularly using drugs. They also stated that they estimated that about 100 of the young people in that school were on hard drugs. But no-one was ever caught.

They also admitted to me that the drugs were spread in those schools not by the pusher, as we seem to think, but by friends. It was the friends who encouraged others to get involved in the drug scene. It was the friends who passed out the LSD, the pills and the marijuana, and then these people were caught on drugs. Maybe we should start describing these people as rattlesnakes, because that is what they are. Whilst they are seen to be friends in one instance, in the longer term they will destroy the future of these young people. But the point I make is that these young people, regardless of the consequences and of the deterioration in the health of their own friends, were not prepared to tell anyone who was giving out these drugs.

There is the same problem in Australia. A study was carried out in my own city of Rockhampton by a police officer. He found that at least one-third of the students in one class-room in one school were regular users of marijuana. Other studies have been carried out. One was carried out by an institute in the central region, and it was found that one-third of the students had used marijuana prior to going to the institute, and that another third of the students used marijuana once they got to the institute. But no-one told.

In fact, when an organisation called Drug Dependency was set up in the area, that institute, that student body, put out an article in its magazine that implied that this organisation was made up of police doblers, and the students were told not to go near it for help because they would get dobbed in to the police. That was completely untrue. When we confronted the representatives of the student union about the matter, they said that they were sorry but that they had no control over the articles printed in the magazine.

The point I make is that, in the drug area, no-one will tell. If the spread of drugs and the concerning aspects of the drug trade in this State are to be overcome, it will not be done just by increasing the number of officers in the field from 27 to 270. That is not the only answer. The only way to do it is to convince the public that they have a responsibility to help. The Government is the only body with the opportunity and the finance to wage such a public campaign in order to create that community responsibility and to remove community apathy.

I ask these questions on behalf of the young people who will be caught up in the drug trade in the future. There will be thousands of them in the years to come. In this Parliament in 1971 I asked the Premier a question about the drug problem, and he said there was none. However, it was not long after that that the then Minister for Health, Mr. Tooth, came out and said that there was a drug problem. Since that time, it has escalated to such proportions that tens of thousands of young people are involved. It is a multimillion dollar business involving, as it is now claimed, business people, police and so many others in the community. The fact of the matter is that it has to be fought. Other countries are having great trouble fighting it but, if the people can be brought on side, something can be done about it.

I suggest that the comments being made by the Commissioner for Police (Mr. Lewis), Assistant Commissioner Mr. Les Duffy, and the secretary of the Queensland Police Union (Merv Callaghan) should be noted and that action should be taken to do something about these problems. In 1976 crime cost \$220,000,000. With the problem of white-collar crime I would not be surprised if that

figure has doubled since that time. White-collar crime is costing this State and the other States throughout the Commonwealth millions of dollars each year.

I wish to turn very quickly to another aspect that centres around this question, namely, the need for the Government to be consistent. Back in April 1977 the report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Enforcement of Criminal Law in Queensland was tabled in this Parliament. That is a very detailed report by three commissioners, the honourable Geoffrey Arthur George Lucas, a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland; Desmond George Sturgess, a barrister-at-law of the Supreme Court of Queensland; and D. M. Becker, a Chief Superintendent of Police who is now retired. That report was the result of much investigation, and contained 57 major recommendations. I do not agree with some of them, especially those which recommend that people can be detained for up to 6 hours without being charged or that their right to remain silent be removed. There are some areas of the report that one would have to be concerned about.

However, the fact of the matter is that it is over 2½ years since the report was made available to members of Parliament. At that time the Premier totally opposed the recommendations. In fact, I have an article dated 12 July 1978 in which the Premier expressed opposition to taped statements. I have a number of other articles in which the Premier expressed opposition to the report. In Cunnamulla in 1977 the then Deputy Premier (Sir William Knox) pledged to do everything he could to bring about the implementation of the recommendations made in the report that were worth while. Nothing has been done.

Mr. Davis: Where does the new Liberal leader stand?

Mr. WRIGHT: I do not know where he stands.

I do know that I raised the matter on 17 May this year, as I was starting to get concerned about it. It had then been a year since the report had been tabled, and it had been a year since Cabinet had referred it to a special departmental committee. I asked the Minister for Justice at the time what was happening. I referred him to the special report and this was his reply—

“The report of the committee . . .”

this is the special departmental committee—

“was received by me on 16 March 1978 and submitted to Cabinet on 17 March 1978.”

That is the last we have ever heard of it. I do not know what the cost of it was.

Dr. Edwards: To which report are you referring?

Mr. WRIGHT: I am talking about the Lucas criminal inquiry. Just to make sure the Treasurer does understand, as he might make comment on it at a later stage, I

point out that Cabinet decided to refer the report to a departmental committee. Following that a report was made to the Minister for Justice (Mr. Lickiss). That was on 17 March 1978. That is the last we ever heard of it. I do not know what it cost to produce that report. However, I do know that many of these matters are vitally important to law enforcement in Queensland. But nothing has been done. The Government says that something should be done for the police to help them with law enforcement to try to overcome the problem. Top police officials are saying that there is a crime wave. The secretary of the Queensland Police Union has said that we have a lawless future ahead of us. Yet here was a very vital report compiled by three reputable men, men who were well versed in the problems and took submissions from numerous personnel, a report containing 57 major recommendations, and nothing has been done about it.

I believe that the Opposition and the public generally need to be told why. What has happened to those recommendations? What has happened to the major suggestions that have been put forward? I refer firstly to the tape-recording of statements. Throughout this year there have been a number of cases in which evidence before the court has been ruled inadmissible because of the way it was obtained during interrogation and investigation by police. The report made the recommendation 2½ years ago that no statement made to a police officer implicating or tending to implicate the maker of it in the commission of an indictable offence should be admissible against him at his trial unless it had been tape-recorded. There are some provisos. It is a major recommendation on the tape-recording of statements. There are further recommendations about video tapes. Areas have been suggested in which those tapes ought to be held.

Special provisions are mentioned for dealing with persons with a disability, including handicapped people. It has even been suggested in other aspects of the inquiry that this could include Torres Strait Islanders, the lower socio-economic groups and Aboriginal people. They are guide-lines that have never been applied.

A major recommendation is that all statutory provisions in relation to police searches should be gathered together and placed in a single statute and that such provisions, along with many others, ought to be referred to the Law Reform Commission. Nothing has been done.

Mr. Davis: What happens to all this?

Mr. WRIGHT: I agree with the member for Brisbane Central. What does happen to it all? Why do we get competent people to sit on an inquiry for a long period, costing the State many tens of thousands of dollars, and then when they finally bring down a report do nothing about it—not even open it up for wide public debate? I am sure that it would attract wide public debate.

Mr. Houston: The Government gained time.

Mr. WRIGHT: I am not sure what the reason is, but the point of the member for Bulimba could be very valid.

There is also a recommendation that the Law Reform Commission should consider whether it is desirable to create a statutory tort of unlawful search. I notice that some of the ideas have been implemented in the recent firearms legislation in relation to the taking of footprints. There are also a number of recommendations that the Criminal Code be amended to allow arrest without warrant for offences. That applies to sections 427 and 428 of the Criminal Code. These matters ought to be open to debate. That is what should happen when a Government goes to such expense to obtain a report. There ought to be wide public debate on it, and then there should be implementation of it, well within the 2½ years that have elapsed since the report was submitted.

As to detention—the recommendation in the report is that police should be given power to detain suspects for questioning, subject to certain controls. This matter ought to be the subject of extensive debate and of further recommendations to this Parliament. There is also the recommendation that the drawing of no adverse inference from a suspect's silence in response to police questioning should not apply. I would be greatly concerned if that was implemented, thus removing the right of silence of any person under challenge or being questioned by police.

Mr. Miller, I could go on at length, because the document covers many pages as you, having studied it, would be well aware. It ought to be the subject of further discussion, statement and recommendation in this House. I challenge the Minister for Justice to tell us what is going on. What has happened during these 2½ years? Who are the members of the committee set up by the Government? How many times have they met? For what duration have they met? How many submissions have they made to Cabinet? What implementation of the many recommendations has taken place? They are important. Some of them are far-reaching. Some of them are major initiatives.

I refer to the release of prisoners to assist in the investigation of offences, as long as the consent of the prisoners concerned has been obtained. There are also suggestions about special laws to allow police officers to form road-blocks. Rules for powers of entry are suggested, as well as new suggestions for issue of warrants directing entry and search for victims of kidnapping and abductions. This is the sort of crime we are getting in our community. The Government ought to update the rights of police, without

giving them too much power, as there is always the danger of a breaking down of civil liberties.

I say over and over again, at the risk of sounding like an echo, that 57 major recommendations, from the matter of vagrants to the police cadet system to recruitment, have simply been cast aside. The report goes on and on. It suggests that police should not be involved in the licensing area; that they should not have any responsibility in the administration of the Liquor Act. We have heard no more of this. We have had no amendments coming before the Parliament. We have had nothing said about recommendations to the Law Reform Commission. I have heard of no notations sent to the Law Reform Commission that it ought to consider a number of aspects that have been raised in this report. Why not? In my opinion, the Minister for Justice and Cabinet have let the people of this State down. They have wasted time and procrastinated, and they ought to do something about it. I make the point that there are some aspects of the report with which members of the Opposition would not agree; but we do say that something ought to be done to finalise it, to fully debate it and to implement aspects of it.

On another subject, the honourable member for Lytton made the point that this State has been the victim of the broken promises of the Federal Government. I do not think that there will be any argument from the Treasurer about that, because on page 5 of the Financial Statement he said that it has been calculated that Queensland's financial prospects deteriorated to the extent of \$38,800,000 in about two months as a result of Commonwealth policies and actions.

Mr. Houston: His colleagues.

Mr. WRIGHT: That is the amazing thing about it. In another part of the Financial Statement he makes the comment that the relative disadvantage Queensland has experienced is further illustrated by the fact that the increase in Queensland's general revenue assistance this year will be 8.6 per cent, compared with an average of 10.5 per cent for the other States.

Dr. Edwards: Our honesty, of course, is quite important.

Mr. WRIGHT: I accept that. I am not doubting that for one moment, but I am asking what the Government is doing about it. For many years honourable members opposite castigated the Whitlam Government; yet we never hear boo out of them about the present Federal Government.

Dr. Edwards: That was righteous criticism.

Mr. WRIGHT: That might be the honourable gentleman's view. In my opinion, it was unfair criticism, and earlier in the debate the honourable member for Lytton and the honourable member for Bulimba clearly stated what the Whitlam Government meant

to this State, what it did for the people of Australia, and what has happened in the last four years under the Fraser Government.

Mr. Casey: That was without the co-operation of the State Government. What could it have done if the State Government had been prepared to co-operate?

Mr. WRIGHT: That is a very valid comment. I should like to know what the Treasurer is going to do, because the people of Queensland are suffering. No longer can honourable members opposite blame the socialist Government in Canberra, because the present Government is of their own political colour.

But it is not only the Federal Government which has broken promises. Not so long ago this Government made a wonderful promise to the people of Mt. Morgan. Now I am told that there is simply no money available to assist them. If ever there is a case for reviewing our approach to the way in which the State is run, I think it is to be found in Mt. Morgan. There has been talk about the need for regional development. Mt. Morgan would provide an ideal opportunity to experiment with regional development. The people of Mt. Morgan have been totally frustrated by the policies of the State Government and the Federal Liberal-National Party Government. They have made promise after promise in relation to what they will do to establish industries there and to assist the people, but nothing has been done. They cannot even build a road between Rockhampton and Mt. Morgan; they cannot even come good with reasonable subsidies to help promote the tourist industry.

In the Banana Shire and other National Party-held shires, there is no difficulty in finding money for water supplies and water reticulation. In Mt. Morgan, it is up to the council to provide the funds needed. I would ask that the Treasurer look at that problem.

Dr. Edwards: Where did the Government fund water resources in the Banana Shire?

Mr. WRIGHT: It is on record. I will send the honourable gentleman the letters, if he wishes me to do so. I do not know whether it was Mr. Neville Hewitt or Mr. Hartwig who finally obtained the money, but the Mt. Morgan Shire is rotable about it because it had proof that State Government moneys were made available for that water supply but not for the Mt. Morgan water supply. The honourable gentleman can answer that later. I will send him the letters, because I do not expect him to have all the details at his fingertips.

I suggest that the Government ought to experiment with the town of Mt. Morgan. The people certainly have not given up. They are a hardy type of people, as the honourable member for Port Curtis, who represented them so well for a period, will tell the House. They are die-hards. They will fight and fight, but they need some assistance.

They have suggested many schemes to create industry, but not much assistance has been forthcoming.

I would make the comment that the Government could experiment from a tourist point of view, and I recommend that consideration be given by the Government to a special allocation of funds to establish Mt. Morgan as a major tourist centre. The Government is willing to give Mr. Iwasaki massive areas of land; it is prepared to give him great privileges in regard to liquor licences, the freeholding of land and the raising of cattle; it is willing to let him break his own promises and contracts. But when it comes to something that is really Queensland, the Government does nothing about it.

There is a sound reason why a tourist centre could be established at Mt. Morgan. The main street could be reconstructed to portray it as it existed at the turn of the century. Alternatively, Mt. Morgan could be restored to depict it as a typical mining town at the turn of the century. We may be talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars. However, the expenditure of that money could be worth while because the tourist industry in Central Queensland would greatly benefit.

Unlike the people of Mt. Morgan, the Government seems to have thrown in the towel. This has been shown by the fact that the Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, talks about revenue being down by \$38,800,000 in two months, but has done nothing much about it.

Dr. Edwards: That is unfair and untrue.

Mr. WRIGHT: The Treasurer made the comment. I invite him to tell the people of Queensland what he has done. I am sure they would like to know what he is trying to do to overcome the difficult situation that the Liberals in Canberra have created for the State of Queensland.

As I say, the Government has thrown in the towel. It has bowed down to the Commonwealth. The long-term result will be a diminishing role for this State Government and other State Governments to play. Personally, I think that is a pity.

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (11.51 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. Firstly, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition raised some important matters. He indicated that my speech this evening was rather short and not of much significance. The reason for that was that in presenting my Financial Statement I made a very lengthy speech to cover all aspects, thereby giving all honourable members an opportunity to engage in a full Budget debate.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to question-time. The blame for certain things that he complained about rests

upon the Opposition. The questions without notice asked by Opposition members are very few in number.

Mr. Houston: We can't get the answers.

Dr. EDWARDS: That is not my judgment. The opportunity is given to Opposition members to make the most of question-time. I urge them to accept that responsibility.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also talked about the early retirement of police. I make it quite clear that the Government's intention will be honoured. Despite what the honourable member for Lytton says, the scheme will come into operation from 1 January. The Government has made that decision and will stand by it. That fact is appreciated by the Police Department and members of the Police Force.

The honourable member paid a tribute to the Whitlam Government. It seems to me that Opposition members have suddenly found a new hero. Mr. Hayden has been such a disaster for the Opposition that quite suddenly everything that Mr. Whitlam did assumes great importance. The honourable member for Bulimba stated that Mr. Whitlam was generous to the States. He may have been generous in some ways; but this State and country have never recovered from the Whitlam era.

Opposition Members interjected.

Dr. EDWARDS: I thought that would stir up Opposition members. The inflation problem, the high interest rates and other difficulties were created by the Whitlam Government. It is pleasing to see Opposition members identify themselves with Mr. Whitlam. In 1974, there were only 11 Opposition members in this Parliament. It is well known that their identification with Mr. Whitlam was not acceptable to the people of Queensland. So tonight I am happy to see them identify themselves with Mr. Whitlam.

It was disappointing to me to note that the Leader of the Opposition did not even bother to take part in the debate. That shows, of course, how little importance he places on the policies of his party.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also said that Whitlam was responsible for the Government's raising of royalties. What utter rubbish! The royalties were increased well before Whitlam did anything to the mining industry. The honourable member said that we were on the Whitlam formula and he corrected himself later. Queensland has never at any time been on the Whitlam formula.

Mr. Houston: You were on it this year.

Dr. EDWARDS: This is the first year that we will reach the base. What the honourable member said indicated that he was not fully aware of the situation.

The honourable member also said that the Government committed itself to building

four hospitals. To make the position clear, at Ferny Grove planning is well advanced, and we will honour our commitment about that hospital. The Wynnum hospital is also well advanced. Tenders will be called in the very near future. In relation to the Salisbury hospital, the Government decided to convert the Mt. Gravatt hospital from a maternity hospital to a full general hospital. As a result, the needs of the Salisbury area will be met fully by the revitalised Mt. Gravatt hospital. That decision has been welcomed by the Salisbury people. Difficulties have arisen in the acquisition of the hospital site at Sandgate, but the Government will honour its commitment about that hospital. The Government has also committed itself to a hospital at Dysart, and that proposition is well advanced.

As to the honourable member's statement about teacher aides and janitors, the Government position is perfectly clear. I make it clear again that on all occasions—in the Budget speech, in the Budget discussions and in the summing up on the Budget—I indicated that an undertaking would be given by the Education Department to review expenditure as quickly as possible and, if there was any way in which the Government could review the situation in the light of savings in Education Department spending, action would be taken to reconsider the proposed decrease in the hours of work for people in those fields.

Mr. Houston: Why did you peg education back \$6,250,000?

Dr. EDWARDS: Education got an increase of \$49,000,000. The Budget allocation this year for education is \$521,000,000—an increase of \$49,000,000 on last year. Education has not been cut back at all. The percentage of increase is above the inflation rate and above the percentage increase given to other departments.

The honourable member for Bulimba raised two or three other matters and asked about the cross-river bridge. Tenders for that bridge have closed. It is hoped that in the very near future a final assessment of tenders will be made and a decision reached. The Government will be fulfilling its obligation.

The honourable member commented on the Government's rail electrification programme. It is well known that those who were able to ride on the electric train a couple of weeks ago fully support what has been undertaken. The Government is committed to an expenditure of \$200,000,000 to complete the programme over a four-year period. The honourable member for Archerfield delivered his usual diatribe about District Court judges and so forth. I am sure that the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General will look into these matters. I was very interested to hear his comments on the Lang Park Trust. I am sure that his colleague Senator McAuliffe will be very interested to hear some of

his comments about the Lang Park Trust. No doubt he will have something to say to the honourable member about them.

I was very interested to hear the honourable member for Lytton say that the honourable member for Archerfield does not have his support on the matter. I feel sure that the honourable member for Lytton is aware of the dire straits in which the Lang Park Trust finds itself. Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is well aware of the proposal. I am hopeful that, as a result of discussions, we can come to a solution that will be acceptable to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the light of the strong representations you have made, and that will also be acceptable to the Lang Park Trust and the community whom you have represented so well.

I was very interested to hear the comments made by the honourable member for Lytton, but I am sure that they were just a sham. I was disappointed that he should make so much noise over so few facts and figures. To back the Medibank programme, as he did, was unbelievable. I am sure that all people know that the blame for the mess in the medical affairs in Queensland must be laid totally at Mr. Hayden's feet. The way in which the Medibank programme has cost this and every other State so much money, and destroyed our free hospital scheme, is a continuing blot on Mr. Hayden and the Australian Labor Party.

The honourable member made many other statements. I cannot be bothered referring to many of them. They had no basis in fact and I am sure that time will prove the truth or otherwise of his statements.

The honourable member for Isis mentioned the Local Government Grants Commission. I would be pleased to hear from him regarding the problem he raised concerning a particular town. I will make arrangements for him to discuss it with the chairman and full-time member of the Grants Commission. The honourable member made some suggestions regarding the problems of local authorities and their loan allocations. This is a very big problem for local authorities and the Government has made every effort to help in this way. We have released something like \$40,000,000 in loans to local authorities, and we will continue to assist where we can in this important matter. I appreciated his comments on the teacher-aid programme and other aspects of education, because of his expert view. I am sure his remarks were appreciated by those who know so much about this matter.

The honourable member for Sandgate commented on various aspects of the environment. He made some very reasonable comments about national parks and I am sure that my colleague the Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation will consider them.

The honourable member for Ipswich West again dealt with the Lockyer co-operative.

We have been through this matter time and time again. The reason why the Government could not assist with a Government guarantee is that the co-operative could not meet the criteria laid down. The results speak for themselves. The honourable member referred to the pineapple industry and no doubt my colleague the Minister for Primary Industries will look at that matter.

The honourable member for Port Curtis raised various matters which I believe have been covered. The Government's road programme is something that the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads has continually brought to the attention of the Federal Government and we have achieved some benefits.

The other matter raised by the honourable member was noise abatement. I have made special funds available for this authority and it will be set up in the near future.

He mentioned what he claimed was the failure of the Government in the pre-school area. The Budget papers contain reference to 66 new centres being provided this year. That is indeed an outstanding programme for any Government. The pre-school programme throughout the State has been the envy of every other State. I was surprised to hear the Opposition criticise some areas of our pre-school programme.

The honourable member for Rockhampton referred to police matters. No doubt the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police will look into them. The honourable member mentioned the Lucas report. I will raise this matter with the Minister for Justice. It has been discussed in Cabinet. The report contains many aspects that are not acceptable to the Opposition and some that are not acceptable to the Government. The report is under consideration and I can assure him that it is not a forgotten document.

I was again surprised at his support for the Whitlam Government. Those comments have been noted by the Government for a long period. I make no apology for our criticism of the Whitlam Government and its performance.

He referred to the tourist industry at Mt. Morgan. There are schemes under which the council can obtain assistance. I am sure that the Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism will be only too pleased to assist in discussions on this matter through the tourist authority.

I thank all other honourable members for their comments.

Motion (Dr. Edwards) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

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

[Wednesday, 5 December 1979]

FARM WATER SUPPLIES ASSISTANCE
ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT (Auburn—Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources) (12.8 a.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act 1958-1975 in certain particulars.”

The amendments proposed are procedural matters relating to the borrowing of moneys for the purposes of the Act. They do not alter the implementation of the Act as regards the provision of technical or financial assistance to landholders.

In introducing the Bill, I would like to remind members of the purpose of the principal Act and to report on the services provided thereunder. The recurrence of drought conditions and the resultant effect on individuals and the rural community is a fact of life in our State.

The Government is proud of its achievement in the conservation of water supplies for rural purposes. Major works throughout the State provided assured supplies of irrigation water to some 68 000 ha during 1978-79. They greatly contribute to stable production and strengthen the ability of the particular areas to withstand the effect of drought. Government action is, however, neither practical nor feasible in all circumstances.

At least 150 000 ha are irrigated from private surface and underground water supplies. The Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act recognises the approach that landholders can better their position by individual action to provide new facilities or to improve their existing resources or facilities. The Act provides the means to assist and encourage this individual action. The intent of the Act is to achieve the following purposes: to improve the standard of stock and domestic water supply on individual holdings; to encourage the development of irrigation by modern methods of water conservation and the development and use of ground-water supplies where they are known to exist; to encourage the development or improvement of drainage on farm lands to remove excess water rapidly enough to prevent crop damage or loss; and to ensure that all such development is soundly planned technically and economically.

Not all of the private schemes provide the same protection and benefit as major schemes, but they do provide increased and more stable production through recurring short-term droughts.

From the inception of the Act in 1958 to 30 June 1979 a total of 3,969 applications for financial assistance were received and

\$13,800,000 has been advanced. In excess of 14,000 applications have been received and advice given for technical assistance only during the same period. Demand for both technical and financial assistance is continuing.

I am sure honourable members will agree that the Act has worked well. The Act is administered through the Commissioner of Water Resources. The Agricultural Bank is the constituted lending authority.

As I mentioned earlier, the proposed amendments are related to the borrowing of moneys to carry on the business of making advances under the Act. Since its inception the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Fund has been financed by State loan funds and borrowers' repayments. The loan funds are appropriated in the Estimates of the Queensland Water Resources Commission. Honourable members are well aware that the limitation in loan funds has affected capital development programmes throughout the State. The Farm Water Supplies Assistance Fund is largely a self-financing service, and in view of the reduced level of loan funds now available it is considered appropriate that future funds be provided by borrowing.

The Act currently authorises only the Agricultural Bank to borrow for the business of making advances. This power has not been used and is not in accord with actual practice and responsibilities. The amendments therefore repeal the power of the Agricultural Bank to borrow for this purpose, and substitute the Commissioner of Water Resources. The borrowing powers proposed to be granted to the commissioner are in accord with the amendments made to a number of Acts, including the Irrigation Act, in June last. In the current tight members who made comments at the introduction to take advantage of available lending sources under the smaller bodies borrowing programme while reducing the demand on available loan funds.

The amendments provide for Government guarantee of borrowings, procedures for issue of debentures, inscribed stock, etc., brokerage and Treasury loans. Provision is also made for the making of any regulations necessary in this regard.

The amendments are procedural in nature. They bring the Act into line with actual responsibilities and will enable advantage to be taken of a range of borrowing methods. I believe the Bill to be relatively straightforward and necessary, and I commend it to the Committee.

Mr. BURNS (Lytton) (12.13 a.m.): The Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act was one of the first Bills designed to assist farmers to provide their own dams and small watering facilities on their properties. It was introduced in 1958 by, I think, Mr. Speaker's father. When he moved its introduction he said that there was wide community support for it. When I read through the introductory

speech made at that time, and the remarks of the Labor Opposition, I found that the Bill was welcomed by the Opposition. However, the Opposition had some criticism that the ordinary banks would be surrendering their rights and giving them to the Agricultural Bank, and that the Bill did not go far enough.

The Opposition must support any proposal that will allow a farmer or a grazier to improve the standard of stock and domestic water-supply installations on his property, to develop better irrigation schemes and to provide modern methods of water conservation and water harvesting. In fact, over 21 years about \$13,800,000 has been spent on assisting people who needed finance and technical advice. When I looked through the report of the Commissioner of Water Resources I found that quite a considerable number of people continue to apply for assistance.

On behalf of the Opposition, I have no objection to the Bill being read a first time, and I will leave further comment to the second reading.

Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT (Auburn—Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources) (12.15 a.m.), in reply: I thank the member for Lytton for his comments. Naturally, I would like to show my appreciation to the late Alf Muller for his quick thinking in introducing this legislation in 1958. I pay a tribute to Max Hodges, who has recently left this Parliament. He was very keen to have this legislation introduced at an early date.

As the member for Lytton has said, over the years the Act has helped a great number of people, especially those who have been short of finance. We have not had any real trouble about banks allowing first mortgages under the Act. All in all, it has been a very valuable piece of legislation.

Motion (Mr. Hewitt) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

SECOND READING

Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT (Auburn—Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources) (12.17 a.m.), by leave: I move—

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

I think the Bill has been well accepted and I have no further comments.

Mr. BURNS (Lytton) (12.18 a.m.): On behalf of the Opposition, I have no objection to the provisions of the Bill. Earlier in the year the same type of provisions were

incorporated in another Bill introduced by the Minister. I welcome the Bill on behalf of those who seek assistance to provide water on their farms.

Motion (Mr. Hewitt) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

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

STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE (QUEENSLAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (12.21 a.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the State Government Insurance Office (Queensland) Act 1960–1978 in certain particulars.”

The State Government Insurance Office (Queensland) Act requires two minor amendments. The first is an administrative matter providing for the deletion of reference to the General Reserve Fund.

Section 15 of the Act currently provides that the following funds should be kept—

- (a) the Life Assurance Fund;
- (b) the General Insurance Fund; and
- (c) the General Reserve Fund

Prior to the separation of the workers' compensation function from the State Government Insurance Office, moneys held in the General Reserve Fund were deemed to have been contributed in the ratio of 80 per cent by the Workers' Compensation Fund and 20 per cent by the General Insurance Fund. When the workers' compensation function was separated from the S.G.I.O., appropriate transfers of moneys in the General Reserve Fund were made to the Workers' Compensation Board and the balance to the General Insurance Fund. Consequently, the need for the General Reserve Fund no longer exists.

The second amendment arises from the need to clarify the alternative procedures available in cases of disputed claims. Section 18 of the Act provides for the alternatives of either proceeding to arbitration or pursuing common law rights through the courts. However, experience has shown that it is not clear to some sections of the community that recourse to common law exists

as an alternative to arbitration. The proposed new subsection will clearly state the alternative procedures available in cases of disputed claims.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (12.22 a.m.): The proposals put forward by the Treasurer appear to be quite simple. The first is that the reference to the General Reserve Fund should be deleted, and that is a natural follow-on from the separation of the workers' compensation function from the State Government Insurance Office.

Perhaps I should spend a moment or two considering whether or not the change has worked out in accordance with the great hopes of the Government. From the worker's point of view, I am sure that he wonders what was in it for him. The Government has not seen fit to increase the payments available at the time of the separation for the various injuries that workers suffer, and I think that the amounts should be updated quite regularly, if only to take into account cost-of-living increases, inflation, and so on.

Dr. Edwards: I think that the claims are indexed up.

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, but more than that is required. Indexation is one thing, but the realities of living on workers' compensation are completely different. One comes back to the situation that if a person requires \$100 for groceries, and so on, and he receives \$110, he has only \$10 to play with, whereas a fellow on \$200 a week has \$100 to play with. There is a fixed base, and I believe that the Government would be warranted in considering an increase in workers' compensation payments for various injuries, particularly to workers in the lower income bracket.

I point out to the Treasurer that amounts awarded by the courts for injuries of a certain type have reached such a high level that it would almost pay workers through their unions to claim at common law instead of settling for workers' compensation. But, of course, we do not want that to happen. If it does, the courts will become bogged down and the litigants will be put to unnecessary expense. However, workers' compensation payments must be related to payments made by the courts.

In workers' compensation claims there is no need for an applicant to prove negligence on the part of his employer. Workers' compensation is, in effect, a payment arising from an accident. If negligence is present, the injured person has redress at common law. It is of no great comfort to an injured person to be told that because he suffered an accident he is entitled to so much, whereas if he had, say, slipped in a different manner, he would be entitled to receive much more. However, I do not want to labour that point. I cannot see that any great change has been made in that respect.

A difference is being made, however, in relation to the investment policy of the S.G.I.O. As little information is available as to what the Workers' Compensation Board is doing with its investment money, I should like the Treasurer to indicate whether any change has occurred in policy and whether the investment board handles its money as the S.G.I.O. did.

The S.G.I.O., as an insurance company, competes with private insurance companies. Their policy-holders demand that their money be invested at a reasonable rate of interest. I believe that the S.G.I.O., being a State Government instrumentality, also has an obligation to its policy-holders. I can well imagine that it is not easy to strike the most satisfactory balance, but I would ask the Treasurer to indicate whether the investment policy has changed.

In this debate a member could cover a wide range of insurance business. I do not intend to do that. I know that one of my colleagues wishes to speak on motor vehicle insurance, so I will reserve further comment until I have seen the Bill.

Mr. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (12.27 a.m.): I rise not to attack the policies of the S.G.I.O. but to speak about comprehensive motor vehicle insurance and third party property damage policies. I am concerned at the manner in which a lot of people in this State are being ripped off by insurance companies, including the S.G.I.O. The most common insurance policy today contains an excess clause, whether it be related to age, the fact that the insured has not had a licence for two years, or something else. Some people accept a \$50 excess to keep their premiums at a low level.

What is happening is that if somebody has an accident and is not to blame, and if his insurance policy contains a \$50 or \$100 excess, he claims against his insurance company and is paid the cost of repairs less the excess. Normally, his insurance company writes to him saying that he can claim the balance from the other driver's insurance company. What happens in almost all cases, however, is that the other driver's insurance company writes to the person making the claim saying that, because it considers him to be partly to blame, it will not pay him the money.

I believe that people in Queensland are being ripped off because the insurance companies have formed a cartel. Most insurance companies have signed an agreement that they will not take one another to court to apportion blame in an accident. If a person has a car accident and claims on his insurance company, it automatically pays out the sum claimed, and the other insurance company then pays it a certain amount. But the excess is not apportioned by the companies. It is up to the private individual to take legal action to try to get blame apportioned. That should not be the responsibility of any person.

I cite the case of a young lady who was driving her car into the city when another car came through a red light on her right and collided with her. When she claimed against her insurance company she was told that it would not pay her excess, and the other driver's insurance company said that it would not pay the excess because she was partly to blame. She was held to be partly to blame because the vehicle came through a red light on her right! If a car goes through a red light and hits another car on the right-hand side, I do not believe that any blame should be attached to the person proceeding correctly through a green light. The only way this woman can get the \$50 back is to spend quite a lot of money in legal fees trying to get the insurance company to pay up. The insurance company in this instance is the Ajax Insurance Company which, I understand, is quite often involved in ripping \$50 off people in this manner.

Mr. Powell: Did the police make a report on the accident?

Mr. MACKENROTH: Yes, they did, and breached the man for going through a red light.

Mr. Powell: And the insurance company still would not act?

Mr. MACKENROTH: It would not act because it knew that a person would not spend a couple of hundred dollars to take it to court to get \$50.

The S.G.I.O. is just as much to blame as Ajax Insurance or any other company. Insurance companies should pay this money. If a person is not breached for an accident, he is not to blame and the insurance company should pay out in full. Insurance companies are not doing the right thing when they demand an excess. Certainly they save a lot of money in legal fees, but they are not doing the right things by those who insure with them.

As the Government is concerned with consumerism and with looking after the people of the State, it should look very closely at this matter. While I know that the matter I have raised is not related directly to the proposed amendments, I felt that this was an opportunity for me to raise it, and I thank the Treasurer for affording me the opportunity.

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (12.33 a.m.), in reply: I thank the two honourable members for their contributions. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to the Workers' Compensation Board. I will take this matter up with the Minister for Labour Relations. I think the points made by the honourable member are relevant, especially the matter of the regular review of benefits. That is a fairly reasonable and relevant position

for the Government to adopt. I will approach the Minister to see when a review was last made and to ascertain whether one is being conducted or will be conducted in the near future. The honourable member spoke about investment. I inform him that the Treasurer advises the Workers' Compensation Board on its investment policy. I am not sure whether the Workers' Compensation Board has its own investment board to give it advice, but I do know that Workers' Compensation Board funds are invested mainly in loan programmes for local authorities. I will get some further information and, at the second-reading stage, give the honourable member more detailed information.

The honourable member for Chatsworth raised some significant questions. I am sure that every honourable member has had similar matters drawn to his attention. I share the honourable member's concern. Whilst it may not be relevant to the S.G.I.O. specifically, as I indicated I will be quite happy to discuss the matter with the Insurance Commissioner and advise the honourable member later.

The big difficulty with these policies is the amount of insurance that one gets for the amount of premium that one pays. The problem raised by the honourable member has caused a great deal of concern to many people. I will raise it with the Insurance Commissioner because, as the honourable member said, it applies to all insurance companies involved in the industry. The S.G.I.O. caters for something like 70 per cent of all comprehensive motor vehicle insurance and a much higher percentage of third-party insurance. I will take the matter up and get back to the honourable member at a later date.

Motion (Dr. Edwards) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Dr. Edwards, read a first time.

MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (12.38 a.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Motor Vehicles Insurance Act 1936-1975 in certain particulars and for a related purpose and to amend the V.I.P. Insurances Limited (Motor Vehicles Insurance) Act 1978 in certain particulars.”

Honourable members will note that this Bill amends the Motor Vehicles Insurance Act 1936-1975 and the V.I.P. Insurances Limited (Motor Vehicles Insurance) Act 1978.

Three amendments to the Motor Vehicles Insurance Act are involved. The first amendment relates to untraceable insurers. Under our compulsory third-party insurance system for motor vehicles, compensation in respect of personal injuries received as a result of the negligence of the driver of an identified motor vehicle is paid by the insurer of the vehicle or, if the vehicle is uninsured, by the Nominal Defendant (Queensland).

An injured person, particularly if a child, may not be able to pursue his claim until some years after the accident. In a few cases during recent years, it has been found that during this delay both the departmental records and the personal records of the owner that establish the identity of the insurer have been destroyed and that the insurer has become untraceable. In such circumstances, the claimant cannot proceed with success against the Nominal Defendant, because he cannot prove that the vehicle was uninsured. His only recourse is against the owner of the vehicle who, not remembering his insurer, is personally liable to meet the claim. Possible consequences are the financial ruin of the owner or non-payment of the claim.

It is considered that the Government, having set up a system of compulsory third party insurance for the benefit of the public, ought to ensure that all valid claims will be met. Accordingly, the Bill extends the liability of the Nominal Defendant (Queensland) to include claims arising in circumstances where the insurer of the offending vehicle cannot be found after due inquiry and search. This extension of liability will apply to claims that arise from accidents after the passing of the Bill. The Bill also provides that the normal recovery rights of the Nominal Defendant in respect of uninsured vehicles will not be applicable to the owners and drivers of vehicles with untraceable insurers, but the corporation is granted a right of recovery if a policy condition has been breached by such owner or driver.

Arrangements have been made with the Police and Main Roads Departments for the fullest possible retention of existing and future records, within the bounds of practicability, so that the number of "untraceable insurer" claims in the future should be very small. No immediate increase in the levy of \$3 per registered owner per annum is contemplated as a result of the suggested extension of liability.

The second amendment relates to air-cushion vehicles. The control of any air-cushion vehicles or hovercraft that may be used in Queensland is covered primarily in the Marine Act. Insofar as these vehicles may be used on or across roads, the Traffic

Act provides for the promulgation of appropriate regulations; in practice, such conditions, including insurance requirements, as might be appropriate in each particular case would be applied.

There is a clear consensus that air-cushion vehicles are incompatible with other vehicles using roads and that they should be excluded from the normal insurance requirements of the Motor Vehicles Insurance Act. The Bill provides for this exclusion.

The third amendment is of a technical nature. Since the Nominal Defendant was created in 1961, the Act has referred to the Nominal Defendant becoming liable to meet claims in cases where the owner of an unidentified or uninsured vehicle would be legally liable "under this Act were it insured here-under". In most cases, however, an owner does not become legally liable under the Act; instead he becomes legally liable at common law. To correct this defect, the words "under this Act were it insured here-under" will be changed to "were it insured under this Act". This correction will apply retrospectively to the commencement of the Nominal Defendant's operations.

Turning now to the V.I.P. Insurance Limited (Motor Vehicles Insurance) Act 1978, this Act provides for a rescue operation under which the Nominal Defendant assumed liability for certain of the compulsory third party motor vehicle insurance claims of V.I.P. Insurances Limited, which went into liquidation on 19 April 1978.

The Act limited the aggregate liability of the Nominal Defendant to a maximum sum of \$500,000 plus any recoveries it obtained from the reinsurers of V.I.P. Insurances Limited and from policy-holders who had breached their policy conditions. The \$500,000 was fixed on the basis of incomplete information available shortly after V.I.P. went into liquidation. This suggested that about 80 claims would emerge, but actually 138 notifications have been received.

The Act gave the Nominal Defendant rights of direct recovery against the reinsurers in respect of reinsurance agreements subject to Queensland law. It has since been found that the reinsurance agreements were effected between the head office of V.I.P. in Sydney and reinsurers in the U.S.A. The agreements are therefore not subject to Queensland law and the Nominal Defendant has no recovery rights against the reinsurers. Any reinsurance will be paid to the liquidator and eventually distributed among all creditors, including the Nominal Defendant, as a liquidation dividend.

This complete inability to recover substantial reinsurance means that the Nominal Defendant, if it is to fulfil the intended rescue operation, faces an outlay of the order of \$1,250,000. This outlay will eventually be subject to a proof of debt against the V.I.P. liquidator.

As it is not in the public interest that the Nominal Defendant should compensate only those injured persons whose claims can be finalised before an aggregate outlay of \$500,000 is reached and leave all other claimants unsatisfied, the Bill provides for the limit of \$500,000 to be increased to \$1,250,000. The Nominal Defendant holds adequate funds to cover this increase without requiring any increase in the annual Nominal Defendant fee levied on motorists.

It was the intention of the Act that claimants must notify the Nominal Defendant not later than 31 December 1978 of their intention to claim. This time limit follows precedents set by previous legislation dealing with failed insurance companies and springs from a desire to quantify, as quickly as possible, the Nominal Defendant's liability in an "ex-gratia" rescue operation. Some doubt has arisen as to whether the wording of the Act gives adequate expression to this time-limit and the Bill provides the necessary clarification.

Finally, the Bill involves small changes in wording, of academic interest only, to correct inadvertent errors in the original legislation.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (12.45 a.m.): The Committee is always interested in legislation dealing with claims by innocent victims of accidents. I suppose the law requiring compulsory third-party insurance would be one of the most important pieces of legislation for the assistance of victims of events to which they themselves have not contributed.

The constant rises in costs are reflected in the operation of third-party insurance. One notices that it is not the type of insurance that brings great profits to the insurance company concerned. Unfortunately, that means that most of the business—I think over 80 per cent of it—is left in this State to the S.G.I.O. to carry. I well recall this Government's setting up quite a few years ago what would have been one of the first of the all-party committees. Unfortunately, it did not have the backing of Parliament. Its task was to investigate third-party insurance with a view to modernising it and bringing it to such a state that there was not a constant increase in premiums and the S.G.I.O. was not the only company carrying that type of insurance. But that committee of inquiry broke down because, as it did not have the backing of Parliament, it could not ask for or obtain a lot of the books and information that it wanted. The Treasurer at that time (Mr. Tom Hiley, as he then was) led that committee, and I had the privilege of representing the Opposition on it. Although we did not achieve anything great at that point of time, our knowledge of third-party insurance was certainly increased.

I am sure it would be worth while for the Government to consider having another look at the question of third-party insurance, because so many aspects of it worry people. One is the tremendous size of some awards that are now being made in court cases, particularly in New South Wales. The other day I noticed a judgment for nearly \$500,000.

Dr. Edwards: Almost \$600,000.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right. I know that no-one would argue against the justification of it as it resulted from the proper legal procedures. Awards of \$200,000 are now becoming quite common. But it does not matter how buoyant an insurance fund is when only one company is carrying almost the whole burden. There is a limit to the premiums that can be charged, particularly when it is a type of compulsory insurance. After all, people should not be forced into driving unregistered and uninsured vehicles. Although the Nominal Defendant Fund was set up to help injured persons in cases where the injury was caused by an unknown or unmarked vehicle, or a vehicle that did not stop, we do not want to encourage the driving of cars that are not registered or covered by third-party insurance. Of course, payment of registration includes the third-party insurance premium.

I am concerned about the way in which the large amounts that are paid out will be financed. I notice that recently the insurance premium for the ordinary motorist in a private sedan rose from \$46 to \$49.68. On a comparison of that figure with those of New South Wales and Victoria, I suppose Queenslanders are well off, because the premiums in those States are close to, if not exceeding, \$100 at the present time. From memory, I think only Tasmania has a lower figure than Queensland. When one considers the size of Tasmania and compares the distances that can be travelled in Tasmania with those that can be travelled in Queensland, I think Queenslanders come out fairly well. The S.G.I.O. should be commended on the premiums it charges.

If high damages claims are being paid out, people get the idea that it is only the insurance company that is paying and it does not matter. In fact, of course, the companies depend on the policy-holders for their money. When we talk about a high pay-out figure, we are really talking about the motorists paying in combination. I am concerned that the motorist is being priced off the roads. I do not want to get into an argument about who is responsible for the high petrol price. I know, Mr. Row, that you would not let me do that. However, the fact remains that every increase adds a little to the cost of motoring.

The person so badly injured that he is virtually a vegetable and can take no further part in life is the one who receives the very high judgment. I have no fight with that at all. In fact, I completely support the concept

that a person who is injured in a road accident through no fault of his own should be sustained by the insurance company—in other words, by the motorists. I have no objection to his being allowed to live a life comparable to that which he would have lived but for the injury. That is only just and right.

On the other hand, I cannot see any justice in the fact that when the person who has received the large amount of money dies as a result of the injury—the \$200,000 or \$500,000 does not do him any good from then on—the money finishes up in the hands of someone who had no responsibility at all for the injured person. In that sense it is a type of windfall to that person at the expense of the general motorist.

Another weakness we find today—it has been with us for years, but I would like something done about it—is the tremendous time lapse between injury and settlement of claim. At the present time “settlement of claim” means the final claim. I can appreciate that with some injuries doctors and solicitors will suggest that, because the injury is not stable, the person should wait a while longer. It is common knowledge to the layman that some injuries, particularly muscle injuries—the Treasurer would know more about the possibilities of arthritis and other matters than I would—can deteriorate over a number of years. Once judgment has been given, there is no coming back for a second attempt. Therefore, it is general for people not to seek redress in third-party cases until some substantial time after the original injury.

That brings me to the fact that for years people who have been injured have to live on what is virtually a pittance. They have to live on sickness benefits or the like, when in fact there could be hundreds of thousands of dollars waiting for them. Therefore, I suggest that the degree of guilt or involvement of an injured person should be quickly established. That has many advantages. Firstly, it would quickly establish whether a person is entitled to a claim or not.

I well recall one case in which a person was knocked down on a zebra crossing. One would think that there would be no argument about that person's entitlement to a claim. However, the judgment was that, because the weather conditions were so bad and the injured person wore dark clothing, the driver could not be held responsible. There is no doubt about it: he drove the car and complained that he did not see the person. The judge upheld his version. Although the injured person was not negligent, as the driver was held not to be negligent the injured person received no award of damages at all. That was some years after the event, and the person believed that eventually there would be a judgment in his favour.

If it could be established quickly that a person was completely innocent of any responsibility for an accident and was entitled to damages, an amount could be paid—a

kind of early instalment—because obviously judgment would eventually be given for a larger amount. As the Treasurer knows, when a judgment is given, the time factor is taken into account—how long it is since a person worked, and so on—and if a person is so badly injured that he cannot work, an amount, not necessarily the whole amount, could be paid. That would assist to overcome some of the problems of people living in substandard conditions after they have suffered injuries. It must also be remembered that at a later stage persons who are injured often have additional medical expenses that are not provided for when the judgment is given.

I should like the Treasurer and the insurance companies to have a look at the situation—naturally, the matter would have to come back to the courts, so legislation would be required—in which it is obvious that a person will never work again and is not capable of going into business or declares that he does not want money to establish a business so that he may become self-supporting, and consider providing an annuity, payable weekly or fortnightly, instead of a lump sum payment. The injured person would then receive an amount of money that would enable him to maintain the life-style to which he had been accustomed, and it would eliminate the possibility of money being handed over in the future to someone who may not have been responsible for the welfare of the person concerned.

There must be a certain amount of cash involved in the transaction because of the shortening of life. If the bread-winner is involved and he has dependants, he is entitled to receive something that will be of assistance to them. My main concern, of course, is that tremendously large sums of money should not go to people who are not involved in any way. On the other hand, if a person who is injured is a tradesman and he is incapable of carrying on his trade or calling, it may well be possible to retrain him and put him into some other form of business. Those are the two points that I wish to make at this stage in relation to third party insurance generally.

The Minister referred to untraceable insurers. I was quite surprised to hear that records are not available. If premiums are paid annually, a considerable period must elapse between the time of the accident and the time of the claim. Consideration may have to be given to setting a reasonable time for the notification of a pending claim to enable records and files to be earmarked for future use. I am not saying that the case should proceed immediately, but it would be a good idea to try to determine the degree of negligence very early in the piece, when the memory of police and other people involved is very good.

I agree that an injured person should not be penalised because of some formality in an insurance office or because of failure to carry out some procedure. I wondered why the Treasurer said that the provision

will apply in this instance only after the passing of the Bill, whereas in the case of V.I.P. Insurances Limited it is virtually retrospective. I ask the Minister to ascertain whether many people would be affected if retrospectivity was provided, because if only a small number of people are involved, I should like to see them included. After all, it was their cases that made the proposed amendment desirable.

As to air-cushion vehicles, this provision must have been prompted by yesterday's auction of the hovercraft. I do not know whether it was sold. However, the Government is wise in declaring very early that there is no place on our roads for a hovercraft. We have enough problems on our roads without adding to them. Hovercraft would be very slow and cumbersome. If they are not to be used on the roads, they could hardly be included in this legislation.

The matter concerning V.I.P. Insurances Limited is totally different. In connection with this we have seen a great deal of misinformation, as it were. The maximum amount was considered to be half a million dollars. I am not saying that the Government gave that figure to Parliament in other than good faith. However, I am sure that it has learnt a lesson from accepting that figure from a company that has gone into the red.

The estimate of 80 claims has now jumped to 138. That is a tremendous increase. It is just as well that the Nominal Defendant Fund has been in operation for a number of years without many claims being made upon it. I believe that it contains \$20,000,000 at this stage. The annual turnover is pretty well at par, so there is no need to increase the premiums.

The unsatisfactory aspect of all this is that it is now very hard for the Nominal Defendant Fund to claim back. I suppose this is fair enough in private enterprise with freedom of investment. If it was not for the Nominal Defendant Fund and the like, which are contributed to by the general public, very little would be thought of insurance companies today.

I do not want to rehash the matter of V.I.P. Insurances Limited. The Opposition supports the introduction of the Bill.

Mr. DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (1.3 a.m.): I want to refer to some of the insurance premiums that are set out in the Queensland Government Gazette of 17 November 1979. The premium for a motor car is \$52. However, the premium for a motor car owned by a farmer, a grazier or a prospector and used exclusively in connection with his farming, grazing or prospecting work is only \$12.

Mr. McKechnie: Are you against that?

Mr. DAVIS: My word I am! It's not right that some of the rich cow-sockies and graziers should pay a premium \$40 less than the one I am paying.

The premium for a utility used exclusively for private purposes is \$45. A utility is approximately the same weight as a motor car. If they are both used for private purposes, their premiums should be approximately the same.

The premium for a taxi-cab is set out as \$150. That will just about put a taxi-cab proprietor off the road. The premium for a bus is \$136. The premium for certain motor cycles is \$33, but a farmer or a grazier pays only \$7.50 for the same type of motor cycle. Finally, for a semi-articulated vehicle, a farmer pays only \$32.

I hope that the Treasurer can answer some of the queries I raised. In many instances the rates have not been changed for years. If a farmer or a grazier pays \$40 less than other people, I think it stinks.

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (1.6 a.m.), in reply: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition raised some fairly important points about large pay-outs under third party insurance claims. His suggestions about the payments being made to relatives who are not necessarily dependent on the person who dies are worth looking at. If his suggestions were to lead to a decrease in overall premiums, we should certainly look into them.

I agree with him that enormous difficulties are suffered when a lengthy time elapses between an injury and a settlement of claim. When I was in general medical practice I saw that one of the worst problems was faced by people who were under treatment for three to seven years and received little or no income, knowing that, eventually, their claims would be successful. In the intervening time they lived almost on the poverty line. If they received social security payments they had to pay them back when the claim was settled. I share the honourable member's concern about this matter. If we can do something to decrease the time lag in getting a case to court, or put the honourable member's other suggestions into practice I will certainly be taking an interest in it. I am not sure that the annuity payments are worth while, but that is a novel approach. I shall be quite happy to look into it.

The honourable member for Brisbane Central can never resist being sarcastic towards country people. Quite obviously persons in passenger vehicles on the roads are at far more risk than those who drive farm vehicles mainly on properties. Obviously more passengers are carried in a passenger vehicle than in a utility. I forget the honourable member's comparison relative to the bus but, obviously, the difference is again related to the dangers involved. I am sure that the difference could be explained quite easily. It certainly does not relate to giving concessions to the farming community who, I believe, deserve a fair go.

Motion (Dr. Edwards) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Dr. Edwards, read a first time.

DAIRY PRODUCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries) (1.10 a.m.): I move—

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

Honourable members will recall that this Bill provides for several minor amendments to the principal Act to ensure more effective supervision of the manner in which dairy produce is produced, treated, manufactured, stored and sold.

I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for his general support of the provisions of the Bill. During his remarks he sought clarification of the provision for the discretion which has been introduced with respect to determining fees. In the present Act, registration of the following premises is necessary: cold store, dairy, depot, factory, milkshop, vendor's vehicle, vendor's cold room and laboratory.

There will be circumstances where, because of the initial costs of starting up operations or where abnormal conditions such as drought cause a severe loss of production, the waiving of the annual fee for that period would be reasonable and just. There is also the case in our present-day economic situation where the costs involved in the collection and administration of a fee can exceed the value of the fee which could normally be charged.

Because of these special circumstances, an amendment to the principal Act which permits a discretion in the prescribing of fees in regulations has been proposed.

Some concern was expressed with regard to the issuance of permits to perform certain skilled duties whilst awaiting the issue of a certificate of competence. The procedure which will be followed will require an applicant to undergo a test of his skill under practical conditions after he is recommended by his factory manager. The examining officer will only recommend the issuance of the permit by the director where the person demonstrates substantial skill. The interests of both the consumer and manufacturer will be protected.

The honourable member for Murrumbidgee raised the question of standards for dairy produce premises. I assure the House that no changes to current practices are to be introduced. There has been extremely close co-operation between my department and the producing and processing sectors of the industry in the matter of dairy buildings. As

the honourable member stated, major renovations were implemented with the introduction of bulk milk in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The redistribution of market milk access under the Milk Supply Act to disadvantaged areas has seen an increasing interest by producers in updating older buildings.

The amendment to provide for the under secretary, the director or an inspector to define standards where they are not specified is necessary to provide the legal authority for such determinations. Members will appreciate that there are some circumstances where no published standards are available, and the decision of a qualified person is necessary. I referred to some of these in my introductory speech.

Materials to be used in containers for dairy produce, location of dairy premises, drainage from premises and keeping of records are some of the areas where it is envisaged this discretion could be used. Other items, such as the use of tainted milk not fit for market milk, the method of storage of samples, and the protection of dairy produce from dust and such, are matters which require the approval of an inspector. By their training and experience, officers of the Division of Dairying are competent to make these judgments. There is no intention to introduce matters or standards which are not currently adopted by the industry or my department.

I commend the motion to the House.

Mr. BLAKE (Bundaberg) (1.16 a.m.): There is little need to prolong discussion on the second reading of the Bill. As intimated in the introduction, and as I commented myself, the provisions of the Bill provide for more effective supervision of the production, manufacture, treatment, storage and sale of dairy produce. The Opposition accepts the explanation and the example of the possible waiving of registration fees in times of drought or as an incentive during the initial establishment-cost period of an enterprise.

I was concerned at the standard required or, as I said, the lack of standard required, to enable a recommended person to get a permit to perform certain skilled functions pending his or her qualifying for a certificate of competency. I am relieved to know that a recommendation by a factory manager is only a prelude to an examination of his or her skills by the director's examining officers. I say “his or her” because I do not think that there is any sex discrimination in the Dairy Produce Act.

The provisions authorising the under secretary, the director or an inspector to define standards where they are not specified is still a slightly grey area. The Opposition accepts that rules cannot be legislated for every circumstance, and occasions do arise where a trained officer has to exercise his discretion. We accepted this aspect of the Bill after examining the details.

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries) (1.18 a.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg, who is the Opposition spokesman on Primary Industries, for his ready acceptance of the measures contained in the Bill.

Motion (Mr. Sullivan) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 8, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

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

ARTIFICIAL BREEDING OF STOCK BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries) (1.20 a.m.): I move—

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

Honourable members will recall that the Bill will update the provisions of the Stock Act in providing appropriate legislation for a wide range of activities associated with the artificial breeding of stock.

It provides for the registration of a number of premises and the issuance of certificates to skilled persons.

Changes in the legislation were not introduced earlier in view of the discussions being held by the Animal Health Committee and their subcommittee on artificial breeding. Interim regulations had been introduced under the Stock Act and this was sufficient as a temporary cause.

At the outset I would thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for his favourable support on behalf of the Opposition. In reply to a question raised by the honourable member, I should correct an error of interpretation concerning the artificial breeding of species of stock other than cattle. While the Act defines stock as a wide range of species of animals, there has only been a general acceptance of the practice within the cattle industries. Artificial breeding of stock in Queensland was pioneered in the cattle industries.

Because of expected requirements of pig producers, goat breeders, sheep breeders and horse breeders, additional emphasis has been given to these species in my remarks. I would point out that while some species lend themselves readily to artificial insemination techniques, others present some very difficult problems. Probably lack of progress with any one species has been due to technical difficulties rather than legislative problems.

Regarding the provision of the Bill concerning training, I would point out that there are two main objectives. Firstly there is the training of persons who perform the operation of collection, processing, insemination, transfer and handling of semen or ova. These people are required to hold a certificate of competency.

Secondly, the people who provide the training for the certificate holders will have to meet specific standards, both in relation to their own qualifications and the course material they provide. As I previously indicated, this will ensure that persons who pay substantial fees for training will be protected. I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for his tribute to officers of my department for their training of producers on farm courses. Next week another course is being held in Crows Nest.

At present my department operates two centres, at Wacol and Ormiston, for the collection, processing, storage and distribution of cattle semen. It is proposed that operations will continue under the authority of the director. They will provide through artificial breeding the desired strains of the different breeds. This will ensure genetic improvement of the cattle of the State. It is also correct that these centres will provide training in artificial breeding techniques.

The honourable member for Warwick expressed concern that the provisions of the Bill would affect the commercial operations of licensed distribution centres. He is correct in noting that the training of producers can influence the commercial operation of these centres. However, the Government has a responsibility to assist primary producers who wish to improve their technical skills. This type of training is widely practised in Australia.

In a recent survey requested by the A.I. Advisory Committee it was found that conception results from many owner-inseminators were the equal of commercial operators. However, I feel that contract insemination can still provide a valuable service within the industry. I believe there will always be situations where it is not economical or practical for an owner of stock to engage in artificial insemination on his own behalf. It is situations such as these that the contract inseminator will be left to fill.

The honourable member for Brisbane Central asked for information of the effects of the Bill on the thoroughbred horse industry. The Bill does not require owners of any species of stock to participate in the practice of artificial breeding. This particular industry will make its own decisions and determine whether or not it will register animals bred by artificial breeding.

Has the honourable member taken that on board, or would he like me to write him a letter?

Mr. Davis: No, I won't worry about it. I won't put my gelding up this week.

Mr. SULLIVAN: I would point out, though, that horses are one of those species that I mentioned previously that do not lend themselves readily to artificial breeding. Perhaps this will be the limitation on the industry in this field rather than any administrative decisions. The legislation does reflect the current practices undertaken within the industry, and the provisions of the legislation have been requested by the industry.

The Bill anticipates the wider use of artificial breeding and makes appropriate provisions. It brings Queensland legislation up to date with legislation in other States. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr. BLAKE (Bundaberg) (1.28 a.m.): The Bill is indeed a large one and took quite an amount of study. After wading through it, we found that, although it is substantial, its provisions are in the main common sense and practical. I thank the Minister for the explanation that, although in practice artificial breeding in the Stock Act related mainly to cattle, it did in fact relate to a wide range of stock. This Bill clarifies the relationship to stock other than cattle. The Minister also pointed out that departmental centres will breed by artificial means to the desired strains of different breeds, as well as provide training. That is a further clarification of a matter in doubt at the introductory stage.

Some concern was expressed by the member for Brisbane Central and others to whom I have spoken about the Bill's effect on the stud horse industry. As the Minister has pointed out, the horse is not an animal that lends itself well to artificial insemination. Perhaps stud practices and stud economics in horse breeding will not be greatly affected.

Naturally, whether horses or animals of some other type are involved, fees and services will be determined by the demand in the market-place. It will determine whether insemination by natural means or artificial means will prevail; it will also determine the impact that further artificial insemination training and services will have on what I might call the contract artificial inseminators now operating. Irrespective of events, time marches on and techniques change, and no doubt the market-place will determine the survival rate of the owner inseminator and the contract inseminator.

I should like to deal particularly with a couple of aspects of the Bill. As I read the Bill, it means that an owner can artificially inseminate his own herd irrespective of the merit of the genetic strain that he is using. I suppose it means that a person can do as he likes on his own property, at least to his own stock, and that is in the spirit of a man being master of his own destiny or boss in his own castle. It is debatable whether anyone would be foolish enough to go to the trouble of artificially inseminating without using a good genetic strain. Apparently it is to be his privilege to do so if he wishes.

The penalty provisions of the Bill are quite sensible. The general penalty of \$500 applies to quite a number of offences, and I notice that the heaviest penalty, \$1,000 or 12 months' imprisonment, is provided for forgery of a certificate to enable a person to operate under forged credentials. I do not think that any honourable member could object to that, because the whole purpose of the Act would be defeated if a very serious view were not taken of that offence.

The Opposition is not concerned about the power of inspectors to inspect premises, plant, machinery, equipment, apparatus, utensils or any vehicle or vessel used, or suspected of being used, in the process of artificial insemination. However, it is obvious that power to inspect and, if necessary, seize semen or ova is required.

I was pleased to note that a warrant is needed before an inspector may enter what is exclusively a home or dwelling-place. I take it that if a person were carrying out some manufacturing process or some inseminating process within his home, it would not be exclusively his dwelling-place. As is the case with all provisions relating to rights to enter a home, human rights must be protected very zealously, and it is a relief to know that in this instance an inspector must have a warrant before he can enter what is exclusively a home or a dwelling-place.

The provision making a warrant current for a month is fairly lenient. I cannot see why it would be necessary for an inspector to inspect over a period of a month. On reflection, if he were inspecting an improvement, or something of that nature, it might take time for the improvement to be built or the omission to be rectified. The Opposition accepts the provision that a warrant may last for a month. Probably it is merely a machinery provision so that an inspector does not have to continually make application for a warrant to enable him to carry out his duties. I am pleased that, irrespective of the time the warrant is current, a dairy inspector or a nominated person must have a warrant before he can enter a private home.

The main provisions of the Bill have been adequately covered. The Opposition sees no reason why it should object to them.

Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries) (1.36 a.m.), in reply: Again I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for his acceptance of the measure on behalf of the Opposition. That is quite understandable, of course, as we do have a committee comprising veterinarians and people from the pastoral industry who investigate matters such as this and make recommendations. I should imagine that, no matter which Government is in office, that committee's recommendations would be the same. They are acceptable to the industry at all levels.

The hour is late, and I suggest that that might be the reason why other honourable members who made comments at the introductory stage have not participated in the debate tonight. It is a pleasure to me and a tribute to the officers of my department that the Bill is accepted so readily.

Motion (Mr. Sullivan) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

(Mr. Row, Hinchinbrook, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 56, both inclusive, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

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

The House adjourned at 1.39 a.m.
(Wednesday).
