

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 1980

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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:—

Associated General Contractors Insurance Company Limited (Motor Vehicles Insurance) Bill;

Griffith University Act Amendment Bill.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

Mr J. H. BROWN, MP (NEW SOUTH WALES)

Mr SPEAKER: I have pleasure in announcing that we have with us this morning Mr J. H. Brown, MP, of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, who is officially visiting our Parliament in the role of Australasian Regional Councillor of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. On your behalf, I extend a very special welcome to him.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

PAPERS

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

Report of the Literature Board of Review for year ended 30 June 1980.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915.

Orders in Council under—

State Development and Public Works Organization Act 1971–1979.

Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979.

Public Service Act 1922–1978.

Explosives Act 1952–1978.

Electricity Act 1976–1980.

Metropolitan Transit Authority Act 1976–1979.

Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979.

Harbours Act 1955–1980.

Forestry Act 1959–1979 and National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975–1976.

Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act 1959–1980 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979 (7).

Banana Industry Protection Acts, 1929 to 1937.

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926–1979.

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Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926–1979 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979.

Regulations under—

Public Service Act 1922–1978.

Meat Industry Act 1965–1977.

Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act 1923–1978.

Report of the Police Superannuation Board for year ended 30 June 1980.

Proposal by the Governor in Council under Forestry Act 1959–1979.

**HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT
BILL (No. 2)**

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Health): I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Health Act 1937–1980 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

**STATE HOUSING (AMENDMENT OF
FREEHOLDING PROVISIONS) BILL****THIRD READING**

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (11.10 a.m.), by leave: The Minister for Labour Relations (Mr Campbell) in this Parliament personally attacked my fight to obtain Queensland compensation for zoonosis diseases on similar medical evidence to that accepted by the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments.

Mr Speaker, in launching his personal attack on me, this Liberal Minister said that if blood tests proved that claimants are suffering from zoonosis diseases, the definition of “injury” in terms of the Workers' Compensation Act is broad enough to admit any claims and to pay benefits. This is not disputed. The point that meatworkers throughout the State and I wish to make is that Commonwealth meat inspectors and New South Wales meatworkers are not required to prove the disease by blood tests. It is only Queenslanders who are forced into this expensive, time-wasting, inconclusive system.

The Commonwealth compensation authorities say that blood tests are not conclusive. Commonwealth employees are paid immediately the doctor diagnoses the case as brucellosis.

I quote from their procedural statement of February 1979—

“The reason for the benefit of the doubt intention is that the diagnosis of Brucellosis is not so simple and may not be assisted by serological studies.”

Mr Campbell, by his actions, accuses Queensland doctors of incorrect diagnosis—an unwarranted slur on the medical profession.

Mr Speaker, I will continue to fight for justice for Queensland meatworkers. I will not let personal attacks by Mr Campbell or any other Liberal politician prevent me from opposing a situation where two Queensland workers living in the same house, working at the same meatworks, contracting a disease from the same animal are treated differently because one is covered by Commonwealth compensation and the other by Queensland compensation.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

TEACHER AIDES

From Mr Miller (43 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will restore and maintain the level of employment to teachers' aides as it existed prior to 1979.

RAILWAY STATION, BRAHMS COURT/RAILWAY AVENUE, STRATHPINE

From Mr Burns (1 037 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will provide funds for a railway station in Brahms Court and Railway Avenue, Strathpine.

Petitions read and received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. ELECTRICITY CHARGES PAID BY ALUMINIUM PROCESSERS

Mr D'Arcy asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to an article in "The Australian" of 26 August concerning the 14.6 per cent increase in electricity tariffs in Victoria wherein the Conservation Council of Victoria points out that this increase will not be passed on to Alcoa because of a contractual arrangement between that company and the SEC and that it has been stated that Alcoa will continue to pay only 1.5 cents per kilowatt-hour to power its giant smelter at Portland and that this compares with 3.5 cents per unit paid by domestic users and 3.0 cents per unit paid by industrial groups before the 14.6 per cent increase—

(1) What are the comparative charges made on the large multinational aluminium processors in Queensland and are these companies protected by a contractual arrangement similar to that provided by the Liberal/Country Party Government in Victoria?

(2) If so, by how much are the domestic users of electric power in this State subsidising these foreign-owned companies?

Answer:—

(1) Alumina refineries in Queensland are supplied at special tariffs which are confidential between the company concerned and the Queensland Electricity Generating Board. Such tariffs cover the costs of providing electricity to these industries.

(2) Domestic consumers in Queensland are not subsidising foreign-owned companies.

2. PENSIONER UNITS, HERVEY BAY

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) When will the pensioner units at Hervey Bay be available for occupancy?

(2) How many applicants are there for these units?

(3) When is it planned to build further units at Hervey Bay?

Answer:—

(1) October 1980.

(2) At Hervey Bay—3 single, 1 couple; At Maryborough—14 single, 2 couple.

(3) There is no timetable. All centres are reviewed annually in the light of demand and available finance.

3. OPTOMETRICAL SERVICES, HERVEY BAY HOSPITAL

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is he aware that an optometrist visits Hervey Bay Hospital only once in every two months?

(2) Is he further aware that there is a 10 month waiting list of people needing to consult the optometrist?

(3) As it is apparent that more frequent visits to Hervey Bay are required, especially in view of the large pensioner population, will he have an urgent investigation into the matter undertaken with a view to satisfying the urgent optometrical needs of Hervey Bay's permanent 13 800 population?

Answer:—

(1) Sessions approved for visiting optometrists to Hervey Bay are on the basis of 10 per year. Arrangements made between the hospitals board and the optometrists are on the basis of five visits, each consisting of two sessions.

(2) The hospitals board has advised me that bookings are filed for the September visit and that there are also 30 patients who will be seen at the December visit. This does not confirm that there is a 10-month waiting list. The hospitals board

has further indicated that from one-quarter to one-third of the Hervey Bay appointments are for interstate pensioners who stay in caravan parks for extended periods.

(3) The hospitals board feels that additional sessions are required, and it is in the process of preparing an application for approval for more sessions for the current financial year.

4. EDUCATION OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS

Mr Scassola asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the report of the Advisory Council for Special Education furnished to him in March 1979, which contained some 20 separate recommendations designed to overcome the very serious differences in special education—

(1) Does he agree with the principle that all handicapped persons have a right to an appropriate education without restrictions arising from age, handicap or other circumstances?

(2) If so, when does he propose to implement recommendations of the advisory council and, in particular, when does he propose bringing to this House legislation in conformity with the first of the recommendations in the report?

Answer:—

(1) Provision of education for children with special needs in Queensland is based on section 26 of the Education Act 1964–1974, which reads as follows:—

“26. Provision of Special Education
For children who require such education on account of a disability of mind or body, there shall be provided special education that is to say, education by special methods appropriate to the needs of such children. Such special education as the Minister approves may be given:—

(a) in special schools;
(b) in classes approved by the Minister for the purpose;

(c) by any other means approved by the Minister for the purpose.”

(2) The recommendations of my Advisory Council for Special Education are being considered along with many other suggestions in relation to amendments to the Education Act. Draft new legislation is currently being prepared, but I regret that I am not at present able to advise the honourable member of the details nor of the timing for presentation of the amendments to Parliament.

5. FIRES IN SCHOOLS

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) How many primary and secondary schools have been damaged by fire in the past five years?

(2) Where are these schools located?

(3) What were the estimated replacement and repair costs of these buildings?

(4) Has security lighting been installed and, if so, at what locations?

Answer:—

In view of the detailed information requested by the honourable member, I table my answer in reply to this question.

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

(1) The number of schools damaged by fire in the past five (5) years is twenty-seven (27) Primary and ten (10) Secondary.

(2) Location of these Schools—

Primary: Coorparoo; Yeronga Infants; Eagle Junction; Sandgate Infants; Richlands; Richlands East; Hendra; Vincent; Oxley; Nundah; Ryeford; Humpybong; Stafford Heights; Salisbury; Victoria Park; Inala Special; Runcorn Heights; Blackwater; Woodridge; Rocklea; Bundaberg South; Woodridge Special; Manly West; MacGregor; Oakleigh; Aspley East; Inala West.

Secondary: Woodridge; Dalby; Pittsworth; Everton Park; Ipswich; Banyo; Nashville; Thursday Island; Richlands; Palm Beach-Curumbin.

(3) \$3,184,770.00.

(4) Yes, at the undermentioned Schools—

Canvish Road State High School; Darra Pre-School; Darra State School; Inala State High School; Kedron State High School; Kippa-Ring Pre-School; Kippa-Ring State School; Salisbury State High School; Stafford Heights Pre-School; Stafford Heights State School; Upper Mount Gravatt State School; Capalaba State High School; Kruger State School; Petrie Terrace State School; Wondall Heights State School; Acacia Ridge State School; Ascot State School; Aspley Pre-School; Aspley State School; Bald Hills State School; Banyo State High School; Bracken Ridge Pre-School; Bracken Ridge State School; Camp Hill State High School; Clontarf State School; Clontarf State High School; Everton Park State School; Everton Park State High School; The Gap State School; The Gap State High School; Harrisfields Pre-School; Harrisfields State School; Inala Special School; Inala Pre-School; Inala State School; Inala West Pre-School; Inala West State School; Kelvin Grove State School; MacGregor Pre-School; MacGregor State School; Manly State School; Manly West Pre-School; Manly West State School; Mansfield Pre-School; Mansfield State School; Norris Road Pre-School; Norris Road State School; Northgate State School;

Oxley State High School; Redcliffe Special School; Redcliffe State High School; Richlands State High School; Richlands East State School; Rocklea State School; Sandgate State High School; Sunnybank State High School; Watson Road State School; White Hills Pre-School; White Hills State School; Woodridge Special School; Woodridge Pre-School; Woodridge State School; Woodridge State High School; Wooloowin Pre-School; Wooloowin State School; Wynnum State High School; Wynnum North State High School; Wynnum West Pre-School; Clontarf Special School; MacGregor State High School; Aspley State High School; Craigslea State High School; Craigslea State School; Craigslea Pre-School.

6. USE OF SOLAR ENERGY IN GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Is he aware that a school in New South Wales designed to be heated and cooled by solar energy will be built as a pilot project by that State Government?

(2) As this type of project, if successful, would be of great benefit to this State, are any Government buildings in this State using, or are planned for the future to use, this source of energy?

Answer:—

(1) Yes. My Department of Works, through the National Public Works Conference at which all States and the Commonwealth are represented at the Permanent Head level, will be fully informed of the developments in New South Wales and in other States, and full advantage will be taken of the exchange and appropriate use of the information available on the latest solar-heat installations.

(2) Domestic solar hot-water systems have been in use since 1977 in dwellings provided by my department for the Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement Department at Aurukun, Burketown, Edwards River, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mornington Island, Palm Island and Yarrabah.

More recently, through the Queensland Energy Resources Advisory Council, the Government is actively pursuing the policy of investigating and, where possible, supporting use of alternative energy sources, solar energy in particular, and monitored solar hot-water systems have been installed in Public Service residences at Gordonvale and Forest Beach.

7. MANNING OF SCHOOL CROSSINGS

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware of a scheme operating in Victoria whereby school crossings are manned during morning and afternoon periods by part-time wardens?

(2) As there are many dangerous crossings in both metropolitan and provincial areas, will he have this scheme investigated?

Answer:—

(1) Yes. This scheme was considered by an inter-departmental committee in connection with its examination of difficulties associated with "zebra" crossings at schools in Queensland.

(2) This committee, consisting of representatives from the State Departments of Main Roads, Police and Education, as well as the Brisbane City Council, the Queensland Road Safety Council and the Local Government Association, after consideration of all aspects of the problem, recommended the introduction of a distinctive, part-time school crossing facility displaying appropriate regulatory flags to improve the safety of these crossings.

The recommendation was acted upon and an amendment to the Traffic Regulations, 1962, was subsequently published in the Government Gazette of 8 March 1980. The "Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices" was also amended and this type of traffic control device is now widely used in the metropolitan area and in provincial centres.

The scheme enables the employment of monitors or wardens by local authorities for crossing supervision where this should be found to be necessary.

Apart from this, regulation 164 of the Traffic Regulations, 1962, provides for the appointment of pupils or other persons to act as school patrols in relation to school crossings.

8 & 9. FEDERAL ALP ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr Austin asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Is he aware that, according to a report in "The Australian" of 4 March, Mr Casey was reported to have said that the federally-appointed administrative committee "was not the kind he would like to sit on", because it was not representative of the party in the State?

(2) Is he also aware that in the same article it was reported that others who have rebuffed the federal take-over include Mr Tom Burns?

(3) How does he reconcile these reports with the apparent about-face of Mr Casey and Mr Burns, who now appear to be subservient to the federal administration?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I am aware of the reports referred to by the honourable member. Both the honourable Leader of the Opposition and the member for Lytton in doing an about-face have done so out of political necessity. The honourable Leader

of the Opposition knows what it is like to be out in the cold, having been expelled once from the Labor Party for failing to bow to the wishes of the Labor Party organisation. He knows what it is like being out on his own and does not want to relive the experience. And the honourable member for Lytton well knows how easily the Labor Party organisation can disendorse and expel members who do not toe the party line because he, as the State Secretary of the Labor Party in 1972, was the person who axed a number of sitting Labor Party members.

So both the honourable Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Lytton had to do an about-face to save their political hides. They have succumbed to supporting an organisation which they believe is not representative of the party in the State. In turn, if the new Labor administration is not representative of the Labor Party in the State, it certainly cannot be representative of the people of Queensland generally. In those circumstances, the members of the Opposition have no right to masquerade as an alternative Government, representative of the people of Queensland. And the need for the two honourable members to do an about-face is one of the more recent examples of the requirement of Labor members to come into this Chamber and vote according to caucus decisions and the dictates of the Labor organisation, no matter what or how strong their feelings might be.

It is bad enough when the Opposition members of the House parade themselves as an alternative Government when it is an established fact that they are subject to the dictates of an organisation outside the Parliament. It is even worse when it is realised that it is not only the State Labor Party organisation which can tell honourable members of the Opposition what to do and how to vote.

The honourable members opposite are subject also to the dictates of the Federal Labor Party organisation, for in the same report to which the honourable member referred the then Federal President of the Labor Party, Mr. Batt, is reported as having re-emphasised that the Federal Executive's authority over the State branch was ultimate. "Ultimate" is Mr. Batt's word, not mine.

The Opposition in this House cannot therefore put itself forward as an alternative Government that would place Queensland's interests first, because it lacks the authority to do so.

when he was referring to the decision of the AWU to be reaffiliated with the ALP, that he had been fighting for years for the two bodies to be reunited?

(2) Is he also aware that Mr Edgar Williams was reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 1 March as saying, "I will not be vice-president of a virtual scab organisation", after he was asked to be vice-president of the new guard of the ALP?

(3) Has he noted how silent the member for Lytton has been on the decision of the AWU not to join the federally-appointed administrative committee?

(4) Does this indicate that the moderate unions have refused to be a part of the socialist left take-over of the ALP?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) I certainly have noted—with some amazement—the silence of the honourable member for Lytton on the decision of the AWU not to join the "new guard". As silence has never been one of the honourable member's virtues, one must assume the stance of the AWU is an issue of utmost importance to whichever of the many factions purporting to represent the "real" Labor Party he really supports.

The honourable member for Wavell poses a most interesting question. Will the honourable member for Lytton now seek the expulsion of the AWU because it supports the "wrong" ALP—and risk losing all that beautiful financial and physical support on which ALP election campaigns rely so heavily? Or does he, in his innermost self, side with the AWU?

Surely, only a dilemma of these dimensions could silence the honourable member. But then, I do not blame him for not speaking up. Traditional Labor Party supporters are already so confused by the intrigues, the posturings, the writs and the possibility of election candidates from different but official ALP factions that anything he might say would only churn the tin of worms faster.

In the meantime, of course, the "old guard" remains defiant at Breakfast Creek and the "new guard" rails against the failure of the Federal Executive to complete intervention in the State branch. It seems that the Labor Party has now attempted to create an illusion of unity. But the Federal Executive could not care less. All it is concerned with is keeping the lid on the worms until after the Federal election.

I know members of the Opposition are highly embarrassed about the position in which they find themselves. The Federal Executive regards the two Queensland ALPs as expendable in the State election but it hopes, by ordering the silence of people like the honourable member for Lytton, that Federal electors can be lulled into a false belief that all is well.

Mr Austin asked the Minister for Labour Relations—

(1) Is he aware that the member for Lytton, the then Leader of the Opposition, was reported as saying on 3 March 1978,

As a former president of the State Liberal Party, I am somewhat amazed that the honourable member for Lytton—a former president of the ALP—has so little influence in party matters and is treated like a little boy. It really is the farce of the decade.

10. AUTOMATIC ROLLER DOORS

Mr Austin asked the Minister for Labour Relations—

(1) Has the Consumer Affairs Department carried out any investigation into the possible dangers of automatic roller doors?

(2) If not, will he cause an investigation into the safety of automatic roller doors to be undertaken because of the danger of crushing small children, as many accidents and deaths have been recorded in the United States of America?

Answer:—

(1) No.

(2) I, too, share the honourable member's concern with respect to matters relating to product safety. However, no specific complaints relating to the safety of automatic roller doors have been made to the Consumer Affairs Bureau. Should the honourable member provide me with evidence of injuries to Queenslanders having resulted from the use of these doors, I shall have the matter examined.

11. CENTRAL QUEENSLAND COALFIELDS TAXATION DISPUTE

Mr Yewdale asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

I refer to the Prime Minister's statements on the question of subsidised housing for Central Queensland coal miners said to have been made at the time when the Prime Minister announced that the Taxation Department was looking at the question of subsidised housing because, he said, no one wants a situation in which company directors are living in subsidised penthouse apartments. When asked whether any alterations to the relevant sections of the Taxation Act could be expected to apply to people living and working in remote areas, such as the Central Queensland coalfields, Mr Fraser is reported to have said that there has traditionally been a similar situation in the primary industries where remoteness applies and where a person wanting a particular job often has no alternative to taking an employer's house. He is reported to have said, "We certainly would not have wanted that situation altered or upset, and I think there is a responsibility to encourage people to move out of the

capital cities into remote parts of Australia that aid and assist development."

I now ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Does he have any recollection of such statements?

(2) Does he agree that if such statements were made, they would serve to indicate that Central Queensland coal miners would be exempt from such taxation that might otherwise apply to people such as company directors living in subsidised penthouse apartments?

(3) If not, why not?

(4) Has he raised these matters with the Prime Minister in discussions they have had over the coal miners' strike?

(5) What was the Prime Minister's reaction?

(6) If he believes that the reported statements are in essence correct, does he believe that the Prime Minister's course in seeking to deny them constitutes a reprehensible action?

(7) What action does he plan to take with his Liberal colleagues to have these promises honoured?

Answer:—

(1 to 7) The honourable member for Rockhampton North would by now be aware that the long-running and very costly Central Queensland coal miners' strike has ended. I believe every member of this House should be genuinely pleased that the men are now back at work and that our vital coal export trade is to resume.

I pay tribute to Mr Howard and the miners' union leaders for their efforts in bringing about a settlement of the dispute which caused the strike. I commend the miners for their overwhelming decision yesterday to accept the compromise formula hammered out in Sydney last week.

I was pleased to have played a part in these talks which produced the urgently needed breakthrough in what had developed into a stalemate situation. As the honourable member knows, the strike was costing this State and nation dearly, but the most serious aspect was its potential long-term effect on our reputation as a reliable trading partner. Hopefully, our reputation will be enhanced if we can achieve a period of industrial peace on our all-important coalfields.

The honourable member for Rockhampton North can be assured that my views on the cause of the strike have been made quite clear to the Federal Government. I can also assure the honourable member that in any major matter affecting Queensland taxpayers, I will continue to make my views known to the appropriate authorities.

12. MINERAL PRODUCTION AND ROYALTIES

Mr Yewdale asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What was the total value of minerals excluding coal mined in Queensland from 1974 to 1979 inclusive and in 1979?

(2) What was the total amount of royalties the Government received from such minerals from 1974 to 1979 inclusive and in 1979?

Answer:—

(1) The total value of minerals excluding coal mined in Queensland from 1974 to 1979 inclusive was \$3,471,140,982 and in 1979 was \$897,985,251.

(2) The total amount of royalties received from such minerals from 1974 to 1979 inclusive was \$133,228,302 and in 1979 it was \$33,131,715.

13. DRIVER'S LICENCE ISSUING OFFICE,
MANSFIELD ELECTORATE

Mr Kaus asked the Minister for Transport—

Will he investigate the location of a driver's licence issuing office in the Mansfield electorate, to complete all Government services in the Upper Mount Gravatt area and release the police station in Mansfield from this duty?

Answer:—

As indicated in my reply to a similar question by the honourable member on 10 October last year, the provision of an additional drivers licensing and issuing centre on the south side of the river was being investigated. Arising from these investigations, discussions are being held with the Logan Shire Council with a view to obtaining a suitable location for the provision of a licence testing and issuing centre at Woodridge which would serve the Upper Mount Gravatt and adjacent developing areas. I will keep the interest of the honourable member in mind and advise him if there is any further progress in this matter.

14. FREE MILK, PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

Mr Bourke asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Is it the policy of his department that pre-school children should receive one free issue of milk per day so as to receive 10 such issues per fortnight?

(2) Is he aware that in some country schools, because of the problems of travel, some children attend for two full days in one week and three full days in the alternate week instead of attending for a morning or afternoon session daily, as is normal in other cases?

(3) Is he aware that such children are not given a morning and afternoon issue of milk in company with other children at the pre-school but are only allowed one issue per day in spite of the fact that receipt of a morning and afternoon ration in their case would only result in their receiving the same issue—10 per fortnight—as other children?

(4) Is he aware of the extent of feeling that the department's practice of denying small children what is given to other children in front of their eyes is causing in country pre-schools?

Answer:—

(1) No. The State free milk scheme is designed to provide to each child in regular attendance at a pre-school centre, a kindergarten, a child care centre or other similar institution approved by relevant State authorities, an issue of 150 mL of milk per day of attendance.

Attendance at all such centres is voluntary, and if a child attends on 10 days per fortnight, he receives 10 serves. Regular attendance patterns for individual children, however, generally range from four to 10 days per fortnight, while duration of attendance on any one day tends to range from two to nine hours.

(2) Yes. These are two common patterns of attendance and many other patterns of attendance also prevail to meet local needs of parents and children.

(3) Yes. I am aware that the scheme provides for an issue of only 150 mL of milk per child per day of attendance regardless of the duration of attendance on any one day. Whether the daily issue is all served to a full-day attender in the morning or divided into two servings during the day is a matter for the staff at a centre to determine. The scheme was devised on the assumption that a 150-mL issue of milk per day attendance was a reasonable dietary supplement regardless of duration of attendance.

(4) It is my belief that centre staff attempt to serve milk in ways that take account of children's feelings.

15. GERIATRIC SERVICES

Mr Jones asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Has the Commonwealth Government designated as a State responsibility the planning and provision of programs for geriatric services?

(2) If so, and because of the accepted medical fact that illness occurs in the elderly more than in any other group, and as the number of persons aged 65 years and over within the Australian community is estimated to reach 1.7 million by the turn of the century, has the State Government initiated any project designed to

ascertain the need for future geriatric services and, if so, what form and direction is it proposed the initiatives will take?

Answer:—

(1) The department has always had an interest in, and a commitment to, providing services for aged people in Queensland.

(2) The honourable member may know that I recently distributed a document entitled "The Care of the Aged—A Policy for the Future". This outlines the proposed development of geriatric services.

16. ROAD-WORKS, CAIRNS AREA

Mr Jones asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

(1) What progress has been made in the completion of planning and design work for the four-lane highway on the southern entrance to Cairns between Clarke Creek and Burpu, Bruce Highway, Cairns, and is it anticipated work will be completed before the onset of the next wet season?

(2) Has any approach been made by the Cairns City Council for a feasibility study for the secondary access road south of Gordon Creek on alignment to Hartley Street, Cairns, and, if so, has consideration been given to including this new access in the forward planning of the southern entry for Cairns's main road requirements?

Answer:—

(1) Construction of the four-lane section of the Bruce Highway between Clarke Creek and Burpu is being undertaken as three jobs. The first job involves the major intersections of Mulgrave Road with Ishmael Road, Balaclava Road and Barr Street. Construction has commenced and is programmed for completion before the end of 1980.

The second and third jobs are for the balance of the road-works and the duplicate bridge over Gordon Creek. The designs of both jobs are progressing and release of the schemes is expected in mid-1981, subject to the availability of funds.

(2) Cairns City Council is currently carrying out a feasibility study for a heavy vehicle access to Cairns from a point south of Gordon Creek. The Main Roads Department has taken account of this possibility in the forward planning of the Bruce Highway. Preliminary investigations indicate that the intersection of the route with the Bruce Highway will be beyond the southern limit of the four-lane section which is now under design.

The honourable member has previously been advised that the alternative access road is not a declared road under the Main Roads Act and hence is not included in the department's forward planning program. The provision of funds for this project, should it proceed, is thus a local authority responsibility.

17. WOREE PRE-SCHOOL

Mr Jones asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Is he aware that enrolments for the Woree Pre-school have already exceeded 100?

(2) If so, has he made a recommendation for the second unit to be provided at this pre-school as an immediate measure and, if not, will he give urgent consideration to this project?

Answer:—

(1) The present enrolment at the Woree State Pre-School Centre is 48 and there is no waiting list for 1980. The waiting list for 1981 stands at 97. However, this figure could well contain considerable overlap with waiting lists for other State pre-school centres and kindergartens in Cairns.

(2) The situation at Woree is being monitored closely. The centre has only just been completed and it would be premature to plan additional units until clear trends in waiting list and enrolment patterns are established.

18 & 19. ST GEORGE HOSPITAL

Mr Neal asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Has approval been given for the replacement of the X-ray machine at the St George Hospital with a new machine?

(2) As the X-ray machine at the Dirranbandi Hospital is not in working order and it is intended to replace it with the present X-ray machine from St George Hospital, will he give urgent consideration to the supply of a new X-ray machine for St George at the earliest possible time?

Answer:—

(1) As indicated to the honourable member in my letter of 4 June 1980, it is intended to upgrade X-ray facilities at the St George Hospital and to this end officers of the Division of Health and Medical Physics have visited St George and have subsequently sought and obtained further statistical data from the medical superintendent of the St George Hospital through the manager. The report submitted by the Division of Health and Medical Physics has been examined and the board will be advised in the near future of the type of equipment which will be supplied.

(2) When the new equipment is supplied to the St George Hospital, consideration will then be given to the utilisation of existing equipment from the St George Hospital at the Dirranbandi Hospital.

Mr Neal asked the Minister for Health—

In view of the number of geriatric patients in the St George Hospital, thereby decreasing the number of beds for other patients and the number of spare beds

available in the maternity wing, will he give consideration to proposals to convert part or all of the maternity wing into a geriatric ward, which would require the engagement of only two more nurses?

Answer:—

The Balonne Hospitals Board has furnished details of long-stay patients and available accommodation at the St George Hospital as requested by the Departmental Nursing Home Committee. The information received will be examined by that committee at its next meeting, which is to be held in the near future.

20. NANANGO POLICE STATION

Mr Gunn asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

As no doubt he is aware of the population buildup in Nanango and the necessity to increase the police strength in that town, what plans has the Police Commissioner for an increase in police strength in Nanango and for the replacement of the very small police station that now exists in that town?

Answer:—

The strength at Nanango station was recently increased by one member who has taken up duty, and the staff situation will be kept under review in the light of developments in the Nanango area.

A proposal to provide adequate accommodation for increased strength at this station is now under consideration.

21. NITRATE CONTENT OF RYE GRASS

Mr Gunn asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Is he aware that rye grass is showing a buildup in nitrates and causing death in cattle in the Lowood area?

(2) Will his department warn cattlemen of the potential danger of crops that are likely to show a nitrate buildup in dry times?

Answer:—

(1) It is well recognised that fertilised and irrigated rye grasses may contain toxic amounts of nitrate and I am aware that losses have occurred in the Lowood and other areas. For this reason, they should be grazed with care.

(2) Yes. Arrangements have been made for a press statement to be released and a radio broadcast to be made.

22. ELECTRIFICATION OF IPSWICH-ROSEWOOD RAILWAY LINE

Mr Gunn asked the Minister for Transport—

As the electrification of the railway line to Ipswich will soon be completed, are there any plans for an extension of the electrification to Rosewood in the near future?

Answer:—

The current suburban electrification program carrying through to 1984 does not include any extension of electrification beyond Ipswich.

Mr Moore: Why don't you take it to Roma?

Mr TOMKINS: I do not propose to do that either.

Answer (contd):—

Apart from the fact that all available funds for electrification are committed to the completion of Brisbane suburban routes, there is insufficient passenger travel demand between Ipswich and Rosewood to warrant the high cost of electrification on that account.

Whilst it would be logical to expect that electrification will ultimately be extended to Toowoomba as a main-line project, and this could accommodate Rosewood services, it is too early to suggest possible program dates. However, with the introduction of a new timetable later this year, several of the services to and from Rosewood will connect with electric trains at Ipswich.

23. TRADING ON FUTURES MARKET

Mr Warburton asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) What legislative protection exists in Queensland for an investor in the futures market?

(2) Is he aware of any complaints against Queensland futures traders as a result of discretionary trading activities?

(3) Will he examine the New South Wales Futures Markets Act, 1979, with a view to introducing similar legislation in Queensland?

Answer:—

(1) No specific legislation currently exists in Queensland regulating the activities of futures markets.

(2) The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs has advised that no complaints have been received in Queensland in relation to futures market trading according to records held in his office. There is no futures market in Queensland and all trading is done in the New South Wales futures market.

(3) The New South Wales Futures Markets Act 1979 is concerned with providing a statutory basis for the operations of the Sydney Futures Exchange Limited, a body which operates in New South Wales. No suggestions have been made, to my knowledge, that a similar body be established in Queensland. If such suggestions are made, the need for legislation will be examined.

24. SECURITY MEASURES, TAB AGENCIES

Mr Warburton asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to the many Totalisator Administration Board offices operating throughout Queensland for the purpose of betting and bearing in mind the armed robberies that have occurred at TAB premises in recent times, and the fact that most of the employees are females employed on a casual basis, is he aware that the TAB provides no security equipment such as alarm systems and/or surveillance cameras and will he take urgent action to have this matter investigated by security experts with a view to providing adequate security at all Queensland TAB premises and for the employees concerned?

Answer:—

The honourable member is not correct when he states that the Totalisator Administration Board does not provide security measures at TAB offices. Security cameras are installed at all TAB offices in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, which are regarded as the most vulnerable areas. I think the honourable member would be well aware of the publicity given to an incident last week which received widespread coverage throughout Australia.

Furthermore, an alarm system to a central control point will be an integral part of the new computerised betting system which will shortly come into operation. The TAB also employs the services of security firms to patrol TAB offices in the evening, when the majority of robberies have occurred.

In addition, other security devices and procedures have been, and will be, implemented, but for obvious reasons I do not propose to divulge details of those publicly. The TAB and the Queensland Police Department are co-operating fully on the whole question of security. Both the board and I are concerned about the security of TAB personnel, and we will continue to increase security measures to provide an effective deterrent to robbery attempts on the part of criminals.

25. DEPARTMENT OF SPORT
PUBLICATIONS

Mr Warburton asked the Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation—

(1) Apart from the usual advice on grants and subsidies, how many publications such as newsletters, pamphlets, handbooks and directories has the Department of Sport developed and distributed in Queensland during the last two years?

(2) If material of the kind to which I have referred has been distributed, what was the nature of the material and what was the extent of the distribution?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) The department has not produced any publications of the nature mentioned by the honourable member. To date it has been considered that sport should receive, in the most direct way possible, the total benefit of the taxpayers' money allocated through the Budget. This direct funding since 1972, when my Government gave the lead to all other States and the Commonwealth in the field of assistance to sport, has totalled some \$10.5m, and this performance has not been equalled per capita by any other Australian Government.

If a need develops for the production of any information material additional to that presently supplied by correspondence to sport, honourable members or any other organisation or individual, then that need will be responded to in the most appropriate and cost-effective fashion.

26. PROTECTION OF HOSPITAL PATIENTS
AGAINST ENFORCED SALE OF PROPERTY

Mr Elliott asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Is he aware of the case referred to Government members by Mr Nestdale in which he indicated that a Queensland widow, who is now in the North Ryde Psychiatric Hospital in Sydney, has been advised by the New South Wales Government's Protective Commissioner that New South Wales laws can force the sale of her property in Queensland to cover hospitalisation expenses, which to date amount to some \$60,000?

(2) Will he ensure that this type of injustice is not perpetrated upon Queensland citizens who are in similar unfortunate circumstances and, if necessary, enact legislation to ensure this situation is in hand?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) This matter does not come under my administration and I suggest that the honourable member refer his question to the appropriate Minister.

27. NEW HOSPITAL, CUNNAMULLA

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Health—

Further to my question of 20 August concerning the estimated date when tenders will be called for the construction of a new hospital at Cunnamulla and as sufficient funds have now been raised for commencement of construction, when will tenders be called?

Answer:—

The Cunnamulla Hospitals Board has been given approval by Cabinet to invite tenders for the new hospital when it has raised a further \$130,000 in the financial

year 1980-81. The manager of the board has indicated that it has been successful in raising this amount and therefore it will proceed with the invitation of tenders.

28. TEACHER ACCOMMODATION, AMBY

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Is he aware of the need for teacher accommodation at Amby?

(2) When is it envisaged that this problem will be overcome?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) My Department of Works has not been requested by the client department to provide additional teacher accommodation at Amby, but following his personal representations the matter is still being investigated.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PREMIER'S STATEMENT ON COALITION GOVERNMENT

Mr CASEY: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to an article in today's "Australian" headed "Joh casts the Liberals adrift". I ask: Is he correctly reported in that newspaper as having said yesterday that the State Liberal Party is no longer in coalition with the ruling National Party, that he will not campaign for his deputy (Dr Edwards) and, by inference, that the Liberals are inconsistent, untrustworthy, unreliable and dishonest? If so, I ask him, as leader of the former coalition Government: Are the Liberals, including their leader and Cabinet Ministers, now free to vote in this House as they wish on matters on which they differ from the National Party or on matters of their own so-called policies which they talk about in the electorate but never seem game to support in this Parliament? In other words, is he really saying that they are free to go their own way and do as they please now?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: There are many ways in which I could answer the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition. All honourable members are aware that Press reports do not always record accurately the words that were spoken. That certainly applies in this case, because certain aspects of the report are not correct.

I do not think that there is any need for me to talk about the coalition or, indeed, about the Labor Party and its problems between the old and the new groups. I think it is a question that the electors will weigh up and judge for themselves at the appropriate time, and I think that the honourable gentleman should be prepared to leave it till then.

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND COALFIELDS TAXATION DISPUTE

Mr CASEY: I refer the Premier to "The Courier-Mail" of Monday, 8 September, and the comments of the Blackwater Combined Mining Unions' delegate Mr Max Tanzer who, speaking of the so-called plan on which the Premier was working relative to the settlement of the Central Queensland miners' subsidised housing tax dispute, said—

"One of the conditions of Mr Bjelke-Petersen's plan being a goer was that the miners did not return to work."

and ask: As it is well known amongst the delegates, and on the coalfields generally, that that same Max Tanzer was the person with whom he built up a close and constant relationship throughout the strike, why does he now deny that that was the message that he passed on to Mr Tanzer through other delegates at the Blackwater strike office whilst Tanzer was in Sydney?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: I spoke to Mr Tanzer at different times when I was up at Blackwater, but I spoke to other people on the telephone, not to Max.

Again, this matter has been distorted very considerably. All I can say to the honourable member is that, having in mind the criticism of me that appeared in the newspaper today, I do not think that anybody worked harder than I did over the whole period of the dispute to try to find a solution. I always worked on the basis of finding a solution under which no tax would be paid either now or at any time in the future. I was determined to try to achieve that objective, and I pursued it relentlessly with tax experts, as many as five of whom were at my place over a week-end trying to come up with solutions and methods of achieving them. I also discussed the problem with tax experts and legal experts from southern capital cities. We were pursuing these discussions at the time the decision was finally reached.

As I had spoken to the miners at different times about the objectives that I had, they knew exactly what I was seeking to achieve. To suggest that I said that they should not go back to work is, of course, a very severe exaggeration. On every occasion when I spoke on a radio program in the morning, I said—and I said it two, three, or four times—that I would be glad—and I was glad—when they went back to work. The suggestion was that, if the final proposal failed, we had another proposal that would mean that there would be no tax payable either now or in the future. It was considered by top legal men and tax men to be completely acceptable, and it would have to be accepted unless the Government in Canberra changed the Act.

The matter that concerns me very much today about the whole issue is that the gate is now wide open because we did not achieve our objective of scrubbing the whole idea. Policemen, schoolteachers, public servants generally, both State and Federal, and primary

producers across the board can all expect to come within the net and be asked to pay tax on subsidised housing or accommodation or concessions of that nature. That disturbs me very greatly indeed, and I regret very much that it was not possible to achieve my objective. On the other hand, I pay tribute to Dr Edwards and others who worked during the strike to resolve the dispute.

The main thing is that the men are back at work. Let us now fight the other issue of the tax problem that other people will face as a consequence of the resolution of the dispute.

Mr CASEY: I direct a supplementary question to the Premier because he has not completely denied the point that I made in my earlier question. Is he aware that an article appearing in "The Australian Financial Review" today confirms that mining union delegates Mick Slade and John Moulds are the persons to whom he spoke on the telephone regarding his better deal, and that they also confirm that the essence of the conversation and his offer was conditional on the miners not returning to work?

Despite the Premier's denials this morning, and in view of the mounting evidence that he took such action at a time when the Treasurer had just presented his Budget to the State Parliament, a document that blamed the miners' strike for the economic ills of the State, wouldn't he class his own efforts to prolong the strike as a gross act of political treachery?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: I would never make a statement that they should not go back to work. If the honourable gentleman reads the article in "The Australian Financial Review", he will find that the man who made the statement said that he could not remember what I said. He said that I talked for a long while and he could not remember what I said, but he thought that that was what I said. The honourable member should not put much credence in that.

LEVYING OF STATE INCOME TAX

Mr GLASSON: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Is he aware of an article in today's "Telegraph" wherein the Leader of the Opposition is purported to be going to say in his speech on the Budget debate that State income tax would be levied by the State Government next year? Will the Treasurer comment on this statement as to whether it is pure supposition?

Dr EDWARDS: As usual, this is most shameful behaviour by the Leader of the Opposition. It is in contempt of this Parliament to release the details of a speech that the Leader of the Opposition has not made in this Parliament. I believe this is the first time in the history of this Parliament that this has happened. This incident indicates quite clearly the contempt that members of the Opposition, including the Leader of the

Opposition, have for this Parliament. It also indicates the hypocrisy of the Opposition which, in the past two weeks, has tried to indicate that it has respect for the House of Parliament.

This action speaks for itself and deserves to be totally condemned. As for the contents of the speech which, I believe, the Leader of the Opposition may be making today—and again, as usual, he is looking to the Press gallery, just as he does when he speaks in this Parliament—I am not sure what the Leader of the Opposition will say; he changes his mind every day. It is reported that he will say that State income tax will be applied by this Government. Let me make the Government's position perfectly clear, just as the Premier and I have done on numerous occasions in the past: on no occasion has this Government been associated with anything which would indicate that it will proceed in any form with stage 2 of the Federal Government's policy. As a Government we will not commit the people of Queensland to State income tax. I pledge myself and the State Government totally to that view.

The Leader of the Opposition should look at the members of the Press gallery again so that they can again say he has made his approach to them to keep in good with them—to those people to whom he leaked this rubbish this morning.

Getting back to the realities of the situation—it is absolutely inaccurate. It was done totally for political expediency. The Leader of the Opposition has told lies in this Parliament, or will tell lies again today.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order. The Treasurer has run away with himself. He has used terms, Mr Speaker, that you know full well are completely unparliamentary. They are offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Dr EDWARDS: I am quite happy to withdraw the remarks and indicate again that the Leader of the Opposition has shown that he is careless with the truth. He has again stated inaccuracies regarding this Government's policies. He has many problems in his party. I would like to make quite clear what the newspapers said today. If I were in his shoes I would be fearful of the outcome of what will happen between the State and Federal parties and the "old guard" and the "new guard" in December.

In reply to the Leader of the Opposition, I again repeat on behalf of the Government of Queensland that no State income tax will be implemented by this Government, but if a Labor Government happens to be elected at the Federal or State level I can only say that I have great pity for the people of Australia because of the imposition of such things as a resource tax, a profit tax and many other forms of taxation. The promises made already by Mr Hayden have been costed at \$2,000m. Somebody has to pay for them and it will be the taxpayers of Queensland

and Australia. It is a tragedy that these attempts to gain political advantage are not given their true perspective.

The Government of Queensland will have no part of such rubbish. I hope that the Leader of the Opposition has the decency not to make such an irresponsible and inaccurate speech later today.

UNJUST FEDERAL TAXATION ON COUNTRY PEOPLE

Mr LESTER: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: What can this Government do to ensure that in future the Federal Government makes no further moves to introduce unjust taxes on country people, such as it tried to do in the recent subsidised housing issue? I ask this question because advice was given by the Premier, the Deputy Premier and Treasurer and me that it would not be wise for the Federal Government to try to introduce this tax. I raise the matter again this morning and ask this question because we have been proven right.

Dr EDWARDS: It is opportune to outline the situation as it exists as a result of the recent discussions. At no time in the history of the mining industry have miners on the Central Queensland fields paid taxation on the value of subsidised housing. That had been the situation right up till a recent decision was made by the Taxation Commissioner to put the value of housing in Central Queensland at approximately \$45 a week.

As a result of changes to section 26E in 1978 and again recently, that section provides for some discounting of the \$45 to about \$20 and by the payment of rentals ranging from \$5 to \$13.50, which meant that the miners in that area were being taxed on a value of about \$16 down to about \$9 a week. That was the contentious issue that brought about the stoppage on the Central Queensland coalfields some 11 weeks ago.

This Government's position, and that of the honourable member for Peak Downs, has been at all times that there should be equality in taxation and that no particular group should be exempt. But we also believe, and we made this quite clear, that people who live in areas such as the Central Queensland coalfields must have the advantage of some form of discount especially implemented to compensate for the difficulties of living in such areas.

Following our stating of this belief, negotiations took place over a long period. Of course, the Commonwealth Government denied that an assessment had ever been made and in fact the Commissioner for Taxation himself indicated that this was not correct. A week or so ago, however, a letter came to hand which showed that an assessment had been made on 22 May 1973 under which for taxation purposes the value of

housing in Moura and Biloela ranged from \$3 to \$9, a fact to which the honourable member referred. The discovery of this letter led to the immediate commencement of negotiations to have the escalation in the value of subsidised housing assessed at a reasonable figure and so allow discounting to continue. We were able to arrange discussions, and I was very pleased that both the miners and Mr Howard asked me to be present. A sensible approach was therefore made to the whole business.

An agreement was reached following those discussions, and it has now been accepted by the miners. This means that the discounting will now take place and no miner will pay tax under that section in the next five years. It means that the law will be upheld, and no particular section of the community will be exempt. The law in fact will apply throughout the whole of the industry and, indeed, in all isolated areas.

I have made a call on a number of occasions, which I now repeat, to the effect that it is time we got a simple form of taxation so that situations similar to this one, which caused distress to many sections of the community, will not arise. We have already called on a number of occasions for a review of zone allowances so that people who live in isolated rural communities would receive an increase in the allowance and, in addition, the areas in which such an allowance applies would be extended. The Premier and I raised this point at the Premiers' Conference, and as a result of discussions an inquiry has been set up which will investigate many of these points.

I believe the solution has been a most equitable one. I do not believe there is any need for people to fear a repetition of this problem. I am hopeful that sanity will prevail both in the way the law is implemented by the Commissioner of Taxation and the way it is interpreted by the mining community and other isolated communities in this State.

REVIEW OF ZONE ALLOWANCES AND OTHER TAXATION INCENTIVES

Mr LESTER: I ask the Premier: In view of his continuing blitz on Canberra in relation to taxation—I instance the abolition of death duties and many other taxation initiatives to show that he has not been talking through his hat—what moves can the State Government now make to keep the pressure on Canberra to ensure that the Federal Government keeps its Budget promises to review the system of zone allowances and other taxation incentives? What can this State Government do to ensure that these promises become reality in 12 months' time?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member was closely involved in attempts to solve the problem in Central Queensland,

and I am convinced that the inquiry that has been set up will result in many people receiving the benefit of new zone allowances. It will take time but, as the Treasurer has just said, he and I raised this question at the Premiers' Conference and it was agreed that an inquiry would be set up. I have every reason to believe that it will result in increased allowances. I cannot imagine that on this occasion the Federal Government would be prepared to leave itself open to criticism on an issue such as this. There is no doubt that it is a point we should raise with the Federal Government before an election. That is always an appropriate time to raise such questions with any Government.

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

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Mr Miller (Ithaca) in the chair

Debate resumed from 28 August (see p. 276) on Dr Edwards's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1980-81, a sum not exceeding \$397,361 to defray Contingencies—His Excellency the Governor."

Mr CASEY (Mackay—Leader of the Opposition) (12.13 p.m.): Until I looked deeper into this Budget during the week Parliament was adjourned, I did not fully appreciate what a dull and disappointing document it really is. Queensland is asked to begin the '80s behind a Budget that apologises for itself before it is even debated or passed by this Parliament.

We are told by the Liberal and National parties after 23 continuous years that all Queensland's problems suddenly belong to a 10-week strike (now ended) and the Canberra economic strategies of their own political parties, which they themselves endorsed and applauded. The Treasurer (Dr Edwards) calls this type of Budget trickery "responsible". I believe it is stale and defeatist—even worse, stale and downright dishonest—as he himself is in this document. He came in here this morning and sanctimoniously tried to defend some aspects of his own comments. However, immediately there is the opportunity for a reply, as usual he disappears from the Chamber like a mouse down its hole. For five unbroken years the political affairs of Queensland (State and Federal) have been the sole responsibility of the Liberal and National Parties, but all we have to show from the experiment is this pitiful economic epilogue from the latest Treasurer.

As far as the Labor Opposition is concerned, this Budget, with its lack of reference to and interest in post-war record unemployment, represents the sell-out of an entire

Queensland generation. It is the sell-out not just of school-leavers unable to find their first jobs but also of more senior Queenslanders who are being thrown out of their last ones at an age when they should be guaranteed the basic right of pre-retirement security, and even those who currently hope they have job security whilst the unknowns of technological change are lurking around the corner waiting to strike.

Where, I ask, are those glorious promises of 1975, repeated in 1977 and, no doubt, soon to be trotted forth once more, in their bandaged form, for yet another pre-election airing? Three years ago the election slogan of the Liberal Party was, "Working for an even better Queensland" and before that, "Turn on the lights". We have been in the dark for a long time since then. I am afraid that there is no evidence of either in this latest economic presentation of their leader and State Treasurer.

I do not argue that many people are doing very nicely out of Queensland with State Government help; but, unfortunately, too few of them are Queenslanders and too many of them are the Iwasakis, the overseas landlords and the international mining shareholders. As this Budget forecasts new mining ventures worth \$12 billion in the '80s, the anticipated return to Queensland from all mineral royalties in the next 12 months is a mere 3.2 per cent of State revenues and less than 2 per cent of the State's jobs.

The economic problems of Queensland date much further back than the recent tax strike by miners in Central Queensland, as the Treasurer pretends in this Budget. As Queensland moves from the political overflow of the '70s into the economic mainstream of the '80s, it is time to study the results of the Fraser/Bjelke-Petersen experiments and their effects on Queensland and Queenslanders. We find—

Unemployment—Up 71 per cent in five years; 8 per cent over the past 12 months compared with an average national rise of only 3 per cent.

Inflation—Back in double figures, with rising interest rates and, in 1979-80, the highest food prices in Australia.

Household incomes—Below all States except one and the lowest level of savings per head of population.

With 15.2 per cent of Australia's population, Queensland enjoys only 9.9 per cent of its manufacturing jobs, and retail sales in the March quarter showed a slower than Australian-average increase. It is not a very pretty domestic picture for a population which the Liberal and National Parties claim is the envy of every other State in Australia.

On the first page of his Budget speech, the Treasurer reports sanctimoniously—

"Queensland has been very fortunate in that successive Treasurers and Governments over more than two decades have

laid a very sound base for what I believe will be the most exciting period in the State's history."

My only comment is that if the economic deterioration of Queensland in recent years is the Treasurer's idea of good fortune, then I would hate to see what kind of mess Queensland would be in if it had been unlucky. I am certain that the Treasurer's satisfaction with Queensland's economic management is not shared by the 60,000 and more unable to find jobs—the 15.5 per cent in the 15-19 age group and the 10.6 per cent among 20 to 24-year-olds who fall tragically in this category.

In this State of such boundless natural wealth—the potential energy-bowl of the Pacific—the Budget now before us for 1980-81 timidly proposes a deficit of less than \$200,000 in a total expenditure of \$2,500 million. No-one suggests reckless financial safaris into the unknown, but, at the same time, this State's credit should be among the top bracket in the world.

In terms of deficit budgeting, the average couple is prepared to risk more comparably in the purchase of their first home than the National and Liberal Parties are prepared to risk in the future of Queensland. Unforeseens, such as the coal miners tax revolt, which the Treasurer has used as his excuse throughout this Budget speech—and, after all, the Premier especially is a great advocate for tax revolt—are treated in the same way as the cost of natural disasters such as the 1974 floods. The State's capital works program should go on irrespective of whatever intangibles might occur.

A Casey-led Labor Government will order an urgent review of present economic strategy in conjunction with the State Treasury, other departments, industry and trade unions with a view to introducing an interim Budget early next year. That interim Budget will begin the process of job recovery in Queensland with new priorities on job growth, job security and career satisfaction.

On page 2 of his Budget speech, the Treasurer said that one of the responsibilities of Government is to ensure that returns from resource development are adequate and shared equitably by Queenslanders.

The Treasurer continues—

"Only by an appropriate sharing of the wealth can taxation and other charges be kept to a minimum while at the same time the essential services such as hospitals, schools and so on are maintained at a level consistent with the needs of the community."

As Mt Isa Mines announces a \$202m profit for 12 months and Utah \$76m for only six months, I can only presume that the Treasurer and the Liberal-National parties consider the present distribution of mineral earnings to be both "adequate and equitable".

Labor, in Government, will review mineral royalties to ensure that payments are fair and adequate. This review would occur in the closest consultation with mining companies and take into account their substantial additional contributions to revenue through rail freights. We will also confer with the mining industry on the secondary processing of more of our raw materials in Queensland as a job-expansion measure and a timetable for such will be included in any new agreements entered into by a Labor Government. No-one belittles the importance of mining or foreign investment to Queensland—far from it.

Mr Katter interjected.

Mr CASEY: Well, Mr Katter won't be here, so Katter doesn't matter.

At the same time (to cite just one example to indicate that we are not faring as well as we should), I am informed that even tiny Jamaica demands, and receives, higher royalties for its bauxite than does Queensland.

It is not so much a case of being the mouse that roars but rather, I believe, a case of not being the mouse that snores. In relation to the Treasurer, I make no specific reference to the Moir cartoon.

The closer I study this Budget the plainer it becomes that the Liberal and National Parties measure their economic performance almost solely on the development of the highly capitalised but low job-creative mining industry.

Mr Porter interjected.

Mr CASEY: If the Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs wants to contribute something to the Government of the State I suggest that he look at the reports of the Treasurer and the Auditor-General concerning the internal auditing of his department and the recommendations that have been made showing that his department has fallen down badly and has not adhered to certain principles.

In these times of difficult and painful technology adjustment, this Government refuses to heed the lessons of the '70s that echo the urgency for Queensland to broaden its employment base. The simple truth is that with all the mineral, tourism and rural resources inherent naturally in Queensland, this State has temporarily ceased producing anywhere near enough jobs for its available work-force.

Any Government that, in its Budget—which is the financial framework of all State activities—ignores the fact that Queensland has above Australian average unemployment in a work community with below average jobs is hiding its head in the sand like the proverbial ostrich.

The Liberal and National parties, in the second half of the '70s, have become professionally skilful in bluffing their way around their economic disabilities. One of the images that they have spent considerable time and public money in projecting to the Queensland community is that this is a taxation-reducing Government. Here, again, the latest Edwards Budget shows that the facts belie the propaganda.

Mr Katter: Of course it is.

Mr CASEY: I hear a back-bench echo, "Of course it is". We often hear Government back-bench members asking Dorothy Dix questions, the answers to which indicate, "Of course it is". I am merely pointing out that, far from lowering taxes as the National and Liberal Parties pretend, the Government, in the past five years, has greatly increased the burden on the average Queenslander. In that period total Government revenue is up 86.1 per cent with a rise in income from State taxes of 72.5 per cent. Land tax collections are up 114 per cent, licences and permits 93.8 per cent, and stamp duties a more than sizeable 146.8 per cent. All have increased at a much greater rate than inflation for the period. Yet members of both parties still try to say, "We are part of a tax-reducing Government. To use the comment that I heard a great Australian use yesterday, I will say, "Balderdash".

An Honourable Member: Who said "balderdash"?

Mr CASEY: Sir Mark Oliphant, concerning the Premier's comments on the hydrogen car.

In pay-roll tax, despite highly publicised exemptions, the increased revenue this financial year is expected to exceed \$28m or 11.4 per cent—again more than the anticipated inflation rate.

The receipts from all State taxes of \$496.1m in 1979-80 was a rise of \$61.4m or 14.1 per cent on the previous year, and in 1980-81 the anticipated further rise is \$58.4m or 11.8 per cent to \$554.5m.

As the Government's figures confirm, it is scarcely the record of a coalition actively preoccupied, outside of its propaganda, in reducing the taxation impositions on the Queensland population.

Rather than lower the taxes, it has imposed additional and higher taxes on the people of Queensland. The National-Liberal Government has been no better than its counterpart in the Federal sphere. Since Fraser came to power in 1975 the total expenditure by the Federal Government and its statutory bodies has risen until it now represents 38.1 per cent of the Gross

National Product, compared with an average of about 33 per cent in the days of a Labor Government in Canberra.

Time and time again we have made the point that however much business people and investors might prefer the political philosophy of the Liberals, it is a fallacy to believe that the replacement of a Labor Government with a Liberal Government would produce lower taxation and a reduction in big Government.

The Liberal and National Parties indulged in similar misrepresentation on the creeping, crawling influence of Fraser federalism across Federal/State financial arrangements.

The Treasurer has again gone down his rat hole somewhere. He is not in the Chamber to listen to comments.

Mr Porter interjected.

Mr CASEY: As the Minister knows, this is the Treasurer's debate. It is his Financial Statement that we are debating. This is the one time in the year that he should be present in the Chamber during the debate.

I suspect that he is out in the corridors talking to the Premier in an effort to settle differences and to keep the coalition together, despite the Premier's comments in the House this morning and those he made in the Press yesterday. They were quite true. We no longer have a coalition Government. All we have is a group of people sticking together so that they can continue to enjoy the lurks and perks of Government as long as they can before facing the people of Queensland, when they will be thrown out on their necks.

The Treasurer does not even know his job. He endeavoured to say this morning that today's Press article about what I proposed to say was the worst thing that has ever happened in Queensland. What a lot of hoovey! I said nothing more in the newspapers than I have been saying since the Treasurer introduced his Budget.

Mr Porter: You released your speech and that was contempt of this House.

Mr CASEY: The Minister gives out his speeches time and time again before he speaks in this Chamber. If it were not for the fact that he has a Press officer handing out his speeches he would be caught in trying to project—

Mr PORTER: I rise to a point of order. This is really to give him a chance to catch his breath. I have never had a Press officer, so the honourable gentleman needs to think again. You withdraw it?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Miller): Order! Is the Minister asking for a withdrawal?

Mr PORTER: I ask for a withdrawal. I have never had a Press officer.

Mr CASEY: I will withdraw it if he says that. I accept his word. I know that he has borrowed a few from time to time.

Mr PORTER: It is not a question of whether I say it or not. I say that I have never had a Press officer and that can easily be verified by anybody. Therefore, the honourable gentleman will withdraw it.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to accept the word of the Minister.

Mr CASEY: O.K. I accept it. I will delete the words "Press officer" and put "staff" in their place. A rose by any other name smells just as sweet.

Mr PORTER: I rise again. The honourable gentleman, by implication, merely repeats what he said before. I said that I have had no Press officer. He said that a rose by any other name smells just as sweet. I regard that as a direct repetition, by implication, of what he said.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot accept the point of order.

Mr CASEY: It is a pity the Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs is so touchy. I wonder what the Treasurer would have to say if he were here to hear what I have to say about him.

But let us get back to the point I was making, and it is this: nothing has changed, not even after anything I had to say in the newspaper this morning or since the Treasurer brought down this apology of a Budget. There is nothing to deny the right of any member of the Opposition or any member of the community to say anything he likes about this document—the Treasurer's Financial Statement—once it has been presented in this Assembly. If there has been any breach of public security or any lack of ethics, it was the occasion of the release by a member of the Liberal Party of confidential Government information given to her by a Minister prior to the bringing down of the Budget.

Mrs KYBURZ: I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition is stating a total untruth. I did not release the information; the Minister for Education did.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Leader of the Opposition did not mention any member by name.

Mr Austin: He did.

Mr CASEY: I mentioned a Liberal backbencher. So far as the member for Salisbury is concerned, if the cap fits, she may wear it.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the honourable member for Wavell that I made a statement and he appeared to contradict what I said. He will apologise to the Chair for the statement he made.

Mr AUSTIN: Mr Miller, I apologise.

Mr CASEY: Whoever did it, I know where I heard it first, and it was in this Chamber. No-one can deny that. I heard it from the honourable member for Salisbury. I do not know who leaked it to the Press, but it first became public knowledge when the honourable member for Salisbury made a statement in this Chamber. It was Budget information. Whether the Minister for Education was indiscreet in passing it out to a member of his committee, or whether it is now seen that he cannot trust the members of his own committee, is entirely a matter for the Government to worry about. The fact is that it happened and that is the way it happened, so it does the Treasurer little credit to come into the Chamber this morning and try to accuse some other member of this Parliament of leaking information when it is all there in his Financial Statement for the year. There is no question about it.

We all know the history of Fraser federalism—we know it only too well! The Liberal and National Parties supported it, but they were indulging in misrepresentation. They spent thousands of dollars of public money extolling its virtues via media advertising, and there is no-one in this Chamber who can deny that. We saw the advertisements published all over Australia supporting the new Fraser federalism. Although the advertisements carried the crests of the Western Australia, Victorian and Queensland Governments, I was able to ascertain from an answer by the Premier that the advertisements were paid for by the Queensland Government.

In September 1975 the Premier and the National and Liberal Parties embraced the Fraser federalism and its tax-sharing ideology in its entirety, even though its contents were still unknown. The Premier's photograph featured prominently in all the advertisements. Let the Premier deny that in the midst of his allegations these days about what somebody else might or might not be doing. The warnings of the Australian Labor Party about Fraser federalism were scorned; so was the caution suggested by the then Treasurer and Liberal Leader, Sir Gordon Chalk.

This Government, more than any other in Australia, was blinded by Malcolm Fraser's visions of new horizons: fooled by the oldest of confidence tricks in which the States,

particularly Queensland with its decentralisation, are now the lasting losers. Today, as the protective umbrella of the Federal Labor years over Canberra-Queensland finances closes, Queensland faces a fresh economic crisis—one that prompts the so recently gullible Treasurer to say in this Budget—

“The current tax-sharing arrangements between the States and the Commonwealth are to be reviewed before the end of this financial year. As the arrangements now stand, after 1980-81 the States will no longer be protected by an effective guarantee.”

Dr Edwards continued to explain that already the Fraser federalism he and the Premier endorsed so wholeheartedly in 1975 had failed to improve Canberra-State financial arrangements. He added (again I quote the Treasurer's own words in his own Budget)—

“Unless new arrangements are negotiated which effectively protect the States, the States will be directly affected by Commonwealth taxation policy and in particular by any switch by the Commonwealth from personal income taxation to other types of taxation.”

We know that this is already happening. The moneys flowing to the States are subjected to a two-way depreciating factor. He continued—

“Secondly, the Commonwealth Grants Commission is presently conducting a review of each State's relative share of the tax sharing pool. Whilst Queensland is confident that its share will be maintained, if not enhanced, there is always the possibility that the reverse situation could apply.”

That is the forecast of all the people who have made a study of our State Budget and the Federal Budget. He went on to say—

“In summary, Commonwealth-State negotiations on the tax sharing arrangements and Grants Commission deliberations on the distribution of the States' share of the tax pool, both of which are proceeding during 1980-81, are very critical so far as the future State revenue base is concerned.”

How very true that is! The Treasurer, the Premier and the members of the National and Liberal Parties in this House failed in 1975 to recognise the dangers of Fraser federalism. Here, from the tongue of the Treasurer, is the admission that Queensland is being squeezed systematically by the Liberal and National Parties in Canberra towards double income taxes—State as well as Federal. They are the very people whom the Treasurer, Premier, Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs and other members of this Government supported in 1975. At that time they said, “Get them into office.” They supported them again in 1977, and, no matter whether the Federal or State election is held first, they will support them again in 1980. They will give their full support to these

people in Canberra who will throw this State into the greatest financial crisis that has ever been seen.

The collaboration of the Edwardses, Bjelke-Petersens and their Liberal-National Party colleagues in this economic betrayal of Queensland's financial rights must surely be the greatest episode of financial treachery in the post-depression period. They are guilty of either participation in this treachery or of gross incompetence in not recognising it as such and joining the Labor Party in warning the people of Queensland.

Rather than proceeding exhaustively through this boring Budget of dishonesty stage by stage, I propose to summarise my criticisms, except for the Premier's Estimates which yet again will be cushioned against debate.

I will be more extensive in these observations. Let us have a look at rail freights. They have been increased by 15 per cent. This is an additional cost factor affecting almost every commodity and service in areas that have already been worst hit by the National and Liberal Parties' petrol parity pricing policy. Nobody recognises that more than the members who represent the provincial cities and country areas, as do so many Labor Party members. They know the real consequences of that petrol parity pricing policy. It is added to rail and road freights. It increases the actual cost of the fuel that the people buy. It is added to fertiliser costs. As a result, it is added to agricultural and farming costs. Because of all these additional costs, there is no end to the increases in food prices. It has permeated its way like a great cancer throughout the whole community and has imposed economic hardship upon almost every person in this big decentralised State of ours.

It is pertinent to note that not only will this new freight levy be passed on to provincial and country consumers, but the National and Liberal Parties will eagerly charge sales tax on it. That in itself is a gross inequity that has to be changed, and it will be changed by Labor Governments at both the State and Federal levels. The Treasurer had what I would call an original apology for this freight increase, explaining that his experts wanted 20 per cent but he decided to settle for 15 per cent. My goodness! In other words, he would have taxed country Queenslanders more than the inflation rate; but he should have gone for more because his advisers said that. It is little wonder that he is known as “Noddy” for his almost automatic capacity to bow agreement towards decisions all over Queensland, which he either does not comprehend or has no genuine intention of honouring.

From rail freights I turn to the proposed rate relief to pensioners, which Labor finds on close study will prove of no actual benefit and could, in many instances, be

detrimental to their interests and those of local authorities. Under this policy the Government provides local authorities with \$1 for each \$2 relief granted by the local authority, with pensioners receiving a maximum 75 per cent assistance under certain conditions. This means, I am informed, that there are at least two possibilities obviously not considered by the Treasurer or his Government. A local authority now giving a remission of more than 50 per cent to the pensioner could reduce its rate so that the pensioner still receives the same 50 per cent.

I see that the Treasurer has now found his way into the Chamber again.

Dr EDWARDS: I rise to a point of order. During my unavoidable absence, which involved very valuable and important discussions with Canberra, it was reported to me that the Leader of the Opposition indicated I was not here for some particular reason. I ask that my explanation for my absence be accepted. It was unavoidable and I apologise for being absent. I hope that the Leader of the Opposition retracts his statement.

Mr CASEY: I accept the Treasurer's apology. I am just glad he has not had trouble with the trots again.

I return to pensioner concessions. It means that those local authorities will receive no flow-on benefit unless the concession is reduced. Of course, a number of local authorities do not grant actual cash remissions to pensioners but instead of collecting rates allow them to accumulate as a charge against the land, recoverable when the pensioner dies and the land is sold. During their lifetimes these pensioners will receive no personal benefit, and if the local authority decides to join the Government scheme it will face a huge bill to clear the slate before it can participate, because so much has already been written off.

Dr Edwards: You can't even read. You can't understand. I feel sorry for you.

Mr CASEY: Isn't the Treasurer going to give that benefit in those circumstances? The pensioners and the Government's own economic advisers are not sure which way the Government is going. The Government announced the scheme purely to gain some sort of political kudos with a particular community group. Pensioners who already have a rate remission are now concerned.

When the Treasurer introduces such a scheme in this Parliament it behoves him to explain it properly. That is one of the other fallacies contained in the document that he presented. From the start to the finish he simply apologised for everything that he was doing—or for everything that he was not doing, I should say—instead

of explaining in precise detail to the people of Queensland just what was anticipated would flow on from these matters.

It is the same story of policies presented without thought of implementation or practicality—more often without conscience of accountability.

There is no economic consistency whatsoever. With our frightening junior unemployment, the Federal Government in 1979-80 underspent its trade training allocation by \$12m. Why, I ask, was there no complaint from the State Government over this non-use of money earmarked for junior employment? Apparently it is cheaper in the eyes of the National and Liberal Parties to import tradesmen and teach them the English language than to coach Australians within a skilled trade in Queensland.

A Casey Labor Government, in its interim Budget, will announce pay-roll exemption measures to stimulate apprentice and cadet employment.

I am informed by my education advisers that the Budget means, in practical terms, larger classes, fewer new buildings and a drop in furniture supplies. If the document is looked at, the sleight of hand trick can be seen. Page 27 of the Estimates shows the number of teachers who are employed. We have been told there will be additional teachers. The document shows that there will be an increase of 386 secondary teachers, and that is a most noble increase. The document shows that the number of primary teachers will increase by 115. These are the Treasurer's own statistics. However a special footnote at the bottom of the page indicates that physical education teachers have been included in primary and secondary education. The document shows there will be 546 fewer physical education teachers and that overall there will be 45 fewer teachers in primary and secondary schools in Queensland. That is only one example of how we can ascertain from the Treasurer's own information what will happen to class numbers in schools. It is amazing how any Government could deflate the importance of education and youth employment as budgetary issues.

This Budget, with its omissions and inadequacies, precedes a State election in which the Liberal and National Parties face judgment on their performance. Nowhere in Australia (I believe nowhere in the western world) is there a Government so aggressively against basic parliamentary minimums in accountability. The Premier tours the State in the Government plane, costing over \$5,000 a week in ownership, operation and maintenance expenses, and not even Parliament is told where it flies, when it flies, why it flies or who flies in it. In the life of this Parliament, Cabinet Ministers have made 46 overseas trips (several pre-retirement junkets) and to my knowledge there is not a single report to the elected Parliament.

Queensland, alone of all States, lacks a joint parliamentary public accounts committee as a watch-dog on public spending, and Labor efforts in Parliament for this form of scrutiny were rejected without debate by both the National and Liberal Parties. Labor, in Government, will initiate joint committees of public accounts and a committee of public works as new measures of accountability in Government spending and contracting, which is another thing on which there have been dubious signs during the three years of this Parliament.

Before turning to the Premier's Estimates, I want to generalise briefly and frankly. Queensland is stumbling towards its first election in the '80s after what I could only term three bad and dirty years of Government. The economic decisions occupying secret priority in Cabinet without reproach to Parliament are land hand-outs to the Iwasaki's, rezonings for Melbourne donors to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation, overseas-controlled P & O container monopolies at the Brisbane Port and Tarong over Millmerran for the powerhouse at a cost to Queensland of \$259m. The Gateway Bridge, across the lower reaches of the Brisbane River, is just beginning now, 15 years behind approval. The Burdekin scheme—a dream for generations—is still only now supported in principle and cannot start for years because the State Government has not fulfilled its approach commitments.

Dr Edwards: What utter rot.

Mr CASEY: The Government has not fulfilled its approach commitments.

Dr Edwards: You don't know what you are talking about.

Mr CASEY: My very word I do. I have been born and reared in that area. I have lived and moved in it all my life. The Government has procrastinated for 23 years. It has done absolutely nothing. Sure, in the Budget this year there might be another \$2m allocated for road-works. There might have been \$1.7m allocated in the same way last year. However, I challenge the Treasurer to deny the fact that at the current rate of spending it will be at least 1984 before the project proper will be able to get under way.

Dr Edwards: Absolute rubbish.

Mr CASEY: It will be that period, for the simple reason that this Government has not proceeded sufficiently with the preliminaries for the project. It has not been prepared to go ahead on its own and do something really constructive for the people of North Queensland. It has sat on its backside and done nothing, especially over the last three years—three years of really bad government for this State. The Government has only supported it in principle.

A start cannot be made for years because the State Government has not fulfilled its commitment.

We see the Brisbane rail electrification, promised by the Government in 1974 for 1977, nowhere near the half-way mark.

The Liberal Party, no matter how it now dodges, shares the blame with the Nationals for the economic mismanagement of Queensland. It shares the blame equally for the surrender of this State to the worst extremes of Fraser federalism, despite the warnings of caution in 1975 by its own then State leader. It shares the blame equally with the Nationals in the Canberra enforcement of petrol price parity on this State at a cost this year of at least \$500 million, with not a cent returned for road improvements and maintenance.

I see the '80s as years of tremendous economic challenge, opportunity and danger for Queensland. There can be no question that the National and Liberal Parties find preference in a foreign cheque-book ahead of a Queensland Bankcard.

The coalition is old fashioned, guided by bitterness and wowserrish carry-overs from a disappearing past. It is a coalition that is out of date, out of touch and past its time. For possibly a few months longer it is a costly situation, for Queenslanders, anyhow, of yesterday's has-beens fighting each other through the last days of what should be tomorrow's Government. As I said earlier, it has been three years of very bad Government for Queensland. In Queensland, with an election fortunately due, it is not so much a case of "Dad's Army" as "Grandpa's Parliament".

Labor, alone of the major political parties, will transfer priority away from patronage by the Cabinet gang of 18 to job creation and security. We will launch a new program of industry incentives for the decentralised expansion of secondary processing plants, particularly those involving Queensland raw production. We will not shy away from adult decisions involving job growth and new industry development because of personal prejudices. Under a Casey-led Labor Government, sport, recreation and tourism will be encouraged as job-production industries.

At least two hotel-casinos will be approved and the licensed club industry developed as community entertainment co-operatives with poker machines as a voluntary form of fund-raising. I heard this morning that the Government is still trying to get a committee together to decide what its attitude will be.

I believe that the annual Budget should be part of a three-year continuing economic-planning program rather than a year-to-year wing-and-a-prayer sermon prone to party-political and electoral influences ahead of community needs. This is the case in Queensland under the Liberal and National Parties, particularly near election-time.

It is, I feel, impossible to see Queensland climbing its way out of the present recession until a State Government initiates genuine proposals in work generation. Throughout the State there are projects forgotten, deferred or partially developed while an available job-force is conscripted to the dole queues. There appears no enthusiasm for job initiation within the Government itself. Employment funds from Canberra (including RED) granted by the Labor Government totalling \$7.7m were scrapped in 1975-76 when unemployment was 71 per cent lower, and now the Grants Commission special assistance has fallen from a \$36.3m peak to \$6.7m this year and will soon, as the Treasurer admits, vanish altogether. Special Commonwealth grants from Labor worth \$44m in 1975-76 are down to \$6.3m in 1980-81 without any alternative avenue of State assistance. I have never heard a murmur of protest from the Liberal or National Parties about the way in which the Federal Government treats Queensland.

At the same time, this Government preserves royalty rates for minerals that contribute a minimal percentage of the State's revenue needs without compensation through high job growth. It allows the jobless ranks in this State to rise by 8 to 10 per cent a year while work opportunities are transported across the NSW border, subsidised, too often, by the Queensland recreation dollar.

I say no more before continuing to the Premier's Estimates except to confirm the priority a Casey Labor Government will direct towards job growth, capital and industry development. It will be a fair Government and an open Government without the almost ludicrous economic securities that entertain the present coalition, and our hands will not be tied by narrow prejudices, delighting a couple of politicians while penalising the population.

I would now like to spend a few minutes speaking in relation to the estimates of expenditure for the Premier's Department. Unfortunately, it has now become apparent that these Estimates will not be debated this year. In fact, the Estimates debate will be very severely restricted.

Once more I refer to Parliament's opportunity to properly analyse the expenditure that it approves. If one goes to the Auditor-General's Report on the Treasurer's Annual Statement, one sees that it states clearly that the appropriation is made by Parliament and that expenditure is approved by Parliament. Parliament does not see one iota of the Government's program of expenditure. It does not see any breakdown of expenditure approved in the documents put before honourable members. In many respects, the Budget is a false document, and it will continue to be a false document till a Public Accounts Committee is established. Opportunity should be given each year for every Estimate to be examined by Parliament, especially because of the way in which our

shadow ministry is now structured. Parliament can really be kept on its toes, and I would sincerely hope that, with the advent of a Labor Government, the Liberal and National Parties in Opposition would also retain shadow Ministers and a committee structure to keep an eye on things.

The mixed-up parliamentary timetable is, of course, completely the fault of the Premier as he endeavours to play a cat-and-mouse game with the Prime Minister as to who wants to front the people first at an election. The only trouble is that no-one—not even the two men themselves, I believe—knows who wants to go first or who wants to go last. However, what we do know is that the people are ready for a crack at both of them as we reach the end of the term of both Parliaments, which have presented us with three of the worst years of Government, both Federal and State, that we have ever seen.

Government Members interjected.

Mr CASEY: When one considers the calibre of some of the Ministers who are attempting to interject, it is no wonder.

An Opposition Member: Has the Minister for Industry and Administrative Services ever made a speech?

Mr CASEY: I cannot recall his making one. It has certainly been a long time. I remember him reading some correspondence in this Chamber.

I suppose that nothing has been more controversial about the Premier since he assumed that office than the Government aircraft and its use as his private and expensive taxi.

The Deputy Premier and Treasurer should not be nodding his head. He is already too well known as "Dr Noddy". He should not nod his head so much. There are some important matters that he, as the Treasurer of the State, should examine in relation to the Government aircraft. He should be greatly concerned about certain important points of economic responsibility concerning the operations of the Government aircraft. Efforts by the Opposition in the Parliament to obtain even the slightest details regarding its use have met with the resistance normally associated with the greatest of State secrets. The Treasurer has been associated with this secrecy when answering questions I have asked him about its use.

From the sketchy details that are available to us from time to time I have been able to piece together some interesting information. Firstly we know that the average flying time is only a little over nine hours per week, and that most of the journeys are from Brisbane to Kingaroy or from Kingaroy to Brisbane.

The Estimates of Ways and Means also tells us that the cost of operating and maintaining the aircraft this year is expected to be \$146,578 or almost \$3,000 a week. But this year we are able to ascertain a realistic costing for hidden away in miscellaneous services is a section classified as "towards the replacement of Government aircraft". The sum of \$178,750 was expended in the 1979-80 financial year and \$471,250 is required for the 1980-81 year.

From that information we are able to glean that the apparent cost over and above the trade-in figure for the old aircraft is \$650,000.

The old aircraft was in service for about five years, while TAA and Ansett usually get about 20 or more years out of their aircraft. Working on this as the normal basis for the State Government the aircraft ownership cost is \$130,000 per year. Therefore total ownership, operational and maintenance costs for this year will be \$276,578 or a weekly cost of \$5,319—or at nine hours a week flying time, \$591 per hour. The going rate for the charter of a similar type of aircraft is about \$250 an hour, with a considerable reduction for long-term rates.

I make it quite clear that I have no objection to the Queensland Government's having its own aircraft. Nor do I in any way object to the Premier's having first priority call on its use at all times. However the simple fact is that it is costing the people of Queensland a fortune to keep this aircraft as a private toy for the Premier.

I again repeat the suggested guide-lines for its operation which I indicated to this Parliament almost two years ago, and which will be put into practice by a Casey-Labor Government.

The Premier must be made accountable for the use of this aircraft. That can only be done by the following means—

1. The transfer of its administrative control to the Transport Department.

2. The establishment of a Government committee comprising the Chairman of the Public Service Board, the Under Secretary of the Premier's Department, the Under Secretary of the Treasury and the Auditor-General to submit draft guide-lines for its future operations with the Premier being given similar priority rights to those available to the Prime Minister in the Commonwealth sphere.

3. The appointment of a senior officer within the controlling department to administer the operations of the aircraft.

4. The complete records of the use of the aircraft including details of all flights, all points of landing and take-off, all passengers, flight times and mileage, the purpose of the use and the servicing and maintenance details and costs are to be kept by this officer and tabled in Parliament twice yearly.

One thing that must certainly happen is that interstate use of the official aircraft for party political campaigning in elections where Queenslanders have no vote or parliamentary connection must cease immediately.

The next aspect of the Premier's Estimates to which I would like to refer relates to the huge increases in expenditure being appropriated for the State Public Relations Bureau. From an actual expenditure totalling \$414,472 last year, the 1980-81 estimate is \$647,651—an increase of 56 per cent.

If we look closely at the figures we see that one of the biggest increases will occur under the heading "Incidental and Miscellaneous Expenses—from \$222,718 last year to \$340,798 this year. How that hides so many activities of the Government! How this Government likes to hide things away in "Incidental and Miscellaneous Expenses"!

Just what does this mean? Why aren't we given a better breakdown of such appropriations? Why can't Parliament be properly informed of the reason for such a big increase in the costs of the State's propaganda machine? We know, of course, that this is election year, and thereby hangs a tale within itself.

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

Mr CASEY: Prior to the luncheon recess I was dealing with some aspects of the Estimates for the Premier's Department, especially the section on the State's propaganda machine as we call it or, as everybody else in Queensland knows it, the State Public Relations Bureau. I mentioned that there is a huge increase in cost and that it is hidden under the simple heading "Incidental and Miscellaneous Expenses." This is an election year and thereby hangs a tale.

Two years ago the cost of the State Public Relations Bureau was \$292,134; now it is almost 2½ times that amount. These are the type of things that the Treasurer should be explaining when he introduces his Budget, rather than making sanctimonious comments about how great his Government is. Unfortunately, as I said before, there is no public accountability by this Government and, therefore, Parliament is not properly informed on the matters that are before us.

A few months ago I forecast the way in which the Small Business Development Corporation would be established. My forecast proved to be spot on, including the granting of the full-time chairmanship to a defeated National Party politician, without Parliament's having any say in the appointment.

Staff and administrative costs total between \$100,000 and \$150,000 and again the Budget document vaguely refers to "Administration expenses, &c." Out of a total Budget appropriation of \$225,000, at least \$100,000 to \$150,000 will be spent on administrative expenses. There will be very

little left to assist the State's many and varied small businesses by way of education activities, seminars, publications, promotions and advertising, much less financial assistance.

Once more we have the charade of the Small Business Development Corporation being the means by which the National Party endeavours to upstage the Liberal Party, and being a vote-catching concern. It will not fool the small business people who are struggling to keep their heads above water because of the impositions of both this Government and the Federal Government.

One aspect of the Premier's Department that is revealed is that the Premier spent \$38,880 on publicity relating to the proposed essential services legislation. It was money which went straight down the drain when he found out during the power dispute—which he, himself, engineered in order to have an excuse to implement his extreme legislation—that it was exactly as Labor had forecast—unworkable.

Nearly \$39,000 was spent on publicity which featured the Premier and what he had to say. And he comes into the Chamber and sanctimoniously blames other Ministers for having excessive expenditures! The expenses incurred by Ministers and ordinary members of Parliament follow the example set by the Premier. That is shown clearly in the Treasurer's Financial Statement.

I would also remind Parliament, because this is another sleight-of-hand trick, that \$100,000 is shown in the Estimates of the Co-ordinator-General's Department for the Queensland International Tourist Centre. It is not being provided to set up something special in the tourist field; it is really for the Iwasaki project which, in itself, has a sad history in Queensland.

From a reading of the Estimates it becomes quite clear that, for the Premier's Department, as with all other departments, no full or accurate assessment of the way in which appropriations by this Parliament have been spent is possible until such time as a parliamentary accounts committee has been established as the people's watch-dog. Only then will we have proper public accountability in Queensland.

Mr W. D. HEWITT (Greenslopes) (2.20 p.m.): We have had inflicted upon us today a liturgy of gloom, depression and despondency. Nothing is right with the State of Queensland, the economy is shot to pieces and only the advent of a Labor Government can correct it. That is the basic proposition put forward by the Leader of the Opposition, a proposition which is totally false, which cannot be sustained by any fact and in fact is unsustainable in the face of hard, concrete evidence with regard to the economy of Queensland. The indisputable facts are that Queensland is enjoying the fastest population growth of any State in Australia; it has the

most exciting economic growth—real and potential—and it manages to sustain the lowest rate of State taxation of Australia.

It would be useful if the Leader of the Opposition occasionally would make some concession; if he would start his observations by acknowledging that the economy is sound but that in some way his policies could further improve it. How often we hear people, in lamenting political practitioners today, say that they will never agree to anything; they argue and attack and criticise because they think that is their allotted role in life. It is not their allotted role, and if some concession, some admission was made that in fact our economy was sound but that their alternative policies could improve it further, then they would have a base upon which they could then advance.

The Leader of the Opposition made a number of very startling allegations which bear close examination. He opened his attack by referring to slogans that the Liberal Party has used on different occasions in election campaigns. One would readily concede that some of those slogans have been rather nonsensical—"Send for the doctor", "Turn on the lights". They filled a number of us with misgivings and did not do much to sustain the campaign, but if they were not the best slogans in the world, surely the most ludicrous slogan presently abroad is that put out by the Labor Party—"Labor—ready to govern".

Mr Austin: What a joke!

Mr W. D. HEWITT: My friend from Wavell sums it up in a few words, "What a joke!"—"Labor—ready to govern". The Opposition Leader would be well advised to look at some of the slogans that he is wedded to.

But that is small tea. Let us look at the more important thrusts of his argument today. He dismissed the mining industry with two sentences. He related the income that this State enjoys by way of royalty as a percentage of total Consolidated Revenue, and with a sweep of the hand his case was proven. That is what the mining industry is worth to Queensland as far as he is concerned. His argument totally ignored and disregarded the enormous infrastructure of our mining industry in Central Queensland, the enormous employment opportunity that it has brought to this State and the wonderfully successful decentralisation programs that we have been able to implement as a consequence.

This State has just passed through 11 weeks of the most crippling strike that this nation has ever known. The mining industry of Queensland came to a standstill. Yet the Leader of the Opposition determines the value of mining in this State on royalties alone. It would be hard to imagine a more

slick or superficial argument than that. Not one mention was made of the very significant contribution that the mining infrastructure is making to this State. To dismiss it so simply was to pay a very poor compliment to that great industry.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about economic strategy. I think that is a good thing. We should all talk about economic strategy. We should break out of the strait-jacket that we have imposed upon ourselves so that we talk about our economy only one year at a time. For years I have spoken about Budgets that should be looking three or four years into the future, and the enormous help that such predictions would make, particularly to the heavy industries of this State. So, the proposition is sound enough: there should be an economic strategy.

But he then committed the Labor Party, if it assumed Government at the end of this year, to bringing down an interim Budget early next year. That is an interesting proposition, and it begs the question: what would the interim Budget contain? To attempt to answer that question, we go to the policy document put forward by the Australian Labor Party at its Rockhampton conference in 1979. We fall upon the most interesting proposition under the heading "Public Sector", which tells us—

"An A.L.P. Government in Queensland will take all steps necessary to protect and expand the public sector in this State, recognising that a thriving public sector, including State-owned enterprise, is a practical and responsible method of ensuring that the resources of Queensland are enjoyed equally by all Queenslanders."

The fact is that such a policy is neither practicable nor responsible. The history of State-owned enterprises and the massive expansion of public sector spending is proof positive of that argument.

Mr Porter: They want to nationalise motels.

Mr W. D. HEWITT: Yes, indeed. There is the proposition that even motels should be nationalised. So we could anticipate that the interim Budget promised by the Leader of the Opposition in 1981, if he led his party to office—

Mr K. J. Hooper: Not "if".

Mr W. D. HEWITT: Oh, I emphasised the word "if"!

Mr K. J. Hooper: You should have used the word "when".

Mr W. D. HEWITT: The member for Archerfield is a little testy these days; we must treat him kindly.

Mr K. J. Hooper: I am in a marginal seat! Why wouldn't I be?

Mr W. D. HEWITT: I understand the problems with marginal seats, yes.

I repeat: it could be anticipated that that interim Budget would move massively into public sector activity, to the creation of State-owned enterprises; a movement towards all of those things that have spelt absolute disaster and tragedy for past Labor Governments.

The Leader of the Opposition also referred to the movement in State taxation and set out to prove that the growth in State taxation in Queensland has been massive and that we are bending heavily under the load that is imposed upon us. It is worth repeating once again the tax scale that I mentioned in an Appropriation debate in this House a few weeks ago, which analysed the State taxation structures in all of the States. A few most interesting things emerge. We find that, taking all of the heads of State taxation, the Australian average per capita is \$420.54. In Queensland, the per capita average is \$332.32, which is significantly below the Australian average and the level of every other State. The Northern Territory is excluded because it does not have the same tax structures.

In looking at this table, and repeating again the Australian average of \$420 per head, the interesting thing is that the average in the Labor-governed State of New South Wales is \$462 per capita. So Queenslanders are paying nearly \$100 a head less than the average in State taxation; our New South Welshmen a few miles down the road are paying \$42 more.

For some fallacious reason, the Leader of the Opposition chooses to castigate us on the structure of our taxation. We hold and maintain the very proud record that in State taxation we are the lowest-taxed Australians in the whole of the continent. To talk merely about percentage movements from a few years ago to the present time disregards totally the movements in cost of living and other factors which make it necessary for governments also to maintain their level of expenditure.

The honourable gentleman took to task the party that I am privileged and honoured to support when he said that Liberals in Government would not reduce big government. The fact is that we have pledged ourselves to look critically at all statutory authorities in this State and, to my knowledge at least, we are the only ones to say quite definitely that we support the principle of sunset legislation.

Mr Warburton: You have been in Government for 23 years.

Mr W. D. HEWITT: The honourable gentleman puts too many years on my shoulders. I have been in this place for 44 years.

Mr Warburton: I am talking about the Government of which you are a part.

Mr W. D. HEWITT: One should choose one's pronouns a little more carefully.

Mr Greenwood: He is a good numbers man, if nothing else.

Mr W. D. HEWITT: Yes.

The fact is that sunset legislation has been enormously successful in some 27 of the American States and this style of legislation should be implemented with some urgency in the State of Queensland. The dozens of boards, bodies and authorities that have been permitted to proliferate for too long should be brought to account. But for the honourable gentleman to say that we would do nothing about big government is to disregard totally the undertakings that we have given to the Queensland electorate.

It was to be expected that he would take us to task with regard to the movement in rail freights. One would say that there is some vulnerability there and that is an obvious point that the Leader of the Opposition would home in on. He would have been more convincing if he could have put aside the history of his own party. There was one time during the years of Labor Government when for seven consecutive years there was movement in railway freights. The honourable gentleman chooses to forget the former Labor Prime Minister of Australia (Mr Gough Whitlam) who made the simple proposition that it should always be the user who pays. It was because of that policy that there were enormous cost increases, particularly with regard to air traffic and air fares.

I did not hear all the speech of the Leader of the Opposition but from reports in today's "Telegraph" I assume that he made some reference to the return of taxing powers to the States. He holds up this thought—this fear—and puts in the minds of Queensland people that we are to superimpose a State form of taxation in 1981 additional to the Commonwealth taxation, which the Commonwealth has enjoyed exclusively since 1941 when it took over those powers on a temporary basis for the duration of the war. Forty years later there is no willingness on the part of any of the States to take up their taxing powers.

We can analyse very closely the long years of the Menzies Government and the many times when Sir Robert Menzies made the offer to return taxing powers to the States. On one occasion he set up a very high-powered committee to determine the ways in which the taxing powers could be returned to the States. That committee found that there were enormous dilemmas in doing just that, because the question of company taxation in particular was one of the very complex fields that could not be finally resolved. But the important thing is that the States have totally resisted the proposition

that taxing powers should be returned to them and there is no evidence at all to suggest that that resistance is in any way diluted.

It is an easy system to have the people and companies taxed at one source and disbursements made as they have been made very successfully now for many, many years. We will continue to argue about the formula; we will continue to argue that a State such as Queensland contributes an enormous amount and is entitled to receive more back by virtue of the great contribution it makes through export earnings. However, it is not good enough to say there is to be a State income tax when every last piece of evidence is very much to the contrary.

We debate today a very constructive document, which shows that the resources of this State are being well husbanded, notwithstanding the very damaging impact of the strike that has just ended. A number of very commendable initiatives have been outlined in that document. It is a document of which any reasonable person can be proud. It is one that applies itself to the economic problems of the State and attempts to find solutions to many of them.

If I am to lament anything at all, I lament the fact that we do not make projections further forward than one year at a time. I am on record as saying that enough times now without repeating the argument once again. If I have another regret, it is that very few people in this country today seem willing or able to address themselves to the long-term problems that face us. I believe we should. A person on one occasion said that a politician thinks of the next election and a statesman thinks of the next generation. We should ask the statesmen of Australia to stand up and be counted. Enormous problems confront us that certainly will not be solved by the next election. They probably will not be solved in the next 10 years, but they are problems we should be addressing ourselves to and, in a corporate sense, attempting to find some solutions to them. I want to touch upon a few of them today.

I lament the fact that these days there is no debate or discussion about basic political philosophies. When I started in politics some 30 years ago, at almost any given week somewhere someone was prepared, capable and able to extol the virtues of the socialist system. There was someone on my side of politics equally capable of extolling the virtues of the free-enterprise system. There was a constant coming together, a constant helping of young people to arrive at their own conclusions. I see little of that exercise these days. That is genuinely to be regretted because every political party, if it claims to be wedded to a philosophy, should be willing, able and anxious to be in the market-place explaining it, extolling it. It is not happening and that is a matter of great regret.

The second thing is that we should be addressing ourselves to what I consider to be the short-term problems of the nation. These short-term problems are ones that presently face us and will be further aggravated in the next decade. Those are the problems of employment and unemployment; the impact of technology and computerisation and how we react to it. People talk about longer long service leave, earlier retirement, longer holidays and job-sharing. The fact of the matter is that probably we can afford none of them at the moment—none of them—but should be talking about all of them. We should be addressing ourselves quite clearly to the great problems that face us and trying in a most responsible fashion to find some solutions to them.

The third thing that I refer to are those long-term problems that I mentioned in this Chamber a few weeks ago. By about the end of the first decade in the 21st Century, society will have reached the crazy situation where people in the work-force will almost collapse under the taxation burden then imposed upon them. The gallery this afternoon is filled with young, bright students and it is encouraging to see them here. If they are successful in their professions—and we all wish them well—those young men will be at the height of their professional careers by about the year 2010. By then, with the lower birth rate, earlier retirement and longer life expectancy, those then in the work-force and paying their taxes will have an almost unbearable burden imposed upon them. Those of us who are now in this Chamber will be the recipients of the benefits then being handed out, if by then we have not gone to our greater reward. But the young people, those on the threshold of their careers, should quite deliberately address themselves to these problems, because solutions must be found in the next 20 years or so if the problems are to be solved.

One solution that I would put forward is a massive change in the taxation policies of this country so that there is in fact encouragement to women to have larger families and to have them a little earlier in their life. Incentives of that type could be built into the taxation structure, and we should be looking at them.

I began my observations by saying that there is little evidence in this nation that anyone is prepared to address himself to the long-term problems of the nation. It is about time we all did that, and it is appropriate to make those references when discussing a Budget document such as this. I would hope that on some occasion honourable members can be given greater opportunity, perhaps by way of papers presented by the Government making certain projections and predictions, to present their solutions and their observations on those solutions. Certainly, the problems that beset us in a very complex society will not be lessened. However, there is a great obligation upon people such as us who are in

public life to try to understand them and find solutions to them, or to assist others to find solutions to them.

Mrs KIPPIN (Mourilyan) (2.42 p.m.): In contributing to the Budget debate, I first congratulate the Treasurer on his presentation of the Budget. It has been called all sorts of things—dull, unimaginative, uninteresting. All I can say is that I believe it is a very sound basis for the continued economic and social development of the State.

If one looks at the development of Queensland over the last 10 years or so, one sees that it has been phenomenal. I should like to ask many of those who criticise to indicate where innovations can be introduced. Of course, all of us can say that we would like additional money spent in various areas, but we must look at the situation responsibly. There are things in the Budget that I would have liked to see developed further. However, the Budget must be balanced. It is essential that a State such as Queensland does balance its Budget; we cannot afford to overspend. Therefore, I believe that the Treasurer has done a pretty good job in presenting the Budget this year.

People generally feel that the present level of taxation is very close to inhibiting not only personal endeavour but also development throughout the State. There has been a great deal of talk about a tax revolt. I think that is largely media talk. Nevertheless, as a State, we must be very careful not to get ourselves into a situation in which we have to impose a State tax to balance the Budget. I do not believe that people would tolerate any increase in the level of taxation.

Mr D'Arcy: Particularly just before an election.

Mrs KIPPIN: No, not only before an election; at any time. People feel that they are being taxed to the limit. This became apparent to me during the campaign conducted by the Queensland Teachers Union for additional spending on education. In the last year, I have attended quite a number of p. and c. meetings at which all present have indicated that they believe that additional expenditure is needed at their school. I have asked each of those associations whether it would be prepared to contribute to a tax specifically for education if it is so concerned about education in Queensland being deprived of the necessary finance. I have yet to meet members of a p. and c. who would vote in favour of an additional State tax, even if it were to be directed back into education.

I referred to the need for the State to balance its Budget. In that context I am particularly pleased to see the improved circumstances of a number of primary industries over the last couple of years. I will

refer firstly to the sugar industry. The delivery price to farmers this year will be higher than it has been in the past few years. The sugar crop this year should be worth as much as \$527m, an increase of 37 per cent on the last season. That means a great deal not only to the sugar farmers but to Queensland as a whole. In North Queensland we have a saying that if the sugar industry sneezes our provincial towns catch a cold.

Most sugar producers agree that they are now receiving a just return for their product. However, the better returns are required to meet the tremendous increase in cost of production and the expansion costs with which growers are faced. The farmers believe that their sugar industry is viable once again. Their confidence is based principally on the long-term export contracts negotiated for a considerable proportion of the sugar produced. Indeed, we have long-term contracts for approximately 1.2m tonnes. The farmers' confidence has also been boosted by the buoyant free-market price for any uncommitted production. This year it seems that we will sell about 1.2m tonnes on the world free market.

Mr Davis: How about the consumers?

Mrs KIPPIN: The Australian consumers are looked after very nicely by the sugar industry. The price of sugar in Australia is amongst the lowest in sugar-producing countries throughout the world. The Australian sugar consumer has much to thank the industry for.

We must pay tribute to the Australian team at the last International Sugar Agreement negotiations for their efforts. Their expertise certainly placed the Australian sugar industry in a good situation. At the time of the negotiations considerable criticism was levelled by the Leader of the Opposition in Queensland at the team's efforts. He condemned in this Chamber the efforts of that team and what it achieved for the Australian sugar industry.

Dr Edwards: He does not understand anything about it.

Mrs KIPPIN: That is so.

The advancement in sugar prices in the last two years has certainly silenced the Leader of the Opposition and other critics who condemned the International Sugar Agreement when it was first announced. His criticism was aimed mainly at that part of the agreement which required Australia to hold in store considerable stocks of sugar against the time when shortages in production could force sugar prices to an unreasonable level. In the mid '70s extremely high sugar prices almost destroyed the orderly marketing of world sugar. The tremendous buyer resistance that developed eventually reacted against the sugar producers in Queensland.

They suffered a drastic slump in prices, and following that they had a number of very lean years.

The sugar stocks that were so strongly criticised under the last International Sugar Agreement helped significantly to stabilise world sugar prices last year. That is commonly accepted by the sugar industry generally.

Unfortunately, not all producing countries managed to fill their stores, but it is certainly to the credit of Australian producers that they have been able to meet the commitments made for them in the agreement. It is to be hoped that Australian negotiators will be as successful in 1982 when the International Sugar Agreement comes up for renegotiation.

It is all very well having an agreement on a world market, but it is up to Australians and Queenslanders in particular, because most of the shipments go through Queensland ports or out of the capital cities of Australia, to make sure that Australia maintains its reputation for reliability of delivery. I cannot stress too strongly the importance of this reliability in the world sugar market; it is a very competitive market.

A few years ago Queensland cane farmers were angered by what they saw as a failure by Japan to honour a long-term agreement for the purchase of our sugar.

Mr Blake: And rightly so.

Mrs KIPPIN: Yes, rightly so, but Australia maintained its reputation for delivery and, to date, we have not been embarrassed by the non-delivery of sugar sold on contract. This is terribly important. In such a competitive market it is imperative that we should never be embarrassed in this way. Recently, during the coal dispute, we have seen that unreliability damages not only the industry but also the State.

From recent Press articles it would appear that there is a market for refined sugar in some of our lesser developed near neighbours. It was reported last year that France supplied large quantities of refined sugar to markets near Australia. Indonesia is believed to have imported about \$2m worth of European Economic Community sugar. The year before last the Australian sugar industry was extremely indignant when New Guinea purchased EEC sugar instead of sugar from Australia. These sales indicate the presence of a market near Australia for our refined sugar.

I would very much like to see those responsible for marketing Australian sugar look carefully at the possibility of exporting refined sugar to those countries and, in fact, to other undeveloped countries in South East Asia. Admittedly, the sugar supplied by the EEC countries is very heavily subsidised by the European Common Market, but the

Australian industry has the advantage of proximity over EEC suppliers, especially to South East Asia. Therefore we would be faced with much lower transport costs, and we all know what transport costs mean to industry today.

Upon investigation, these markets may be available for the export of refined sugar from Australia. To be able to increase our sales of refined sugar in new markets such as these would be extremely advantageous to the industry, particularly in the renegotiation of the ISA in a couple of years' time. If we can increase our sales to new markets, we will be put in a better light and on a better footing in future negotiations of the ISA.

I am extremely pleased that the Treasurer has seen fit not to increase the rail freight rates on the cartage of raw sugar. This is only fair as the rates for raw sugar have been increased significantly in past Budgets compared with the rates applying to the haulage of other primary products. It is sugar's turn this year.

The increase of 5 per cent on the rates for sugar-cane proves further the wisdom of the sugar mills in the Innisfail district in purchasing the Government-owned tramway more than three years ago. The efficiency effected by these mills in the transport of their own cane has meant tremendous savings and, of course, added benefits to their own growers.

The general increase in rail freights will be sorely felt by all North Queenslanders, but they are felt more specifically by primary producers who just cannot pass on these increased costs. Primary producers are at the end of the line. They have to pay the increased costs, yet they have to take whatever price they can get for their products on the open market. So they are the meat in the sandwich. Such increases in operating costs are causing all primary producers to look carefully at increasing production in relation to the returns received for their efforts.

It is expected that world demand for sugar this year could be in excess of production, so the sugar industry has had to consider expansion. I believe that the Australian sugar industry should take advantage of the increase in world demand, because if the demand is there then someone will surely take of advantage of it. There is little use Australian producers saying, "No, we won't expand because our expansion could eventually cause a glut on the world market." I believe this will happen whether Australia chooses to expand or some other sugar-producing country chooses to do so. I am of the firm belief that we should take advantage of the present demand for sugar. Queensland is in a particularly good position to respond to this demand to the advantage not only of cane producers but the entire State.

I was pleased, however, to see the Government take a cautious approach in accepting the recommendation of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board that the industry plan for an increase of 5 per cent in this season's crop. I believe it was a very sensible approach, because we must be very careful not to disadvantage farmers who are unable to take advantage of a period of expansion, and my electorate of Mourilyan is particularly sensitive in this regard. If we do not look after these people we could see them disadvantaged by a higher percentage of overseas price in the No. 1 Pool. Should the overseas price be forced down by a glut on the world market then we could see a change in the structure of the No. 1 Pool price. Farmers who are dependent on the No. 1 Pool price for their viability would then be disadvantaged in two ways.

The Government must bear in mind the effect that fluctuations in world prices have on the No. 1 Pool. Any expansion must not place at risk the level of the No. 1 Pool price as the viability of the whole industry is in fact based on that price. At the present time long-term contracts are approximately equivalent to free market sales, so there is a little difference there. It does not matter whether we increase our production and have more long-term contracts or free market price sales, but we must be very careful because when the world free market price falls, the farmers—usually the smaller farmers in areas with very little land available for increased production—are disadvantaged.

I believe that another thing that has helped the sugar industry is the establishment of a home consumption price formula. In the past every time the sugar industry felt it needed an increase in the home consumption price it had to go cap in hand to the Federal Government and plead for an increase. For a long period when overseas prices were particularly good the sugar industry did not bother to ask for an increase in the home consumption price.

However, in the mid-1970s, when overseas sugar prices fell drastically, the sugar industry felt justified in asking for an increase in the domestic price. The industry was really put through the third degree. It had to make a number of submissions to the Federal Government. It took more than 12 months to finally achieve an increase in sugar prices. This was quite demeaning to the sugar industry. It felt that it was a slap in the face. Over the years the industry had not bothered asking for gradual increases because it was quite well off.

There has been a bit of dissention in the sugar industry about the formula used for fixing the home consumption price. The formula was a very good starting point, and I hope that in due course it will be able to be renegotiated to the advantage of the sugar industry. The formula is more or less indexed according to increases in the cost of living and inflationary trends. The

basis of the formula was established in the McKinnon report, but it will take a little time to see how it will work. I believe that it is a very good basis and that in due course the sugar industry will be quite satisfied with it.

I have talked about improvements in the sugar industry. Fortunately, beef prices have improved, too. Most primary industries throughout my area of North Queensland are particularly viable. However, Queenslanders must be constantly reminded of the fact that the standard of living in this State depends on the income derived by our primary industries and our mining industry. There are definitely no innovations in the Treasurer's Budget providing improved benefits to either primary producers or miners. I do not disagree with that, but I think people should be ever aware that when primary producers fall on bad times they are entitled to assistance out of the "trough", as we term it.

Another particularly pleasing provision in the Budget related to an increase in allowances to apprentices on block-release training. The allowances paid to apprentices have been increased by an average of 25 per cent, and apprentices will appreciate that. Last week in the House I raised the problem facing apprentices who have to leave home for their block-release training. The new rates will be \$24 a week for a first-year apprentice, \$20 a week for a second-year apprentice and \$17.50 a week for a third-year apprentice. Those rates do not really cover the accommodation expenses of apprentices who are forced to go to areas where accommodation is in short supply; I speak specifically of the Cairns district. Many Innisfail apprentices have to go to Cairns for their block-release training.

When this scheme was first introduced, Innisfail employers agreed to it because they were under the impression that there would be established at the Cairns College of Advanced Education either a dormitory block or an accommodation block for apprentices. I fully appreciate that the development explosion in TAFE courses throughout Queensland has caused a tremendous drain on the Education Department's funds and the resources available to TAFE colleges, but there is a serious problem here. There are certainly no hostels available to apprentices going to Cairns for their block-release training. In my electorate a number of apprentices live in caravan parks. In fact, a couple of them are living in their own tent in a caravan park. A number of them have to live in hostels and share rooms with permanent lodgers who are usually older men with permanent positions in the town. Such situations are most unsatisfactory for studying.

As the block-release programme is crucial to apprenticeship training, some of the boys have been seriously disadvantaged by the lack of suitable accommodation during this critical period of their training. So that is something that I believe the Government will have to

pay some attention to. I know that there is some accommodation for first-year apprentices at Kedron and that has been much appreciated by northern parents in the past. However, more and more northern people do not travel all the way to Brisbane; they go to Cairns, Townsville or possibly Rockhampton. The Government must look at providing at least hostel accommodation for first-year apprentices.

Another area that has been considerably discussed all year is the level of road-funding in our State. We can all say that our roads would be very much better if the Commonwealth gave us more money and I fully support the Minister for Main Roads in his push for additional funding for Queensland's roads. That money does not have to come from the petrol tax; I do not care where it comes from. But I believe that the Federal Government must urgently look at providing additional funding to Queensland. In the last couple of years we have seen tremendous development in tourism in Queensland and in the next couple of years there will be a tourism explosion.

A lot of attention is given to international tourists, but we must realise that a very high percentage of tourists in Queensland are Australians, both from within Queensland and from the other Australian States. Those people spend a lot of time travelling on our roads. That additional traffic on the roads means that we need a well-developed highway system from Brisbane all the way through to Cairns and back again. When I say "back again", I think specifically of inland Queensland, because Queensland is a State which varies vastly and someone who drives up the coast from Brisbane to Cairns and then returns by an inland route really experiences two holidays for the price of one. So I believe that the State is justified in appealing to the Commonwealth for additional road funds.

However, I maintain that our road system is really not quite as bad as a lot of members opposite would like to make out. In the life of this Government, we have seen tremendous development of our road system. That is amazing, particularly when one thinks of the mileage of bitumen road that has been achieved over a vast area with a sparse population. I wish to read to the Chamber a letter from yesterday's "Courier-Mail" because it expresses what I have felt for some considerable time. It was written by a K. F. Mollard from Victoria. Normally it is interstate people who complain about our roads, because they are not used to travelling on roads which, compared with some of the highways in their own States, are narrow. Mr Mollard wrote—

"Having just driven from the railhead at Murwillumbah, New South Wales, to Port Douglas and Mossman, returning via the Atherton Tablelands, and Burnett Highway to Kingaroy, Toowoomba, Goondiwindi

and Newell Highway to Melbourne, I am writing to say how very impressed my wife and I were with Queensland.

"In our opinion the roads were excellent and the so-called 'horror stretch' between Rockhampton and Mackay failed completely to live up to its reputation.

"Between Bundaberg and Mackay, I burst a radiator hose and within two minutes of raising the car bonnet two trucks and a car stopped to assist."

That pleases me tremendously. The letter continues—

"The truckie who took charge had us on our way within 15 minutes, and, if he happens to read this, we would like again to express our grateful thanks.

"The many people we met were unfailingly very pleasant and friendly. The scenery was consistently good and absolutely magnificent north of Ingham.

"Any ignorant southerners who criticise your magnificent State in our hearing will be in for several hundred well chosen words in correction."

I believe that that letter expresses the feelings of many tourists after they have concluded their visit to Queensland. Our roads are not nearly as bad as most of our critics allege. Admittedly, there are areas where we would definitely like to see improvement. I have many secondary roads in my electorate that urgently need upgrading. Of course, for this we must turn to the Federal Government for additional road funding.

This Budget is a most creditable one. Credit is due not only to the Treasurer but also to the other Ministers of our Government who have been responsible for the compilation of the budgets of their own departments.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Do you endorse the Budget?

Mrs KIPPIN: Yes, of course I do.

An area in which additional funding is needed is one that has not received much increase for many years. I refer to assistance to the small mining industry. I have sizeable tin-mining areas in my electorate. With the price of tin being considerably higher in the last couple of years than for some time past, there has been a tremendous influx of small miners into the Herberton/Mt Garnet district. Of course, today mining requires a lot of machinery, whether the operator is a company or a small miner. This has put a tremendous strain on the local authority in that area, the Herberton Shire Council, which does not have many ratepayers. It has been very difficult for it to maintain the endless miles of mining roads in its area. I have no doubt that requests have been made for additional funding for mining roads, but I would like the Treasurer to look very carefully at this matter and give it further consideration as the year goes by.

I would also like to see more money available as loans for small miners, who are faced with very high machinery costs. A number of these fellows have quite viable mines, if only they could get started. They spend a considerable amount of time on unemployment benefits, so if they could be given financial support to purchase machinery the nation as a whole would benefit.

Before last week's adjournment the member for Cook presented a petition on behalf of the Ravenshoe ALP protesting at the grant of two mining leases along the Wild River in the area of the Innot Hot Springs. The feeling against mining development on mining fields just has to stop. The signatories on that petition were not miners. They were people who had taken advantage of the MHPL system—the granting of miner's homestead perpetual leases without competition. A lot of them are small farmers. They might keep bees or a few cows. They are responsible for very little production and contribute very little to the economy of the State.

The most interesting point about the petition is that it does not have the support of the Mt Garnet branch of the ALP. Its members are all involved in tin-mining, and for quite a number of years they have been concerned that the dredges on which they are employed might have to cease operating because tin deposits may not be available.

Dr Edwards: Are the Mt Garnet people members of the "old guard" or the "new guard"?

Mrs KIPPIN: I believe that the Mt Garnet branch of the ALP definitely belongs to the "old guard". There is an old-established community in Mt Garnet and the people there understand fully that their standards of living are dependent upon the production in mining areas. I believe that they take a very sensible approach to the question of conservation. The mining company involved is required to return the area to a reasonable standard when it has finished mining, and it has a pretty good track record in that respect.

Mr K. J. Hooper: It is tin-mining at Mt Garnet, isn't it?

Mrs KIPPIN: Yes. I reiterate that Queenslanders must be ever conscious of the need for increased production, because our standard of living rests on increases in all forms of production.

Mr WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (3.16 p.m.): During the debate on the Appropriation Bill about two weeks ago, I made a number of criticisms in relation to the poor treatment that Queensland has been receiving from the Commonwealth Government, especially

at the hands of Mr Fraser and Mr Howard. Having considered the Treasurer's Financial Statement in the last few days, I believe it is apparent that he is well aware of this problem, and I note that in introducing the Budget he has substantiated my criticisms.

It would seem that Queensland is placed in something of a financial strait-jacket by the financial arrangements between the Commonwealth and the States, and I should like to bring to the notice of members the type of comment made by the Treasurer and emphasise and reiterate it so that people might begin to understand what is happening in Australia. Repeatedly throughout his speech the Treasurer referred to the specific financial arrangements that I mentioned, and he summed it up in one way by speaking about the uncertainty that Queensland faces in the future relative to Commonwealth general revenue assistance to the States.

It is quite obvious from what he said that there has been no real improvement in the Commonwealth's assistance, that there will be no substantial improvement in the future. When one realises that the tax-sharing arrangements have been tied to 1979-80, with only a one-year guarantee, one sees that it does not give any Treasurer or any Government the opportunity to plan ahead. I appreciate that the Commonwealth Grants Commission is carrying out a review of the tax-sharing arrangements; but I prophesy here and now that that review will not be in the interests of Queensland or the other States.

One notes that Commonwealth loan allocations increased by only 5 per cent. That certainly was not sufficient to maintain the real value of work able to be done. The allocation of \$173.3m is over \$80m less than the amount needed to maintain real work value, not for 1979 but for the 1977-78 financial year. Again, Commonwealth allocations for roads and housing are well below the acknowledged needs. Continuing restraint is being imposed in the field of capital works because of the policies that are being foisted upon the people of Queensland by the Commonwealth Government.

Despite the massive increase in the cost of fuel—something like 240 per cent in the last three years—no special assistance is being given. It is no wonder that the people of this State are facing high increases in freight and general fare charges. As the Treasurer said, the Commonwealth is pursuing a no-growth, no-improvement policy in the field of hospitals and other health services. This means that we, as a State, without alternative resources, will be held to such a policy.

The Treasurer also made the point that the Commonwealth's position on this issue was absurd and unreal. I am totally in agreement with him. In his statement he projected a shortfall of some \$11m if the

negotiations presently proceeding are not successful. I reiterate that any negotiations which this State or other States may embark upon have no guarantee of success because of the way the States are treated at the moment.

The Commonwealth's refusal to adopt the 50/50 cost-sharing arrangements on the upgrading of health services must create tremendous strain and extreme difficulty in administering the hospital program. That point, too, was raised by the Treasurer.

Another point I took from the Treasurer's statement concerns the Commonwealth's progressively and unilaterally reducing its percentage contribution, thereby forcing the States to make a larger contribution in funding the gap. There is a continued drop in Commonwealth funding in real terms in such facilities as community kindergartens. The loan allocation of \$173.3m, while representing an increase of 5 per cent on that for 1979-80, is still 8.8 per cent less than the allocation for 1977-78. As has been stated, that represents a decline in real terms of over 30 per cent, or \$80m, in work value over three years.

The people of Queensland and this Parliament have every reason to be angry with the Fraser Government. It has reneged on promises, and since 1975 has constantly forced the States into a worsening financial situation. In acting almost like a dictator, it is introducing financial centralism that is unprecedented. In doing so, it is lessening the capacity of the States to meet the needs of their people. It is progressively reducing the independence of Queensland and the other States in formulating their own economic policies. Overall, it is placing a stranglehold on initiative, a halter on development, and it is certainly destroying ability to plan. When this type of situation exists, one could well start to wonder why anyone would want to be in government in a State Parliament.

For these reasons Queensland and other States over the next decade are facing a crisis. In fact, they are facing the crisis time now—a time when, to an ever greater extent, the State Governments will be pushed into the background. It is apparent that the Fraser financial arrangements mean a continuing transferral of decision-making power from the States to the Commonwealth. It is evident that the Fraser/Anthony Government has embarked upon a definite, calculated plan to eventually make the States no more than an extension of the Commonwealth's bureaucracy.

The States are being tied hand and foot. They are becoming administrators rather than decision-makers. With all due respect to the Treasurer, it is fairly obvious that his pleas and those of the Government have fallen on deaf ears in Canberra. We have no guarantees on future tax-sharing arrangements; we have no certainty of continued

funding of loan programs. Unilateral decisions have been made under which the Commonwealth is prepared to break promises and agreements. There have been cut-backs in percentage contributions for specific expenditure on such things as hospitals and health services. There has been repeated interference in State responsibilities. In line with this interference is a constantly increasing measure of State administrative responsibilities, together with a decreasing, and sometimes total removal, of financial assistance previously given by Liberal Governments and the Labor Government in 1972-75.

The question arises as to whether or not the Queensland Government is prepared to cop this situation. It may well be said that efforts have been made, that the Treasurer himself has gone to some pains to press the Commonwealth Government into giving Queensland a better deal. I appreciate that some cognisance of Queensland's special situation, because of the wrong assessment of population, has meant an increase in some funds. However, it is fairly obvious that political affiliation—whether it be Liberal or National—means nothing to the Fraser/Howard team; it carries no weight. I am saying that the time to rebel has come; that there is a need for the Treasurer, in his role as State Treasurer and leader of a party in this State, to call a special conference of the States.

Dr Edwards: There's one on Friday.

Mr WRIGHT: I want to go further than that. I am talking about a special conference of all the State Governments, with representatives of all the parties in Parliament. This is a threat to all, and that conference should be representative of Government members and of Opposition members. I stress that it ought to be held quickly, and definitely before the Federal election anticipated in November.

It is time to set aside our party politics on this issue because we have a common enemy. Our weapon, if we can put them together, is votes. Queensland has shown in the past that it is prepared to play politics with its money. This is one time that I would agree with it. A precedent was set when the Whitlam Government was in power. This State spent hundreds of thousands of dollars fighting Mr Whitlam—so often, totally without cause.

The threat is far greater. The threat that we have here will have a massive impact on every person in this nation. There is little use in Queensland's embarking on a fight in isolation. The only way that we will win this fight—and it is a fight; it is a war—is to co-ordinate our forces electorally, physically and financially. We are dealing with a Commonwealth Government that is determined to centralise the financial controls of this nation. We are dealing with a Government that is dishonest, untrustworthy and totally irresponsible.

We need only hark back to the Central Queensland strike, the strike that centred around the Federal Government's imposition of a tax on subsidised housing. It was a strike that cost this country something like \$350m and, 10 weeks after it started, 10 weeks after the trade unionists put forward a reasonable program under which that tax was not to be imposed or applied, the Commonwealth Government comes back and says that there will be no tax for this year and possibly for ever after. That whole matter could have been resolved 10 weeks ago.

It shows how Fraser and Howard and the Federal Government are prepared to act on national crises and issues. The Fraser/Howard Government deserves the utmost contempt for the way it handled that issue, because of its unrelenting stubbornness regardless of the economic consequences it was causing.

There is a real need for this Government to see the Fraser policies for what they are. They are anti-State, anti-people and anti-Australian. Mr Fraser and his cohorts will listen only if electoral defeat is guaranteed. He will listen only if the people of Queensland and of every other State are prepared to tell him just that through the ballot-box.

To do that, the people need to be told of the short-term and long-term consequences of Fraser federalism. They need to be told of the effect that it is having on their individual quality of life and of the fact that they themselves are the ones who suffer in the long run because services cannot be rendered, capital works programs cannot be initiated or carried out and employment cannot be provided.

The States have an opportunity that will not rise again for another three years. They have an opportunity to act now, because they have the political capacity to carry out any decision and the State conference that I am advocating ought to be held. The answer is to defeat Fraser electorally. That will happen anyway with Bill Hayden but, in the game of politics, one cannot always be sure. The States cannot risk another three years like the last three years. We must have some type of guarantee that, regardless of who controls the Treasury benches in Canberra, that Government will be a partner in running this country and not an economic dictator.

If the Treasurer means what he says in his speech and if he really means the criticisms that he has levelled at the Federal Government's economic policies, he will accept my advice and immediately initiate what may well become a conference of war among the States against Canberra. It is of the utmost importance that we co-ordinate our abilities, our capacities and our activities to let the people of Australia know exactly what is taking place and exactly how it will affect them.

Whilst I acknowledge the excesses of the Fraser Government and whilst I appreciate the restrictive nature of Fraser federalism on this Government and every other State Government, the Government's application of the resources available to this State is also open to criticism. I read the Treasurer's Financial Statement a number of times to glean what I could about what the initiatives really are. They come down to three main areas besides nominal increases in certain benefits paid to people and organisations. One of the main initiatives is a subsidy to local authorities of 50 per cent of the cost of additional—and I stress “additional”—pensioner rebates, up to a maximum limit of 75 per cent of the rates payable.

The second initiative is an allocation of \$30,000 to assist organisations in providing counselling services in the community, and the third is an initial \$100,000 allocation towards the cost of the International Year of the Disabled. I do not think anyone was surprised to see the allocation of that \$100,000, because we all knew of the role of the Minister for Welfare as the chairman of the State committee that has been set up. Local organisations have been established, and so it is not surprising, particularly when the Commonwealth Government, at least in this instance, has given money—some \$50,000—that the State should allocate \$100,000.

The \$30,000 for credit counselling is commendable, but really the value is going to depend on where and how it is used and whether or not it is going to be passed across to some of the voluntary consumer organisations.

The third initiative is the subsidy for pensioner rebates. It certainly sounds great, and I know when it was raised in this Parliament and in the Press there was a certain amount of commendation, because it meant a better deal for those people least able to pay rates. But we ought to note very carefully what it does mean, because the Financial Statement clearly states that it is for additional remissions. It will be of little help to the councils already giving major rebates, because the limit is up to 75 per cent of the rebate given. It will depend on the conditions set by local authorities.

I need to use this opportunity to explain some of the conditions being set by local authorities when rebates are given, because in my own city of Rockhampton there is an obnoxious, iniquitous situation that I believe must be brought to the attention of the Minister for Local Government. Unfortunately, he is in Rockhampton attending the local government conference, but I am hoping that he will take cognisance of what I am saying and act upon it.

In Rockhampton conditions of eligibility have been set for rate remission, and in these

conditions the council clearly states that it is not endeavouring to enter the social services field but instead it wishes—

“... to provide financial assistance and incentives for pensioners to maintain their equity in their home and land for not only their own benefit, but also for the benefit of their beneficiaries.”

It goes on to say—

“The City will also benefit as a whole, as this policy encourages pensioners and their families to keep an active interest in the good maintenance of the home and property.”

Then we find how they are doing it. People are told to go to the city council chambers. In fact, they are required to apply in person for an interview between 1 July and 30 September and then to lodge application forms and show pensioner cards and pensioner cheque-butts.

But that is not where it ends. Pensioners go in believing that they are going to be able to apply for this rebate or remission of rates and they find that the first thing they are asked to do is show their bank-books. If a person wants to upset aged people, that is the first thing he asks them to do. I have received calls in my office from upset and embarrassed pensioners who are fearful that the council will have the power to go to their banks and take out the statistical information that is available in private banking accounts.

Mr Hansen: They do it.

Mr WRIGHT: They do? I am surprised. I am pleased that the honourable member for Maryborough has told me about that. I hope that the Maryborough City Council does not do so.

Mr Hansen: No. Social Security.

Mr WRIGHT: I know Social Security does it, but I am wondering about the local authorities.

The application form clearly sets out the conditions. It points out that the eligible pensioner must be the sole owner of the property or the joint owner with one other pensioner, whether a relative, including a spouse, or otherwise. It goes on—

“A part owner, who, if similarly applying would not be an eligible pensioner, results in there being no entitlement for remission under this policy.”

“The pensioner owner must have been a resident property owner in Rockhampton for three years.”

So if a person has been living in the country near Rockhampton and decides to move into the city to retire, until he has lived there for three years he can forget about any type of remission. It also goes on to say—

“The pensioner owner must have been a real property within the City or elsewhere, except vacant land/s with unimproved capital value/s totally less than \$4,000.”

It goes on then to talk about occupancy and who can reside in the dwelling. It is no wonder that one lady was upset when she rang me. She is 72 years of age and she was asked with whom she lived. Her husband died some six years ago. It may well have been that the interviewer did not mean it that way—it may well have been that he was simply trying to find out who else occupied the dwelling—but the way it was put certainly embarrassed and upset the woman in question.

The application form then goes on to say—

“The pensioner owners or occupiers must not have combined assets in the following categories totalling more than \$10,000:”

These categories are banks, building societies, savings, shares, bonds at current market prices or other income-earning investments at current market prices, including land and buildings. The conditions are very stringent. Those pensioners who have more than \$5,000 in the bank, which is not a lot of money, now will not get remissions of rates, regardless of what this Government says it is trying to do so. For all the publicity and for all the commendation that has been given in the past, it is obvious that this Government will have to look carefully at the application and the implication of the policy that it is espousing here today.

The other aspect that we need to look at relates to matters that are in the Budget, and I might suggest that they do not excite anyone very much. We can take account of the problems that the Treasurer has had with the Commonwealth. It is quite obvious that there is little, if any, job-creating potential in the Budget. There is a 15 per cent increase in all fares and freights. There is a reduction, in real terms, in road construction and housing. There is a continuation of the disastrous losses in the Railway Department, which the Treasurer points out, exclusive of the mineral traffic profits, is expected to exceed \$200m this year.

Then I come onto the pay-roll tax exemption, which is being increased from \$150,000 to \$180,000. No doubt this will be appreciated by industry, but I suggest that it will do little to alleviate the plight of businesses facing annihilation because of other aspects, such as unfair competition, inability to borrow, especially at reasonable interest rates, and sometimes inability to borrow at all because of the unsavoury practices of banks, landlords and lessors. That will not overcome these types of problems. These people face massive problems, massive difficulties. No wonder the Minister can stand up and say that 75 per cent of small businesses last only three years.

The Treasurer has made the point that the inaugural cost of establishing the Small Business Development Corporation is expected to be \$225,000. When the legislation setting up this corporation came to this Parliament, the proposal was questioned

because there were alternatives. The corporation is yet to prove its worth. I suggest that it will have limited power. The small business sector of the community needs not only managerial advice but also that ability to compete, and that means access to money and the opportunity to take action quickly on the types of problems that arise suddenly. The failure of a business affects not only those who own it but also its employees and the general community. So, regardless of philosophies, we have to acknowledge the fact that some 90 per cent of businesses in this country are small businesses employing hundreds of thousands of people. When they go bust, it is often the husband and wife proprietors who, because of their age bracket, cannot find alternative employment. There is a need to take special cognisance of the problems. I am certain that this Government does not appreciate their extent.

We need new initiatives. If we are setting up the Small Business Development Corporation, let us do something so that we can get swift justice, swift investigatory action on behalf of this sector of the community. That could mean the establishment of a businessmen's ombudsman. It may be a high-falutin term, but it has been proved in other countries. When there is a specialised officer who has the power and the opportunity to investigate problems, action can be taken and those problems can be overcome very quickly.

It is not only big business, banks and lessors that these people are waging war against; it is also the bureaucracy. I have written today to the Corporate Affairs Office about a particular case. This gentleman has been waiting weeks and weeks simply to get the certificate of registration of his business name. Until he gets it, he cannot operate. He cannot get his telephone number registered. He is in great difficulty. These types of problems are constantly arising. So we need some specialist force within this corporation that has been set up to try to help the small businessman.

Mr Blake: No encouragement at all from this Government.

Mr WRIGHT: I do not believe there has been any encouragement. I do not believe that the Government even appreciates the problem. As the economic climate worsens, the situation will get worse. The Federal Government and the financial institutions are already setting the stage for a sharp increase in interest rates. I have been watching the position very carefully in “The Australian Financial Review” and other newspapers. Some senior bank officers started this off. First of all it was the Commercial Bank. Then we had the Bank of New South Wales and then some excerpts from the Campbell inquiry. Then there was the secret report from five Federal departments suddenly leaked. What did they all say? There has to be an open-ended approach to interest rates

in Australia. They will not do it before the Federal election because we know the effect it would have on the Fraser Government. But we know it is coming. It seems that these people are working with the Federal Government to condition the population of Australia, be they business or the general public sector, into accepting the fact that interest rates will rise, so that when it does occur Mr Fraser will turn around and say, "It had to be."

We know what they are doing. They are saying that they need to restrict the demand on borrowing—in other words, cut down the opportunity of the small businessman to expand his business and therefore employ other people, to upgrade the type of technology that he has, to improve the type of machinery he is using and to expand into other areas. It also means that the ordinary home borrower will have great difficulties because of the limitations on loans. If the Federal Government is out to restrict the demand on borrowing, everyone must suffer. It will mean dearer money, limited loans and shorter term borrowing. It will also mean no expansion, fewer job opportunities and less security for those already in employment.

We appreciate that all of this centres around the power of the purse. It is a question of who controls the purse-strings. I have advocated time and time again, and other people have put forward views, that the Government should embark upon earning its own money. The moment that is said in this Chamber one gets dragged down as a Communist or a socialist or something like that. I will say it again, regardless of criticism, that one of our first needs is to embark upon—and for the Government to accept—a partnership approach to development, that is a partnership of the Government, the people and private enterprise. There is another necessity that I have also raised time and time again but it has fallen on deaf ears. Because I believe it is one of the major solutions to the economic problems facing this State, I will raise it again: the necessity to establish a State bank. For the life of me, I cannot understand why the Treasurer is opposed to this concept. When the proposal to buy a certain percentage of the Bank of Queensland was put to Cabinet, I can understand that there would have been questions, but the establishment of a State bank for the people of Queensland is another question.

Dr Edwards: Do you mean a bank of issue?

Mr WRIGHT: Yes.

Dr Edwards: Under the Constitution we have no power.

Mr WRIGHT: Just a minute. I will come to that. I believe it must start on the basis of a savings bank, and there is certainly

provision for that in the Constitution. I will quote to the Treasurer section 51, clause 13—

"The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to: Banking, other than State banking; also State banking extending beyond the limits of the State concerned, the incorporation of banks, and the issue of paper money."

Dr Edwards: You are talking about a savings bank.

Mr WRIGHT: I am talking about a savings bank in the first instance.

Dr Edwards: We cannot do that until 1986.

Mr WRIGHT: Yes, we can. I will prove that we can. I wanted to debate this publicly with the Treasurer but he was not prepared to do so.

I will return to a few of the advantages because constitutionally the State is allowed to participate in the field of banking. Let us take some of the precedents that have already been set. Under a Liberal Government the State Savings Bank of Victoria in 1979 had 511 branches, 22 sub-branches, and 487 agencies. Bank depositors increased by 10.9 per cent. In 1979 the bank had total deposits of \$341.16m, which brought the deposits at that point to \$3.46 billion. In 1979 loans have been made available for housing, farms and small business amounting to over \$41m. While they were able to have this lending power, which is vitally important, and setting aside the power of issue and credit creation ability, the profit for 1979 was \$36m. The State Bank of South Australia is a much smaller bank, which is only natural because that State has a smaller consumer population. At 30 June 1978 its total lending on housing amounted to \$27m. Other loans and advances in 1978 totalled \$100m, an increase of 10.8 per cent. I point out that in 1978 lending on housing increased by 15.3 per cent. The net profit made was \$3.5m.

I turn to a more specialised banking area, the Rural Bank of New South Wales, and again the report for 1978. It has limited activities, I appreciate, mainly in the rural area; yet deposits in 1978 stood at \$1,467m, net revenue was \$65.5m and the profit totalled \$6.6m. It clearly demonstrates that there are profits to be made; but, whilst it is good to have profits coming into the State coffers, more importantly funds are available to people for housing, for primary industry, for small business and for personal loans.

Queensland did have a State bank, as we appreciate. The legislative aspects go back to 1854.

Dr Edwards: The Labor Party gave it away, you know.

Mr WRIGHT: I am going to raise that. As the Treasurer probably appreciates, I have never been one to shy from making criticism where I believe it is necessary, irrespective of the political party in question.

In 1917 the Agricultural Bank and the Workers Dwelling Board were amalgamated with the Queensland Government Savings Bank. Then in 1920, as the Treasurer has just mentioned, an agreement was made whereby the Commonwealth Government took over our savings bank. That agreement was for a duration of 45 years.

Dr Edwards: It was one of the worst decisions the Labor Party ever made.

Mr WRIGHT: I believe it was, but at that point of time because of economic circumstances the action was taken. If one reads "Hansard" at that period one starts to realise why the action was taken. Financially they thought they would get a greater benefit, but that did not eventuate. Certainly in the long term it has not worked out for us. However, that is no reason to live in the past. It is no reason to say that because something was done in 1920 we cannot alleviate the situation now.

The Treasurer says that it goes till 1986. The original agreement was for 45 years. It ran out in 1965. So I decided to go back and refer to the Commonwealth Savings Bank of Australia Agreement Act of 1966, which was, as the Treasurer says, for the next 20 years. I read section 11—

"Subject to its ratification by the Parliament of the State this Agreement shall commence on the first day of July One thousand nine hundred and sixty-five and shall continue in force for a term of twenty years thereafter."

I accept that. However, let us look at section 12. One ought to read on. It is like reading the Scriptures. If one takes just one isolated passage, there is always the danger of ending up with a false doctrine, like some of the sects. One needs an overview of these things. Section 12 reads—

"Each of the parties hereto shall at the expiration of each period of five years of the term of the Agreement have the right to consult with the other party for the purpose of obtaining variations of the terms of this Agreement on the basis that by reason of an alteration in circumstances the Agreement is operating to the detriment of the parties or either of them."

It is clearly stated that every five years both parties have a right to consider the detrimental aspects of that agreement. It may well be that the financial benefit is not enough and that is not going to be accepted by the Commonwealth. However, I suggest that the Commonwealth Government would have great difficulty in saying "No" to a

proposal that we establish our own State bank. I do not believe that, with the precedents already set in other States, it would be willing to say "No" to Queensland. If it does, then the people would have their say; but we face a crisis again, because the agreement expires in 1986, but the review is 1981—and now is the time to prepare.

Dr Edwards: A review of terms and conditions, not whether it continues.

Mr WRIGHT: That is the whole point: it is open to interpretation by courts.

Dr Edwards: It is not.

Mr WRIGHT: It is. I have had legal advice on it. I have spoken to banking officials. They do not want to see it, and I will mention the reasons for that.

Dr Edwards: Will you send me a copy of your legal advice?

Mr WRIGHT: I am prepared to get him to talk to the Treasurer, if he wants to. I would be happy to, because the interpretation of that is very clear—

"... operating to the detriment of the parties or either of them."

Dr Edwards: Read the previous part.

Mr WRIGHT: I did. It refers to variations of terms. One of the terms is that it be for a 20-year period. That is in section 11.

Mr Porter: That is in the agreement.

Mr WRIGHT: The agreement may well be a financial arrangement as to review but the advice is very clear that it is worth contesting and, if this Government does not understand the importance of it, I believe that it does not want to involve itself. I would go even further and say that, when 1986 comes around, if Queensland has a National-Liberal Government in power again, it will not want to renegotiate it other than for another 20 years. So now is the time to review it, because of the right under section 12 to claim a variation because of the detrimental aspects to Queensland. If that could be done in 1981, there is every reason to believe that we could incorporate the Queensland Housing Commission and the Agricultural Bank. It would mean significant benefits to the Government and to the people of Queensland. It would mean access to funds for the people and the Government itself.

Let us look at the \$36m profit in Victoria and the \$6m profit in New South Wales and take a mean of \$15m or \$20m for Queensland. Because of this State's diversity and potential, profits could be substantial. There would be loans for housing, loans for people, loans for farms, loans for small businesses and loans for local authorities. It would also

give greater independence to Queensland. After all, is not that really what the issue is in this debate—a financial independence that we need to have, an independence that we are not going to get because of the way in which the Commonwealth Government is treating this Government and the people of Queensland? If we have the independence and the ability to back our own development, we are going to have employment. It would also mean money to finance development in co-operation with private enterprise where necessary.

We cannot afford not to contest that agreement; we cannot afford not to take the opportunity in 1981, because after 1981, regardless of the dilemma, regardless of the detriment, there is no right of review for five more years. I think that we ought to do it. We have Crown Law officers who could take the job on.

Other State banks have demonstrated that they can compete in fair and open competition. Another point is that the people of Australia will accept State banking. That has been proved by the hundreds of thousands of depositors in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, and I believe that the position is similar in the Rural Bank in Western Australia. People will back their own State bank. If the people of Queensland respond as people have responded in Victoria, there are no bounds to what we could do. Talking of bounds—we are not bound by the Reserve Bank conditions or the savings bank regulations.

It is not only suggested by me and other Opposition members; I note, too, that the Premier has spoken about it. However, no action has been taken. It is wanted by people in industry; it is wanted by small businessmen. A major article some months ago stated that the cattlemen wanted their own bank or a State bank. I know that it has been recommended by certain persons in Treasury. If we embarked on the preparation of a case to put to the Commonwealth and we could succeed, we would overcome many financial difficulties in this State, especially in the area of lending to small businesses and those who need housing.

People throughout the State are living in substandard accommodation. Families are living with their parents because they cannot obtain accommodation elsewhere. People are being forced to live in caravan parks. Other people are paying excessively high interest rates. The situation is disastrous. If the Treasurer wishes to know what is going on, I invite him to check the applications for Housing Commission borrowing. I rang a gentleman in the Housing Commission yesterday. He told me that one person in my electorate who wants to borrow \$25,000 will have to wait four months before his name even gets near the top of the list. The commission will then have to consider his application again, so he will probably have to wait six months before he

can borrow a miserable \$25,000. Because of the circumstances in which people are living, the Government of Queensland must take advantage of every opportunity and must consider the alternatives.

Mr Vaughan: If they did that, they would not be able to blame the Federal Government.

Mr WRIGHT: I would agree with that in part, anyway. It would certainly take away most of the Government's excuses and the apologetic approach that one sees here.

The time is fast coming when the Government must set aside some of its old-fashioned philosophies as to whether or not Government can be involved in development, whether or not it can be involved in some type of private enterprise. It has proved itself with the SGIO; it has proved itself in a managerial field in the bureaucracy. We have here some top people who would be prepared to co-operate in private enterprise. Let us share the development, let us control the development, and let us also share the profits. We need finance to do that, and one way in which we can get finance is by having a State bank. I reiterate that the people will back such a bank, as has been proved in other States.

Before concluding, I wish to raise the question of accountability. Over the 12 years I have been in this Assembly I have been concerned at the inability of this Legislature to fully review the financial situation of the State. I have been concerned inasmuch as I have tried to study it and I have had top, expert people assisting me in an advisory role. They have found it almost impossible to see what is going on. If we compare what happens here with what happens with the Federal Budget, we are so far behind it is a joke. We cannot make cross-references and we cannot check on specific expenditure. It is extremely difficult to ascertain what is really being spent and where it is coming from.

In financial debates members in this Assembly have no option but to speak on parochial matters, things that we need in our electorates, and accept what is happening. I am no longer prepared to do that and I do not believe that any other member should be prepared to do so. We have a special responsibility, not on behalf of political parties, but on behalf of the taxpayers, to exercise vigilance that allows us to control, or at least review, executive and administrative decisions. Expenditure made on behalf of the Government, or the people who actually own the money, ought to be justified. How can we do that? Time and again we have advocated a checking system by way of a public accounts committee. Members of different political parties espouse the idea time and time again. I do not want to retrace dead ground but when this idea was put forward by the ALP the Liberals were not forthcoming with support. We have yet to find out why.

It is quite obvious that we are in a bind, which happens so often in democratic States, where there is a strong Executive and a weak Legislature. We have the unfortunate situation of a very strong Executive and a very weak Legislature. That cannot be traced to the inability of the members of Parliament. On a capita basis, in the matter of experience and degrees—and degrees are not always an indication of ability—many members of this Parliament have had long experience in business, industry, trade unions and professions. We can match the experience and ability of all other Parliaments, but what opportunity do we really get to sit down and canvass the various proposals put forward by any department? What opportunity do we really get to question any Minister about how he is spending money? What chance do we get to talk to departmental heads to find out alternatives, and how they are reviewing expenditure? I know that, on a monthly basis, various departmental heads must give advice to the Treasury Department. I know that they must engage in constant checking. That is what the Treasury is all about. One of its major commitments is to undertake a review and checking system, but that, again, is an executive role. It should be a parliamentary role. Something must be done about it. The first thing must be the establishment of a public accounts committee.

I would like a promise from the Liberal leader, irrespective of his role after the next election, that we will have a public accounts committee as one of the first legislative proposals. It does not have to be done by legislation, but let us do it properly. Let us get in line with all the other States. We are not attacking the bureaucrats or the public servants who carry out their role in a very efficient manner. We should praise 99 per cent of public servants working for Queensland, but we have a responsibility to the people. It worried me when I picked up the Financial Statement to find that the assessed losses for the Railway Department in 1980-81 total \$200m. When I saw that I started to wonder what we are doing. I well know that that amount is offset by some of the profits from the mineral traffic, but it is not good enough. We need people who are prepared to consider the alternatives.

I have another solution that may sound somewhat radical from a legislative point of view, but I believe it to be necessary, although it may involve a greater work load for some of our departmental officers. Just as they are required to report on a monthly or quarterly basis to the Treasurer, their reports, information or review of expenditure and receipts should be made available to the Minister and tabled in this Assembly. We must have some system—not mini-Budgets—whereby, in grass root terms we have reports and details assembled here for honourable members who are interested. We have Opposition shadow Ministers who carry out their job well. They spend many hours studying documents, without any back-up services; they do not have

the facilities available to Ministers and some Government back-benchers who go to departmental officers for advice—officers who carry out a tremendous role. Not only would they be involved, but also other conscientious Government back-benchers would be prepared to sift the reports and carefully carry out their role of accountability in this Assembly.

There are so many reasons why this ought to be done. I realise that, when Budgets are prepared and when departments bring forward their estimated receipts and estimated expenditures, there could be changes and variations. If that is to be so, if there are changing trends and if there are to be divergences from the approved Budget, we ought to be told about them. It may well be that things could have been different in regard to the 10-week strike and the economic problems it created for Queensland had that sort of proposal been implemented.

I say again and again that the Parliament needs to be told. It is all very well for the Ministers and the departmental heads to know and for the Treasury to have its finger on the pulse, but we are responsible to the people; we have the electoral responsibility to every person in Queensland. We are the custodians of the purse on behalf of those people. If variations do arise because of droughts, strikes, economic or political conditions, worsening unemployment, credit squeezes, large award increases, changes in market opportunities, falls in primary production or the distribution of unforeseen surpluses, it all comes back to budgetary control and accountability.

It is time that we as an Assembly started realising that we are more than just members for particular electorates. The time has come for us to appreciate that we are State members who represent people within the State of Queensland, and one of our major responsibilities is a financial responsibility. It is time that we were given the opportunity and the capacity—it comes back not to a physical or intellectual capacity but an opportunity capacity—to carry out the role of keeping account of what is happening in the State of Queensland.

Mr BISHOP (Surfers Paradise) (4.2 p.m.): May I firstly congratulate the Treasurer on his second Budget. It is obvious that he is continuing the tradition of fine Liberal Treasurers in Queensland over the years.

I should like to say one or two words on the comments of the honourable member for Rockhampton not only today but also in the past. His comments should be noted by all members and particularly by the people of Queensland. As he is the shadow Treasurer we can assume that, some time in the next 50 years, he might become Treasurer and, as such, might seek to introduce some of the philosophies that he has been espousing.

I refer firstly to his speech on the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) on 19 August. He said—

“There has been a definite erosion of family living standards . . .

“The answer is to offset the tax burden . . .

“I have thought carefully about a number of areas that the State Government could enter. The first surely would be the tourist industry . . .

“The Government—”

I am not sure whether he meant a future Labor Government or this Government—

“ . . . should establish State-financed motels and tourist resorts and finance such things as country camping reserves . . .

“I believe we ought to have State-financed motels and tourist resorts . . . like New Zealand.”

That is one of the few times I have heard, in this Parliament, a member of the Labor Party so flagrantly espousing the philosophy of nationalisation which we all know is prominent in the Labor Party's mind.

He said that we should be like New Zealand and enter into the business of State-financed motels, but that we should not be—

“ . . . like New Zealand which spent money, opened up a new area, pioneered a resort and then sold it off to private enterprise.”

He said that we could even have a State tourist bus system. Again he wants to nationalise the bus transport industry in Queensland.

I am sure that the honourable member for Rockhampton would realise that people are pouring out of New Zealand every day of the week. New Zealand is shot to pieces economically, and one of the major reasons is because Labor Governments there have stifled private enterprise. If the honourable member wants to do that in Queensland then I suggest he has an extraordinary point of view. Where else in this world, let alone in Australia, would we find less need to set up State-financed motels? Where in the world can one get cheaper and better accommodation than in Queensland? I suggest that the shallowness and barrenness of the shadow Treasurer's speech was appalling. He not only wants to ruin the free enterprise system in the motel industry and nationalise the bus system, but he also wants to destroy the free enterprise banking system in Queensland by setting up a State bank. His very words were that he wants to control development and share profits. If that is not socialistic philosophy, then I would like to know what is. I suggest that the shadow Treasurer needs to have another look at what he is espousing on behalf of the Labor Party.

But I do agree with the honourable member for Rockhampton on one aspect of his speech, and that concerned the establishment

of a parliamentary public accounts committee. I have endeavoured to find my way through the Budget, the Estimates and the Auditor-General's Report on the Treasurer's Annual Statement, and it is true that unless one has technical assistance available it is a very difficult series of documents to follow. But I did note in the Auditor-General's report for the year ended 30 June 1980 some significant statements in this regard. I think it is worth noting that on page 2 of his report he says—

“As long as expenditure is within the specified terms of a vote, discretionary power is vested by the Act in the Treasurer to sanction the application of any surplus in one subdivisional item to meet any deficiency in another.”

That seems to me to allow plenty of flexibility to swap money around. Unfortunately, it usually does not seem to be within the capacity of these documents to readily show where this does occur. The Auditor-General goes on to say later in his report—

“The prime purpose of governmental accounting is to serve the requirements of Parliament and more particularly to ensure effective control by Parliament over public moneys.

“To achieve the objective of Parliamentary control referred to above, such cash accounting is generally on a ‘gross’ basis—although cases must be considered on their merits and the foregoing rule cannot be applied in every instance. Accounting on a ‘net’ basis (that is, setting off receipts against payments or the reverse) results in transactions not being fully exhibited in the accounts rendered to Parliament and may improperly increase the spending power of the accounting department.”

He then refers to parliamentary fiscal control, and says—

“The Act makes it clear that overall financial responsibility begins and ends with Parliament. Parliament appropriates the moneys for the services of the State and it receives an accounting for such moneys through the Treasurer's Annual Statement and the departmental appropriation accounts which are presented to the Legislative Assembly. The reports made by the Auditor-General on the Treasurer's Annual Statement and the Departmental Appropriation Accounts assure the Assembly of the integrity of such financial accounting and reporting.”

I repeat—

“ . . . assure the Assembly of the integrity of such financial accounting and reporting.”

I wonder whether that happens under the present system. My view is that it does not. My view is that the opportunity to question the accounts in a proper and detailed fashion is not given to us, and it will not be given

to us until a parliamentary accounts committee is set up and is working. That is the first comment I have to make.

The second comment about the Budget relates to my reading of the departmental Estimates. Often it is said about Government Budgets that once an item appears in a Budget, increases in expenditure from year to year are accepted on a basis in line with inflation. Once an item appears in a Budget, it very often is there for ever and attracts automatic increases as time passes. If one looks at the Estimates this year, one could be forgiven for believing that that assessment of a Government Budget is correct. Very few items have been omitted and most of them have attracted an automatic increase. There are some significant exceptions, and I suggest that the Committee should look at those exceptions today. One exception is the Premier's Department.

Mr Davis: How long are you going to speak for?

Mr BISHOP: The member for Brisbane Central can read this on page 10.

Mr Davis: I asked: how long are you going to speak for?

Mr BISHOP: The honourable member can have a sleep for about 50 minutes.

On page 10 of the Estimates there is reference to the State Public Relations Bureau. The sum of \$414,000 was spent on the bureau in 1979-80. The amount required in this year's Budget is \$647,000. The staff is to increase in number from 12 to 17, which is an increase of 5. The amount provided for salaries is to be increased from \$191,000 to \$310,000. Under the present system, there is no explanation of why that is occurring. I have no doubt that a parliamentary accounts committee would obtain that information. I see no reason why that position should not be explained to this Chamber.

I turn now to page 12 of the Estimates, which refers to Miscellaneous Services in the Premier's Department. There is to be no increase in staff under this heading. The appropriation under this heading for 1979-80 was \$318,000. The sum of \$601,000 was expended in 1979-80, and the Vote for this year is \$806,000. I note an increase of \$300,000 for the Government aircraft. The total appropriation for the Premier's Department is to be increased from \$12,848,000 to \$15,864,000, which is an increase of \$3,000,000 or 25 per cent. The increase in staff is only six.

On page 10, which deals with the Co-ordinator-General's Department, there is an item "Queensland International Tourist Centre". An amount of \$100,000 was spent in 1979-80 on this item, in spite of the fact that there

was no allocation. At least, if there was an allocation, there is no notation in this year's document to say where it was. It just seems to drop in. For 1980-81 the requirement is \$100,000. Nowhere can I find a reference to this \$200,000 expenditure. I hope that the Treasurer will enlighten me as to what that means.

I also note that there is an item of \$225,000 for the Small Business Development Corporation. How is that money to be spent? There does not appear to be any reference to staff. Is it to be wages? All I suggest is that in a proper accounting system we should be given an explanation of what that item is.

I would like to refer to matters which have fascinated me in this document. In every department there appears to be a reference in particular terms to an item called "Incidentals". It tends to be "Traveling Expenses" and "Incidentals" or "Miscellaneous". There are some very interesting "Incidentals" and I think the Chamber should look at some of them because there are no explanations for extraordinary increases in some of these areas. Some people might be forgiven for thinking that it is the lurks and perks section of the Government.

Let us have a look at the "Incidentals and Miscellaneous" for the Registrar-General. In 1979-80 the allocation was \$159,000. He spent \$161,000. In 1980-81 he is allocated \$298,000, about an 80 per cent increase. Why? In 1979-80 the "Incidentals" vote for the Licensing Commission was \$111,000. The expenditure was \$105,000—in other words, it did not come up to the Budget allocation, and yet for this financial year the allocation is \$128,000.

The expenditure for the Supreme Court rises from \$601,000 to a Budget figure of \$751,000, that is an increase of \$150,000 or about 25 per cent on expenditure. Last year the Public Defender expended \$689,000 and that rises to \$795,000, an increase of \$100,000.

In 1979-80 the Law Reform Commission had an "Incidentals" vote of \$31,000. In fact, it spent only \$17,000, a drop of some \$14,000 on the allocation. For some unexplained reason, in this year's Budget the Commission received a 130 per cent increase on expenditure to \$40,000. The Labour Relations Chief Office rises 30 per cent to \$962,000. The Consumer Affairs Council and the Consumer Affairs Bureau increase by 40 per cent to \$192,000. The allocation for the Forestry Department is a large one. Last year that department spent \$1m and is allocated only \$1,168,000 this year, a rise of only 10 per cent.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Why is that?

Mr BISHOP: The honourable member for Archerfield has an astute mind. He asks, "Why is that?"

"General Contingencies" for the State Emergency Service go from \$86,000 to \$120,000, an increase of 50 per cent. Last year the Mines Department expended \$1,731,000 on "Travelling expenses and Incidentals" and this year gets only \$140,000 extra to take it to \$1,871,000. That is another large provision. "Travelling Expenses, Postage and Incidentals" for the Valuer-General's Department increased by only \$40,000 on an expenditure last year of \$1,220,000—about 3 per cent. It just does not seem consistent. The Transport Department last year expended \$1,124,000 and there is only a \$130,000 increase this year. Under the Department of Welfare Services, the probation and parole system expended a quarter of a million dollars last year and the amount this year has risen by 40 per cent.

It can be seen that there have been some very substantial increases in this category of expenditure. One could continue that inquiry right through the Budget. On those figures, I do not believe that sufficient control is being exercised over incidentals. I would hope that some explanation is given for the inconsistent manner in which those increases occur throughout the Budget. However, it indicates that large percentage increases in expenditure can be extended on some items to some departments, and I will return to that point at a later date.

I turn now to some items that I believe are significant and useful improvements for the welfare of Queenslanders. I refer particularly to pay-roll tax. The ceiling has been raised to \$180,000, which is the equivalent of 14 or 15 employees. That will have a very beneficial effect on the small business community, which is the basis of my electorate. However, I am disappointed that there has been no relief in stamp duty for those people in high-rise units who have been caught in the squeeze associated with the high fire levy. I would hope that the Government would move quickly to bring to a conclusion the inquiry that is under way.

If we look at the Budget document further we will see that there is not too much joy for the Gold Coast. For example, I notice that the electorate of Surfers Paradise has been dramatically neglected in the area of pensioner housing. Why is it that in a locality such as that, where there is such a high demand for pensioner accommodation, it is not being met by this Government?

However, I am pleased to see an increase in police strength of nearly 200. That should mean a significant alleviation of the police shortage in the Gold Coast District. I would expect at least 40 of those police to be allocated to the Gold Coast, which has the highest burglary rate in the State. It is important that crime protection be increased. I hope that the Government would consider the introduction by the Police Department of a special drug squad for the Gold Coast. I do not believe that one drug squad, based

in Brisbane, is sufficient. The problem on the Gold Coast, as elsewhere in Queensland and Australia, is significant. I would hope that the Police Department would give special consideration to my suggestion.

The growth of the Gold Coast is reflected in the huge borrowing program outlined in the Budget of the Gold Coast City Council—an amount of \$10,366,000. Apart from Brisbane, that is by far the largest local authority borrowing in Queensland. It might reflect an aspect of the lack of Government assistance for the Gold Coast, particularly in the subsidy for beach protection work. I do not think there is any excuse for either the State Government's or the Federal Government's allowing this very heavy financial burden to rest solely on the shoulders of a local authority. It is not just a problem of the Gold Coast City Council. Why, for example, is it not a problem of the Tweed Shire, the Brisbane City Council area, the Redland Shire, the Beaudesert Shire or the Albert Shire? This Government and the Federal Government have allowed local authorities on the north coast and on the Gold Coast to carry the full financial burden. It is not good enough for the State Government to say, "Yes, we will give you a 40 per cent subsidy provided the Federal Government also gives you a 40 per cent subsidy." In that case, of course, the Gold Coast City Council would have to pay only 20 per cent. At the moment, it is carrying the other 80 per cent. That is inequitable, unrealistic and unfair to the tourist industry of Queensland and Australia.

As you are well aware, Mr Kaus, the question of pensioner rebates is one to which I have given my attention not only while I was an alderman of the Gold Coast City Council but also since I have been a member of this Assembly. Therefore, I congratulate the Government on a very real initiative in that field. However, I do wonder why there does not appear to be any mention of industrial estate development in the Gold Coast area although Molendinar is full. I believe that reflects a lack of forward planning over many years by the Government in setting up proper industrial estates in the Gold Coast and Albert Shire region, despite the fact that the Gold Coast is still the fastest growing light industrial area in Queensland.

There is another significant gap in the Budget. It is one that I take very seriously; I am sure that many other Queenslanders also take it seriously. There is virtually no mention of tourism in the Budget. It is quite extraordinary that in a 60-page Financial Statement, covering every aspect of the development of Queensland, tourism receives a one-sentence mention on the bottom of page 58.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BISHOP: For the benefit of the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who I know cannot read, I will read it—

“The tourist industry continues to remain a firm growth area, and made significant gains in aggregate expenditure during the year.”

I respectfully suggest to the Treasurer that that sentence is an insult to the tourist industry. It would have been better to omit any reference to it if that is the best that Treasury can do in regard to tourism. The reason should not be that no significant information about the tourist industry is becoming available these days. Honourable members will recall that the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau appointed a research officer a couple of years ago, and I am sure that the work of the department has grown since then. A whole array of statistical information available from the Commonwealth Statistician would be interesting in the context of the Financial Statement, and I suggest that that one sentence reflects the lack of interest and the negative attitude of Treasury to the tourist industry. That has been shown not only in Queensland but also in Canberra for many years. If the Federal Government wanted a Vote to slash, the first to be slashed was tourism.

Historically, Treasury departments seem to have difficulty in grasping the economic value of tourism to a community. If we need any evidence today to highlight the importance of the tourist industry to the economy we have only to look at what is happening on the Gold Coast. I point out to the Committee that the population of the Gold Coast region at the end of 1979 was 121 000, representing an increase from 39 000 in 1961. It is estimated that the population will increase to 250 000 by 1986.

Mr Davis: Is that visitors?

Mr BISHOP: Even the honourable member for Brisbane Central will appreciate that that shows a steady, high growth rate over a prolonged period. Even he would not disagree that it indicates strong reasons for people moving to, and remaining on, the Gold Coast. Those reasons are not subject to the quirks of fashion. They arise wholly and solely from the benefits of tourism provided for tourists on the Gold Coast and elsewhere in the State. It is a demonstrable fact that if people can be enticed to a State as tourists they will come back later to live. That is one reason why Queensland is growing at such a rapid rate. One reason why Victoria, South Australia, New Zealand and New South Wales are losing thousands of people is tourism in Queensland. The Treasury is not capable of understanding that proposition.

Mr Davis: Could I ask you a question?

Mr BISHOP: If the honourable member wants a further indication of what tourism

is all about, or if he doubts what I am talking about, he has only to read an article in Monday's "Courier-Mail", which reads—

“People from the south are creating a record tourist boom for Queensland.

“Combined airline figures show a 278 per cent increase in the last two months in traffic over already well-worn routes from Sydney and Melbourne north to Gold Coast, North Coast and reef island resorts.

“By contrast other Australian tourist routes have shown at best only marginal increases in use, and in many cases decreases.

“Combined air traffic on the Melbourne to Brisbane route increased 38 per cent in July-August compared with the same period last year.

“Sydney-Townsville-Cairns traffic rose 67 per cent, Sydney-Sunshine Coast 59 per cent, and interstate air passenger traffic into the Gold Coast rose 35 per cent.

“Air traffic between Brisbane and the air gateway to the Great Barrier Reef, Proserpine, rose a staggering 278 per cent in the two months.”

I want to drive home to the Treasury a statement appearing in the article attributed to Mr Stehn, the General Manager of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, which is in these terms—

“The day after the first commercial was shown, our Newcastle office ran out of Gold Coast brochures,” Mr Stehn said, “Our southern branches have gone through 20,000 brochures in the last two weeks.”

“Australia and the rest of the world are realising what a great tourist product we have in Queensland.

“Queensland's tourist industry, worth \$900 million to the state last year, will improve greatly in 1980-81 and all Queenslanders will benefit.”

I can say that they will not benefit because of the generosity of the Treasury.

We now have the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation. Its Estimates do not appear in the Budget figures any longer so we will have to wait till it publishes its report. As far as I can establish from the inadequate figures available, the Government's allocation to the corporation for 1980-81 is \$5,986,000.

In addition, it will receive an estimated \$1.5m in commissions, although it seems that it received only about \$1.1m last year.

Mr Davis: You are quoting too many figures. You are trying to pad your speech.

Mr BISHOP: I realise it is difficult for the honourable member to understand, so I shall put it in simple terms for him.

This financial year, the Government is allocating \$5,986,000 to the corporation whereas last year it allocated \$5.5m. The increase this year is only about \$480,000 apart from commissions. That is an increase of only 8 per cent.

I refer the Committee to the incidental and miscellaneous expenditure figures that I quoted earlier. I did not go through them idly; I went through them to point out the haphazard way in which allocations to certain sections of Government activity are attacked. Nobody in his right mind would believe that it is more important to dole out increases of 50, 60, 80 or 130 per cent to the pork-barrel sections of the Government under "Travelling" and "Incidentals", where there does not appear to be any accounting, while neglecting what the Government itself says is one of the greatest industries in the State. Would any honourable member deny that tourism is the major growth industry in Queensland? This is not happening because of the Government.

The Minister for Industry and Administrative Services (Mr Lee) issued a Press release dated 31 August 1980, which reads—

"Southerners migrating to Queensland have helped to make the State the fastest-growing in Australia.

"But they have also made the unemployment situation worse, he said.

"Mr Lee, who is also migration Minister, said latest figures showed the State's population rose by 1.5 per cent to 2,213,000 in the 12 months to last December 31.

"Half the population growth was due to migration—mainly from the southern States."

I suppose Treasury takes the point of view that if the migration rate is kept down the unemployment rate is kept down and that will solve an economic problem confronting the State. I take the point of view that a more positive approach to tackling unemployment in this State would be the encouragement of employment in the tourist industry. Tourism provides employment for unskilled people and is labour-intensive. So surely the Government should be providing more than an 8 per cent increase in the allocation to the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation.

Mr Davis: In other words, you are saying that the Treasurer is not doing the right thing. Is that correct?

Mr BISHOP: I am saying that the Government is completely neglecting the tourist industry. I suggest that this is because of a lack of understanding of what the industry can and does mean to this State. I am suggesting that this Government has no grasp of the worth of tourism to Queensland.

Finally, apart from those few odd criticisms I have had of this Budget, I congratulate the Treasurer on it, particularly in the circumstances in which he has had to bring it down. I suggest that in the future he take a realistic look at the promotion of tourism in this State.

Mr LESTER (Peak Downs) (4.40 p.m.): I deem it a great honour to the electorate of Peak Downs that I have been invited to

be one of the speakers in this important Budget debate this afternoon. I intend to devote most of my speech to the mining towns of Blackwater and Moranbah.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr LESTER: There is no need for Opposition members to groan and carry on. They seem to do that every time I begin to speak. Here they are again interjecting and carrying on at a time when I have an important—

Mr Kruger: It's the same old story.

Mr LESTER: Yes, it is the same old story. The honourable member should be listening to the good—

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order on behalf of the Opposition. We did not interject on him.

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

Mr LESTER: I have never seen the ALP in such disarray. They are down on their knees. Here they go. They interjected, and the honourable member for Brisbane Central took a point of order to say that they did not interject. Of course, you said there was no point of order, Mr Kaus, and that means that they did interject.

Mr K. J. HOOPER: I rise to a point of order. May I suggest through you, Mr Kaus, to my colleagues that they do not interject on the honourable member for Peak Downs. He is a mug and a parrot and couldn't make a speech.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no valid point of order.

Mr LESTER: I will not ask the honourable member for Archerfield to withdraw that statement, because the people of Peak Downs will now be able to see the extent of his vocabulary and the way he refers to people, and particularly to me as the representative of the Peak Downs electorate. After all, when he last visited Moranbah he got into a great deal of trouble with the parents and citizens' association over some of the things he said and insinuated. It is all there in the newspapers for everybody to see. I am still getting letters about it, so it is no wonder that the honourable member for Archerfield has gone so red in the face. I hope now that I will be able to continue and make some sensible comments about the electorate of Peak Downs and the people I represent.

Mr Davis: Why are you going trendy?

Mr K. J. Hooper: Get your hair cut!

Mr LESTER: There we go. Here comes the Labor Party again. They want to know why I am going trendy. Good Lord! I just do not know what the people in my electorate will think when they read all these

interjections from the ALP members this afternoon. These are the people who say that their member is the alternative representative of my seat and they are the alternative Government of this State. They have clearly proved here this afternoon that there is no way in the world that they can do that. When it counts here in this Chamber, they have not stood up and been counted on behalf of the people of my electorate.

I am happy to be able to speak here at a time when my people are back at work and the issue of subsidised housing has been settled for the time being. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of those people who offered encouragement and suggestions for a solution during a time that was so trying for so many. Without the support of the people, it would have been most difficult for me to make the stinging remarks that received national coverage and forced the Government to initiate discussions and negotiations between the parties which eventually led to a settlement. Before I made my remarks Mr Fraser was sitting back, Mr Howard was sitting back, and the unions had not entered into negotiations with them. In fact, they could not do so at the time.

It was only when I got up and said what I did that things started to happen. From that day on, the settlement came. Now that the dispute is behind us, let us look to the future.

Mr Vaughan: What are you going to do about the navvies out there on the line now? They are paying \$20 a week for bondwood huts.

Mr LESTER: That is correct. When the Labor Party was in power, the navvies lived in tents. The honourable member cannot deny that; I have photographs showing that.

Let us now look at our security, our families, our children, full employment and future happiness.

Mr Vaughan: What about the Western allowance?

Mr LESTER: If the honourable member had been listening today he would know that I asked a question about zone allowances and the Western allowance in particular. That interjection shows very clearly once again that he was not listening when I was asking questions in the Parliament on behalf of my electorate.

Mr Vaughan: It is no good asking questions. Do something positive for a change.

Mr LESTER: Asking questions is doing something positive. That is when one receives answers. It is much better than getting up in this Chamber and making a speech, with nothing happening afterwards. A question has to be answered. That is why I have the record for asking the greatest number of questions in the Parliament during the time

I have been here since 1974. I have asked some 250 questions in this Parliament. No other member can match that record. If the honourable member looks at those questions he will see that positive answers have been given to many of them. Very few people would be able to match that record.

Mr Vaughan: You have a very bad record.

Mr LESTER: The people of the Peak Downs electorate will be able to see the way in which my speech on the Budget is being sabotaged by the members of the ALP. They will see that the ALP is not interested in my electorate. Every minute of my speaking time that the members of the ALP waste, is a minute during which something might not be done in the Peak Downs electorate. That rests squarely on the shoulders of the members of the ALP.

The town of Moranbah has a population of some 5 000. I predict that in the not too distant future it will increase to some 12 000. A bucket wheel is being constructed in the Goonyella mine area. There is a very distinct possibility of steaming coal coming on tap at Riverside. Many other mines in the area are possible goers.

I now look at Blackwater which has a population of some 8 000 at the moment. Hopefully, with the development that is taking place, the population will increase to 12 000 or 13 000 in the not too distant future. The big thing with Blackwater is the future development of the Curragh mine that will be supplying coal to Gladstone Power House. It has tremendous reserves of both steaming coal and coking coal. We expect that this will greatly help the development of the Blackwater area.

I also refer to the expansion that is taking place at the Thiess mine at the moment. This will create more employment for the town. It also means that there is another matter that we have to consider. As the town settles down, a large number of youngsters will need work. Very clearly, the State Government, the Federal Government and everybody else have to unite to try to find ways and means of providing local employment for our children. It is not good that so many of our children, after completing their formal schooling, have to leave these towns. It is not good that so many people who would like to settle down in these towns find that because of their children they cannot afford to do so. There must be some way that we can localise industry and employment away from coal-mining.

I now go on to look at the ways that we must attract industry from the coast. Freight rates have to be considered when this proposition is looked at. However, I believe it can be done. It has been done in other parts of the world and we must work toward this. Supply firms need to be positioned on the spot. Firms that supply the coal mines would be far better off if they were locally based. That would mean more

employment all round for men and women. We need to bring in new industries that will employ young men and women. The arts and crafts industry is one that comes to mind. A scheme should be set up so that the whole problem of employment for young people in our mining towns could be looked at. It is not an issue that we can run away from; it is an issue that is there and one that will remain with us for a long time.

Many other issues need to be looked at so that these towns can be made more pleasant to live in.

Mr Vaughan: What about the workers at Blair Athol?

Mr LESTER: The workers at Blair Athol would not have a job if the Labor Party was in power. It was not until the Liberal-National Party Government got back into power that the Blair Athol people were assured of employment.

Mr Vaughan: Why did you cancel their contract to the Gladstone Power Station?

Mr LESTER: There is no need to worry about the contract to the Gladstone Power Station. The company at Blair Athol does not want it because it can make more money in contracts with Mount Isa Mines, and many other contracts are presently coming up. Indeed, had it not been for the State Government the Blair Athol mine would have closed down. No other Government would have supplied coal to Gladstone. In fact, the Labor Party criticised the Government for doing that. It accused the Government of increasing the price of power.

Mr Vaughan: Gladstone was not even built in those days.

Mr LESTER: The member for Nudgee is talking rubbish. He has made a mess of this one. The State Government supplied coal to Gladstone and that is it. Obviously the member for Nudgee is very worried about what I am saying here this afternoon.

Mr Vaughan: I want to know what you are going to do about the western divisional allowance for the people in the West?

Mr LESTER: I have already answered that by my question in the House today. Obviously the member for Nudgee was not listening to what I had to say; he never does. He closes his ears when I start to talk and try to do something for the people of Western Queensland. The Opposition comes in at the last minute and tries to say what the Government should have done.

Mr Vaughan: What about the navvies down at Duaringa who are living in bondwood huts?

Mr LESTER: Duaringa is not in my electorate. The honourable member for Nudgee will find that in all the new places in my electorate the workers have new huts. In fact, I had the Minister for Transport out there only the other day so that

he could have a look at them. That is how much the Opposition knows about the West. Members of the Opposition do not even know which towns are in my electorate.

Mr K. J. Hooper: I know where they are. Do you want me to name them?

Mr LESTER: There they go. Quite clearly members of the Labor Party have rattled themselves. My Budget speech will make really good reading for the people of the Peak Downs electorate. If I had tried I could not have better organised these frivolous interjections from the Labor Party this afternoon.

The Government needs to do things that will make the towns more comfortable for people to live in. Of course, that means Budget money, and that is why I mention it in the Budget debate. Rest areas need to be developed at some points between Blackwater and Rockhampton. I think firstly of a rest area on the Dawson River near the Dawson River Bridge. That is an ideal setting well off the road. It would enable people to stop half-way between Blackwater and Rockhampton and have a family picnic. It is not as silly as it sounds. The children and animals would be able to run around. I believe it has some potential. The Blacktown Tableland is in the process of being declared a national park; it contains some excellent areas near Rainbow Falls. The National Parks and Wildlife Service needs money to develop this into an excellent area to allow the residents of Blackwater to get away from it all. In addition, we have the Bedford Weir, which we would like to see upgraded even further. It is ideal for water-skiing, family picnics and barbecues.

I see the honourable member for Nudgee has had to leave the Chamber. He could not take much more of it. He is the Opposition shadow Minister for Mines and Energy, the fellow who made all the interjections in the early part of my speech. Once again, we breed them too tough.

Returning to the serious business of this speech—I point out that in the area of Moranbah there are sections of the Isaacs River that could be developed as recreation areas. There is also Nebo Creek, where an excellent bridge has just been completed. Russ Hinze came out recently and opened that bridge.

Mr K. J. HOOPER: I rise to a point of order. Is it not unparliamentary for one member to refer to another by his name?

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

Mr LESTER: I do not quite know what the member for Archerfield is trying to do, but he is certainly not making an intelligent contribution to the Parliament today.

I turn now to education. At the Blackwater State School there are 871 children at the moment. The new Blackwater North

State School, which is excellent, has 301 children. We have 413 children at the Blackwater State High School. All have very good teachers. Recently Mr Neville Hewitt was out and opened a special education centre. Although it is not fully developed, it will play a role in dealing with people who need special education. It must be remembered that children come to Blackwater from all over Australia and from many other countries throughout the world. Because many do not get on top of their learning straight away and never pick up, a special education centre is particularly necessary. If children from Years 3 or 4 on get behind, they are in real trouble, but if there is a special education centre to help them they have a chance of picking up and eventually becoming very useful citizens in later life. However, I make the call that the special education centre in Blackwater be upgraded as quickly as possible so that it has full facilities.

Blackwater needs a technical annexe so that trade facilities can be extended to our area and more people given the opportunity to learn a trade. By doing that, we would be providing a very important service. It is distasteful that so many parents have to send their apprentice children away to centres such as Brisbane and Rockhampton for block-release training. We have to try to decentralise these activities. I know that we cannot regionalise them all, but I do ask that every possible effort be made. I ask the Treasurer (Dr Edwards), who has been so good to us, to see if he can make money available for a technical annexe.

I congratulate the parents and citizens of the Blackwater High School for their excellent efforts in building two new tennis courts and two new basketball courts, for which the State Government gave them half the money. Some \$30,000-odd was provided by the parents and citizens for those amenities.

Mr Simpson: When are you opening them?

Mr LESTER: I have already opened them by serving the first ball in an American tennis tournament two weeks ago.

I will convey to the parents and citizens the Treasurer's interest in that complex. When he comes to Blackwater in the not-too-distant future, I will take him along to see it.

Dr Edwards: Are you still the hero in Blackwater that you were the day I was there recently?

Mr LESTER: Certainly. I would hope so.

Dr Edwards: What about the cheer they gave you when they booed everybody else?

Mr LESTER: That is correct. It is very interesting to note that the Deputy Premier and Treasurer had a choice of travelling with Mr Howard or Mr Anthony, or with me in my car. He chose to travel with me, and we

got a rousing reception. I know who made the right decision; it was Dr Edwards. So in Dr Edwards I have a friend for life, and that is why he worked so jolly hard to resolve the strike.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Kaus): Order! Please refer to the honourable gentleman as the Treasurer.

Mr LESTER: I will take your advice, Mr Kaus. My comments do relate to the Budget, because the resolution of the strike meant a heck of a lot to the Queensland Treasury.

Mr Vaughan: It was not a strike; it was a revolution.

Mr LESTER: Well, whatever the honourable member wishes to call it.

Mr Vaughan: It was a tax revolt.

Mr LESTER: Oh, for goodness sake! Is the honourable member going to allow me to speak about the people of Moranbah, or is he trying to sabotage this important speech, which will be read by everyone in my electorate?

Dr Edwards: Mr Coffey is even going to vote for you at the next election.

Mr LESTER: He might not have much choice.

Moranbah has a State school with 1 072 pupils and a high school with an enrolment of 290. What is good news for Moranbah is that a new State school is to be opened at the commencement of the next school year and the building program is well under way. The new school will be an excellent acquisition for Moranbah. It will have a pre-school and all the other mod cons of present-day education.

On 25 September the Minister for Education is coming to Moranbah to open a new special education centre that has been built there and is now operating under the expert guidance of Mr Spottiswood, one of the most excellent teachers that I have seen in this field.

Mr Vaughan: You will run out of bouquets shortly.

Mr LESTER: I believe in giving credit where it is due, and Mr Spottiswood is an excellent teacher of handicapped children. I hope that the Labor Party is not going to try to take issue with me when I praise someone in my electorate.

Mr Vaughan: Oh, no chance!

Mr LESTER: I wonder where the Labor Party is going. Honourable members opposite have made a dreadful mess of trying to disrupt my speech this afternoon by interjecting.

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr LESTER: The Temporary Chairman is continually having to call them to order so that the Hansard reporters can hear the important message that I have for the Parliament in relation to the Peak Downs electorate.

Let me continue and point out that on 4 October the Minister for Mines (Mr Sullivan) will visit Moranbah to open the new manual arts and home economics centre there. In fact, recently I led a deputation in relation to flyscreening for the new centre. Problems arise when cakes are being cooked, and so on, if the building is not flyscreened. There is a council sewage treatment works not very far away, and I should like special attention to be given to the request for flyscreening.

In addition, I should like to see screen doors placed in the open areas of the high school in Moranbah. Although they are very expensive, they are necessary. If screens are not provided, people find difficulty in concentrating in an open area situation. I feel for children in an open area when other people are making a noise. I have had similar difficulty in concentrating in this chamber this afternoon because of the irresponsible behaviour of members of the ALP Opposition. The people of the Peak Downs electorate should be honoured that the Treasurer has taken time off from his busy schedule to be in the Chamber this afternoon to listen to what I have to say. He is the man who has the money, and when he hears about these matters from the horse's mouth, so to speak, we always get a better deal.

Such towns need specialist education services. First-aid classes, vehicle safety instruction, music training, speech therapy and other special courses are needed in country areas but we are not getting them. It is wrong that so many school services should start in city areas and only gradually filter through to country areas. I should like a change so that things start in the country and filter back to the cities. Cities already have such services in the schools or elsewhere. In this term of Parliament I have managed to get a school dental therapy unit at every school in my electorate.

An Opposition Member: That's favouritism.

Mr LESTER: It is not favouritism; it is good representation by the member for Peak Downs.

All is not as rosy as it might be. Teacher housing is still a problem, mainly because of the vast expansion in these areas. We must look at this matter very closely to ensure that we keep up with demand, especially with a new school starting in Moranbah next year.

I shall now deal briefly with fire services. While I am grateful for the fire brigade services in Blackwater and Moranbah, some way must be devised whereby the fire services can be improved to cope with a fire that

occurs on the highway, as it did near Blackwater recently, when members of the Blackwater Golf Club gained recognition for their bravery in shifting a burning car away from another car that had a man trapped in it. We must provide for fire brigades to leave a town area to attend to a car that is on fire on a highway. I do not know if that can be done by giving ambulances better fire-fighting equipment, by making every motorist carry a fire extinguisher, or by insisting on bigger fire extinguishers being carried in cars. I subscribe to the belief that it should be compulsory for every motorist to carry a fire extinguisher. I carry one in my car. The fire that occurred the other night could have been put out very quickly if all the motorists who stopped had carried fire extinguishers. Unfortunately the fire extinguisher carried by one of the motorists was not big enough. Some motorists carry fire extinguishers that are not big enough.

Mr Vaughan: What size would you suggest?

Mr LESTER: Twice the size that is normally carried.

I can hear the honourable member for Wavell speaking. He is very concerned about consumer affairs and has made a great contribution to Parliament on the various safety matters he has raised. I ask him to specialise in this matter to see if there is something he can do about it. It is a very real problem. Do I have his support?

Mr Austin: Yes.

Mr LESTER: The honourable member has decided to do what he can. If we save only two lives a year we will have made a good contribution.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I do not mind a bit of frivolity during the debate but if the honourable member for Peak Downs wants to ask the honourable member for Wavell a question it is only fair that he should ask an Opposition front-bencher a question.

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

Mr LESTER: The honourable member for Brisbane Central has totally sold out the brave golfers in the Blackwater area who shifted that car. The bravery of those golfers meant a lot to the Blackwater people. The honourable member interjects and suggests that I should not tell the Parliament about the bravery of those wonderful men.

Mr Powell: Do you think that this is another example of the ALP trying to stop you from expressing your opinion in this Parliament?

Mr LESTER: It is very clear that Opposition members have tried to sabotage my contribution today. They have tried to blot out my representations on behalf of the

people of Moranbah and Blackwater. One of these days Opposition members will learn, but they are taking a jolly long time to do so. They just go on and do not do anything when it counts. I do not mind. It makes my job a little easier. When I am representing my people, I do it without opposition.

The air services to Moranbah and Blackwater have been improved. By the good graces of BPA, Metro aircraft fly to those towns. Blackwater often has a direct service, while Moranbah does not always have one. At least daily services are provided. This is a lot better than previously when people from Blackwater and Moranbah had to drive to Rockhampton or Mackay to fly to Brisbane. Those people now have direct services.

The introduction of the Metro aircraft was a step in the right direction. That aircraft might not be the most comfortable in the world but my original suggestion was that it was as fast as a Fokker Friendship and was not a big plane. That resulted in a more frequent service. And frequency of service is what travel is all about. That is why I chose to push for more smaller aircraft, and I have been proven right. Nobody in my electorate disagrees with me.

The people in other areas of the State are not keen about the Metro but it has provided an excellent service in my area. Trade has increased to the extent that BPA, Queensland's own airline, has ordered bigger aircraft, including the Fokker Friendship and the DHC Dash. We will be well looked after when they are put into service. It will be a great step forward. They are comfortable aircraft that will provide a frequent service and pleasant flying conditions.

Because of shift work in mining towns and mum and dad, and even grandparents, living away from the area, there is a need for social workers and marriage guidance counsellors. They play an important role in such a community. In most areas these people make regular visits, but it is necessary for them to be available all of the time. They should live in the environment so that they can understand the problems. If a couple run into a marriage problem, they need advice on the spot, not in a week's time.

It has been said that marriages break down more in mining areas than anywhere else. I do not think that is correct. Certainly there are problems with marriages in mining towns, but generally families get on well together, and I do not believe that the number of marriage breakdowns is higher in mining areas than anywhere else.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Nobody jumps the fence?

Mr LESTER: For heaven's sake, I am not talking about jumping the fence! I am talking about the serious task of trying to keep marriages together by providing the help of social workers more frequently. All

we want is for our families to stay together, live together, grow up together and become excellent citizens. So, Mr Hooper, please take what I have to say seriously. We are all concerned for our families. I know you are, too. In fact, I understand you are a good family man.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Thank you, Mr Lester, you have won me.

Mr LESTER: Thank you, Mr Hooper.

Mr Davis: What about the family that prays together?

Mr LESTER: Perhaps the honourable member for Brisbane Central can pray for those families.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Seriously, the family that prays together, stays together.

Mr LESTER: Thank you, Mr Hooper. Those are your comments, and no doubt they will be recorded in "Hansard".

Now I will move on to the story of health services in my area. We have a 14-bed hospital in Moranbah, and I believe it is at the stage where it will need extensions in the not too distant future. I understand that this will become a reality after the hospital at Dysart has been completed. At the present time people from Dysart use the Moranbah Hospital, and there is the odd occasion when bed space at the Moranbah Hospital is insufficient. There will be a decline in demand once the Dysart Hospital is completed. In the meantime, however, we have to look very seriously at the Moranbah Hospital and plan now for extensions.

I am very happy to announce in this speech that the State Government has approved a 10-bed extension to the Blackwater Hospital. It will then become a 24-bed hospital, which will mean more nursing staff will have to be employed, and it will provide a better base for specialist services. Through the good graces of our private doctors many specialist services are now being offered to the people of Blackwater, including an eye specialist who visits monthly, a physiotherapist who is doing good work and other specialist services provided by Dr Forbes, a specialist flying doctor who comes into the area. As the hospital gets bigger it will be able to provide a base for such services. It will not be just a holding hospital from which people are choofed off to Mackay, Emerald or Clermont. I do not really like the concept of holding hospitals. Of course, some cases have to be treated in specialist centres, but for the general run of illnesses we like the people to remain at home and still receive specialist care.

I congratulate those doctors who have initiated moves to bring specialists into the area on a visiting basis. I congratulate them on their enterprise and the excellent contribution they are making to the good health of the people in the area. I also congratulate Dr Forbes on the work he has

done in Moranbah and Blackwater. We are now getting to the stage where we need a flying surgeon in these areas. A flying surgeon already operates to Emerald and Clermont, and it would be ideal if he could extend his services to Moranbah and Blackwater. I understand that there will be an additional flying surgeon based at Roma in the not too distant future, and perhaps he can be diverted into Moranbah and Blackwater. The doctors in Moranbah and Blackwater provide a very good service, and they deserve congratulations.

I congratulate Ron Davis and his personnel in the ambulance service who have worked so hard, together with the police, the fire services and the mines rescue brigade to provide protection to the people in my electorate.

I would now like to refer briefly to the price of petrol in country areas. This is of paramount concern to me. I have stated publicly before, and I state it again today, that I cannot see why we cannot have a price parity scheme under which the cost of petrol is increased according to the rate of inflation each year.

Mr Vaughan: That is Labor policy.

Mr LESTER: I do not care whose policy it is. I believe that the scheme can work. Airline companies would like to see such a scheme introduced. People in the country could also be helped by it. Unfortunately, there is some need for the present petrol parity pricing scheme, otherwise we will run out of oil altogether.

I would like to ask questions about the untapped oil reserves in Australia. What about those oil-wells in Australia that have been holed up again? I think that there is a great deal of mystery surrounding petrol and oil in Australia and throughout the world today. There is no doubt that oil companies have all Governments throughout the world, irrespective of their political colour, by the throat, and that is not good. In fact, since 1974 the cost of fuel has increased by 578 per cent. During the same time wages have increased by only 214 per cent. That shows that we must do something about the matter.

When we look at the cost of petrol we also have to look at the fact that we have to reserve some of our supplies. If we do not reserve some of our supplies, we will run out of fuel. If Mr Whitlam had remained in office, we would have run out of fuel by now, as many other countries have done.

We also have to look very hard at the development of alternative fuels. I refer again to the steam car, which three members of this Parliament—the member for Toowoomba North, the member for Rockhampton and I—have backed. In fact, we asked for, and received, voluntary support. We stopped Mr Pritchard from going broke. We are now in the process of launching a

public company that we hope will have responsible directors. We hope to introduce a scheme under which the steam car is developed and energy conservation is explored to the full. I refer not only to motor cars but to steam engines as well.

We have to look very hard at the development of the solar car. For the life of me, I cannot understand why there cannot be more development of the solar car. I have been in many parts of Australia and have seen solar car experiments.

Mr Vaughan: Whereabouts?

Mr LESTER: At the CSIRO establishment in the Melbourne suburb of Highett. When questioned, I can always give the facts.

Mr Vaughan: Have you seen the experiments at the university?

Mr LESTER: Yes, I have seen the one at the university. I was out there recently with the member for Flinders.

Mr Vaughan: A solar car out there?

Mr LESTER: Not a solar car. I am talking about energy conservation involving motor cars and houses. Much more experimentation has to be done with solar energy. No Government is giving enough money towards this work now. Something has to be done about it. There has been a lot of talk and no action. From today, it should be all action and less talk.

The State Government has a very grave responsibility to introduce a young farmers' scheme, whereby young people can get onto the land and do something in their own right. I am very, very greatly concerned at the continuing trend in Australia today towards take-overs by big companies. That sort of thing happens very easily. For instance, a family may have owned a property for a great number of years, and then the land is offered for sale and it is purchased by a big company. It is only big companies that can afford to do this. They then put a manager, a jackaroo and one or two others on the property. There are thus fewer people on the land. Unfortunately, sometimes the companies use the farms as a tax dodge.

This State Government has a very great responsibility to institute a scheme such as the young farmers' scheme that I have been involved with so that young people are given an incentive to work on the land. Young people with only \$25,000 could be given a low interest loan of up to \$100,000 to help them on to the land.

The other thing that has to be done is to look very hard at subdividing some of the big areas that come up for sale. It is all very well to say that I am all talk on this issue but I would like honourable members to examine for a moment the area of Gordon Downs, which was a massive property of good grain-growing land near Emerald. It was to

be sold for a figure of approximately \$5m. That would have meant a big company would have bought the property and installed a manager, a jackeroo and one or two others. Private citizens would not have been given the opportunity to buy the land in their own right.

Mr Davis: What did you do about it?

Mr LESTER: In that instance I approached the company concerned, Clark Bros & Tait, together with the Chairman of the Peak Downs Shire Council, Councillor Garside. I recognised that it was their right to sell but I appealed to them to subdivide the property and cut it up into areas so that many people could be given a chance to purchase the blocks and become farmers in their own right. That would provide employment for 60 or 70 people, some of them self-employed. I suggested to them that they do something similar to what was done by the Queensland British Food Corporation, when a huge property run by that corporation was in financial difficulties and the land was cut up. Now the Capella area is a particularly rich one and, by way of taxes, contributes a great deal to the nation. That was one of the best moves that has ever been made.

To return to Gordon Downs—Clark Bros & Tait adopted the suggestion put forward by me and Councillor Garside and are in the process of cutting up the land. The land was bought by Houston Oil & Minerals, who excised a portion for coal development and cut up the rest of it. That means that in the areas not as well suited to grain-growing there will be a coal-mine and the rest of the land will be put on sale to private purchasers. So my decision to approach the company directors has resulted in future employment for possibly 2 000 people in the Central Highlands. When one considers a coal-mine and subsequent development—there could well be a power station constructed in the area—it augurs well for the development of the area.

I point out to the members of this House that they should not just sit down and cry about something that does not suit them; they must get up and do something. In that particular instance I did something: I approached the company, they agreed and now massive job opportunities will result from my actions.

Might I further point out—

Mr K. J. Hooper: Round off.

Mr LESTER: The member for Archerfield challenged me to go 60 minutes. The Labor Party must take responsibility for my having to speak so long. I lost 20 minutes of my time through frivolous interjections from that side of the Chamber.

I point out that there is a very definite need in the Peak Downs electorate and coal-mining areas generally for a substantial, effective road system. When one considers the dependence of the mines on one another,

one realises the need to have Emerald connected to Moranbah through Capella—the Cotherstone road to Dysart and on to Moranbah. There is need for a connection to the beef road and for a direct road between Dysart and Blackwater. All of those roads would be part of an interesting network of roads in the not too distant future.

In the north is Goonyella and then Peak Downs, Saraji and Dysart. Being developed are German Creek, Oaky Creek, which I was at the other day, and the Gordon Downs mine. There is Gregory mine and, of course, the three Blackwater mines of Utah, Thiess and QCM. If we are to have the proper back-up services for these mines, obviously there has to be an interconnecting road system. Not only do we have schoolchildren all wanting to commute between the towns, but we also have many sporting organisations wishing to visit. In fact, this Sunday Blackwater will host the football grand finals. It is fitting that I deviate for a moment from the Budget to congratulate the Blackwater footballers. All three teams have made the grand finals. That is an interesting achievement by Blackwater.

An interconnecting road system between those towns would be a great advantage. In sports we have Rugby League and Rugby Union football, basketball, athletics and hockey. They are all part and parcel of the Central Highlands sporting scene. We have many tremendous footballers in the region such as the Andersons in Moranbah, the Meiers in Blackwater and the Perrys. All of them will be tremendous sportsmen in the near future, but if they could travel more easily between towns they would be so much better.

With better road communication many economies would be effected in business. It would lead to cheaper costs of living. We must ensure that we offer the best for our people. It might be said that some of our miners earn high money, but it must be remembered that expenses in that area are high. Fuel costs are getting higher, so we have to shorten the distances to be travelled between towns and make improvements to our roads. That is the advice I offer to the Main Roads Department. I suggest that we fix up our roads, build new ones and make sure that our towns are served by an interconnecting network.

While I am speaking about roads, might I say that we are deeply grateful for the bridges that have been recently completed over the Dawson River, Comet River, Retreat Creek and Nebo Creek. That provides an alternative inland route from Rockhampton through Blackwater, Emerald, Clermont, Capella and Moranbah on to Mackay. It is a feather in our cap to have roads which are more reliable than the coastal route from Rockhampton to Mackay. More tourists will be attracted to our area. I am concerned, however, about the section of road from Nebo Creek bridge towards Nebo on the

Mackay route. Much of that road is in bad repair. It is breaking down badly and more money needs to be spent on it.

I should also like to see money allocated for improvement of the Dingo-Duaringa section of the road between Blackwater and Rockhampton. Although that section is not in my electorate, my constituents have to travel over it. In fact, it is at the top end of the electorate of the Minister for Transport, and I remind him of his responsibility to the people of his electorate. Unfortunately, I will have to take issue with him if he does not suggest that that section of road be upgraded with the utmost urgency. I do not want it hanging over my head that a fatal accident has occurred because of this bad section of road in the vicinity of Wallaroo.

A little closer to Rockhampton, there is a very poor section of road between the Wowan turnoff and Westwood. That is in the electorate of the honourable member for Callide, and I advise him also that he has the responsibility for the back end of his electorate that services my constituents. In the not too distant future I shall have to state publicly that these sections of road must be improved. The majority of roads in my electorate are being improved, but I am concerned about those in neighbouring electorates that are not up to standard and over which my constituents have to travel.

Mr Vaughan: What are you going to do—improve the western divisional allowance and the locality allowance for the people in your electorate?

Mr LESTER: I thank the honourable member for his interjection. He will find that I put that problem before a rally that I addressed in Moranbah not long ago. I was the first one who asked a question in the House about the matter.

Mr Vaughan: The amount has not been improved since 1959.

Mr LESTER: I do not care whether it has been increased or not. The fact is—

Mr Vaughan: You don't care?

Mr LESTER: I have not said that.

Mr Vaughan: Yes, you did.

Mr LESTER: I am saying that I cannot talk about the past. I am looking to the future and trying to get something done about it. Nobody tries harder than I do to get services and allowances upgraded. No matter what I do, I always get nit-picking from the ALP. The Peak Downs electorate has never been so well or so forcefully represented. Indeed, the Treasurer shudders every time I go to see him because he knows that I am going to ask him for money.

I should like to see a special effort made to introduce an apprenticeship for plant operators. That is very important in certain areas of my electorate, because many young

people who work for councils do not get an opportunity to learn to drive a grader, a bulldozer or, in the long term, a dragline. I have had representatives of various unions here today. We met Mr Byram of the Apprenticeship Office, and we are trying very hard to get something constructive done towards introducing an apprenticeship for tractor operators and machinery operators. It would be one way of guaranteeing employment. In addition, it would ensure that machinery would be well maintained for employers.

More facilities must be provided for young people in country areas. They must be given the opportunity to enjoy theatre and the arts. Many wonderful people have already given so much by teaching music, art and dancing. The Moranbah School of Dancing comes to mind. We need the ear of the State Government to ensure that we get many more specialists into the country areas.

After having spoken for a full hour on some of the important areas of my electorate, in the last minute of my speech I thank the people of the Peak Downs electorate for the many ways in which they have tried to assist me. I thank particularly the people of Blackwater and Moranbah. I thank the many people who have made suggestions to me that have come to reality. I thank those people who raised with me the necessity to retain the dollar Golden Casket ticket. That was a great winner for the pensioners. It ensured that they were not forgotten. The pensioners and the other little people in our State have not been forgotten. I should like to think that I always have an open ear for the complaints of the little people, and that I try to help them.

(Time expired.)

Mr KRUGER (Murrumba) (5.41 p.m.): I am very pleased to have been able to sit here for the last 60 minutes and listen to the last Budget speech by the honourable member for Peak Downs. I should say that this could well be the last occasion we hear him on that score.

In all seriousness I intend to bring to the notice of the Chamber the economic problems confronting the State, many of which have been brought about by Cabinet decisions. In saying that, I point out that I believe Cabinet has made many decisions too quickly—decisions that have not been in the best interests of the State—without honest debate, and without their being put to the people of Queensland for due consideration. That is one of the worst things that has happened in the State, more particularly in the last three years. Prior to that, there was some reasonable consideration and discussion. In the past three years, I have seen a decline in the quality of Cabinet decisions. It is high time that Cabinet members woke up to themselves and tried to be realistic.

The Treasurer's Budget has done nothing to overcome the problems that we have become accustomed to in recent times. Because it is widely split the coalition Government is costing the State money. Many of the problems confronting the State are attributable to the split in the coalition and also within the coalition parties themselves. All these problems are now reflecting on the financial position of our State.

In looking closely at some recent happenings, I will quote from an article that appeared in "The Courier-Mail", in these terms—

"Campbell slams Joh conduct.

"The Labor Relations Minister, Mr Campbell, today accused the Premier, Mr Bjelke-Petersen, of disgraceful conduct over the government's industrial relations policy.

"Mr Campbell said the latest outburst by Mr Bjelke-Petersen cast what he called a disgraceful slur over the integrity of the State Industrial Commission.

"The row highlights the differences between the Liberal and National coalition parties."

I would go so far as to say that that type of situation does nothing but harm the State of Queensland. It concerned the cable-layers' strike. When such problems arise and force a former leader of the Liberal Party to make statements against the Premier, the troubles confronting the State come clearly into view.

At this stage the Liberal Party in Queensland has a rabbit of a leader, and a president who breeds like a rabbit. On looking at the problems, we see the inconsistency in the two-party situation, with two distinct groups within the Liberal Party trying to operate in coalition with the same dogged National Party that we have learnt to live with in recent times. While that situation continues, the State will not benefit.

Before I leave the problems attributable to the Government, I must say something about the poor quality of debate that takes place in this Chamber. Much of the reason for this is to be found in the low standard of Government members and, of course, their numbers in the Assembly make the situation appear much worse than it is. With the evening up of numbers and possibly a change of Government following the next election, we will have a high standard of debate in this Chamber.

On many occasions recently the Government has tried to reduce the time limit of speeches. This is entirely wrong. If people have something to say, they should be given the opportunity to say it. The shortening of the time allowed for debate does nothing to improve the standard of debate, particularly when we wish to discuss, for instance, the finances of the State, a matter which is very important to the people.

The Budget makes a very dead approach to the needs of Queensland. Very little additional expenditure has been provided in

the areas that need it most. More expenditure should be provided for those areas. The Treasurer has done nothing to improve the employment situation.

Dr Edwards: What about the \$57m we spent on employment opportunities?

Mr KRUGER: We have heard about employment opportunities for many years but we have seen very little result. Unfortunately the unemployment figures increase and that shows quite clearly, Mr Edwards—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Row): Order! The honourable member will refer to the Treasurer by his proper title.

Mr KRUGER: I point out to the Treasurer that we are not getting any results from that expenditure. It seems that the funds have been mishandled. If the Government had some reasonable policies on that additional expenditure, better results would be obtained.

I now turn to Forestry Department expenditure. The amount provided is little different from that provided in the past. Admittedly the status quo has been maintained. However, the Budget provides no room for expansion in the Forestry Department, nor has any consideration been given to extended experimentation in the eradication of diseases affecting our forests. The die back in Western Australia, caused by phytophthora, is becoming very significant, and quite a lot of timber is being lost on the northern tablelands of New South Wales. The disease is affecting mainly the eucalypts in New South Wales and the jarrah in Western Australia. Considering the extent of die back in Queensland, it is high time that more money was spent on research. If we do not face up to reality in this field, a massive die back will occur somewhere and we will be rushing all about the place trying to stop it.

The entomologists in the Forestry Department believe that a certain amount of die back is occurring because insects eat the leaves. If that is so, it would take a long time to cause the death of a tree. Possibly the only problem that could arise is a sucking type of insect that carries the disease from one tree to another.

Phytophthora is carried through the roots of the tree, and it is carried by pineapples and a few other plants. It spreads through the soil, through the air or by water. If this disease is rampant and uncontrolled, it will spread from area to area. It is very prevalent in Queensland, particularly in wet soils. Most of our forestry plantations, such as slash pine, are planted in wet soil. If we do not look at this problem now it could become much worse, and forestry production would be severely retarded.

We also need to look at expanding the private sector and encouraging people to plant timber on blocks which are unsuitable for normal crop-growing but would grow good timber. While we must look at the

potential of timber products we must also look at the possibility of greater rainfall following the planting of timber. We have been looking at the problem of dry land salinity and associated problems that occur when our forests are raped, as has occurred in certain areas of Queensland in the past. Without timber we cannot hope to encourage greater rainfall. Some members might not know that an average eucalypt will exude 8 gallons of water per day into the atmosphere, and when that occurs the possibility of higher rainfall is greatly enhanced. If we encourage the planting of timber by the private sector, together with the plantings of the Forestry Department, we will overcome a lot of rainfall and timber shortage problems we presently face. But we will not overcome these problems if we do not allocate more funds to enable the maintenance of a reasonable amount of planting operations as is occurring at present. That is one area in the Budget which I regard as a complete failure.

I now want to look at the allocation of land for the production of crops around the Clare Weir. Certain areas around the weir have been set aside for lease, and I have been asked by several farmers who are presently leasing land from cane growers about the possibility of obtaining some of this land on which to grow crops. The honourable member for Peak Downs touched on this problem earlier, as he has done on different occasions in the past. But that is where it stops; he does nothing further about it. I believe that the Government does not intend to do anything further about it either. We have to have a further look at this in order to enable these people to have a reasonable chance of obtaining land on which to produce crops, but even this would be of no great advantage if we did not do something about obtaining markets for such crops.

I now want to deal with roads throughout the State. This subject has been touched on by a large number of speakers in the past few months, but possibly only one member spoke about our good roads, and that was the honourable member for Mourilyan who quoted earlier from a letter written by somebody down South. Our roads are pretty bad, and I believe that this Government should be doing some very strong talking in an endeavour to obtain greater road grants from the Federal Government. Local authorities in my area have mentioned to me the possibility of further cut-backs in road-works allocations, and if these do in fact occur our roads will deteriorate even further. There are more and faster vehicles on our roads and this will cause even further deterioration, particularly if the Government can maintain a supply of petrol at the right price.

I now turn to the treatment of local authorities by the Local Government Grants Commission. Commonwealth grants are presently distributed throughout the State by

the Grants Commission, and many local authorities are discontented because they believe that this money is not being distributed correctly. The Treasurer ought to keep in very close contact with the Grants Commission to ensure that the previous method of distribution is maintained and that the distributions to some local authorities are not increased.

I now want to deal with some other problems that I have raised recently in this Parliament. I refer firstly to the land development in the Raby Bay area. In case you are worried, Mr Row, this does relate to the affairs of the State so far as the Budget is concerned. Certain statements have been made which indicated that that development would take place in an orderly and proper manner and that there would be no worries about finance. I believe that the lease issued by this Government has been sold to an American firm through a company known as Coast Securities. I would like to quote from a letter from a person in the area who states—

“Nothing new has eventuated since I talked to you on the telephone last week.

“I must admit our information is very sketchy but it appears that Mr A. D. Roberts has arranged for the sale of all or part of the Development lease of Raby Bay to American interests reputedly from Texas for \$800,000.”

In answer to a question asked in this Parliament it was stated that the lease would be issued to Mr Roberts. It was also stated that Mr Roberts had the finances to carry out the development. The letter continues—

“We know for sure that a Gold Coast firm called ‘Gold Securities’ operated by Geoff Taylor and Wally McIntosh, civil engineers on the coast, hired Sea Worlds helicopter SW1 and were in the Raby Bay area on 10th June. We know that since then they conducted a feasibility on the Raby Bay project.

....

“During June or July Cabinet evidently discussed the Raby Bay Project and put some extra requirements on the issue of the lease. One was that the riparian right holders had to be adequately compensated. It would be interesting to know what the others were. The riparian right holders then were offered \$25,000 each for the loss of water frontage. \$1,000 by the end of July and \$24,000 in October 1981. The \$1,000 was paid at 9.40 p.m. on the 31-7-80. One of the riparian holders wanted to sell house and all for \$45,000.”

It goes on to show that this Government's lease arrangements in Raby Bay are not good.

When we consider the aggregation of large holdings within the State, it seems

that Queensland is being badly treated. This matter was touched on by the member for Peak Downs. Because he lives in an area in which this is happening, he is well aware of it. However, his representations to the Government have fallen on deaf ears. It is quite obvious that this Government intends to do nothing about the matter because there have been many opportunities for something to be done. It has ignored the wishes of the people to ensure that this aggregation of land by foreign companies does not take place. It does not intend to break up this land so that people can produce from it in an orderly manner. We have lost a lot in this area over recent years.

We can look also at the development that has taken place at Yeppoon, with the hand-over to Iwasaki. We can look at the problem that appears to be arising now with lease arrangements on Curtis Island. As I have just mentioned, there is the Raby Bay affair. An attempt is being made to bring in overseas money to take over land in the Gold Coast hinterland. Why cannot this Government, together with the Federal Government if necessary, do something to encourage local investment so that the State of Queensland and the people of Queensland can get some advantage from these developments? The people should be given a fair go to produce off this land.

Unless we are prepared to have a look at the overall property lease arrangements, we will find that sections of our primary industries, such as grain-growing and beef-producing, will be sold out to foreign ownership, just as has happened with our coal operations. This is the last thing that the people of Queensland want. In no way can people who have had anything to do with the land accept this as being a reasonable situation. I cannot understand why the members of the National Party, who are supposed to look after the interests of country people, allow this sort of thing to happen. Unfortunately, they have allowed it to happen, and they continue to allow it to happen.

The member for Peak Downs said that we should be getting the younger people back on the land. How are we going to get them back on the land if we do not have any land for them? What is the good of getting them back on the land if there is no way in which they can make a living from their operation? Under this Government, people are coming into cities because the properties on which they grew up are no longer viable. That is why people are leaving the land, and the State Government and the Federal Government are doing nothing to overcome the problem. It is high time that there were discussions, particularly in the Federal sphere, to ensure that the marketing arrangements will make these operations viable. This matter has not been given full consideration. There is a lot of room for improvement throughout the State and the Commonwealth.

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

Mr KRUGER: Increased fuel costs are having an adverse effect in rural communities. Fuel prices are becoming harder and harder to accept. Although the State Government is not responsible for the increased costs, it has aligned itself with the Federal Government which, of course, has brought about these increases.

I wish to quote from the report of the National Party conference. On the subject of minerals and energy it was reported—

"The Labor Party will obviously try to make political capital of the issue, and have, in fact, announced that they would impose a twelve months' freeze on the price of crude oil produced in Australia.

"We well remember that our then Federal Leader, Artie Fadden, helped to win the 1949 Federal election, campaigning for the abolition of petrol rationing. While this is a different matter, it demonstrates the public's concern over petroleum products.

"For these reasons your Committee has given much thought to the problem and to ways of relieving the situation without abandoning the principle of import parity prices. To start with, we posed these questions:

"Was the present price high enough to continue the expansion of exploration activity in Australia for the time being?

"Was the present price high enough to persuade people to conserve fuel?

"Was the present price high enough to encourage research into, and the production of, oil from alternate sources?

"In each case your Committee considered the answer 'Yes, for the time being'. The problem then was to devise a policy initiative which would provide some relief from further increases in the immediate future, and take the political advantage away from the Labor Party without—as said before—abandoning the principle of import parity pricing."

That clearly demonstrates that the National Party's intention is to create a smoke-screen during the period leading up to the Federal and State elections and take the initiative away from the Labor Party. I assure honourable members that the Labor Party will not have the initiative taken away and it will bring to the fore the problems caused to the man on the land by high fuel costs. I again quote from the same documents—

"After much deliberation the Committee came up with the resolution which is presented below. It has been accepted by your Management Committee and I seek the Conference's confirmation.

"Such a policy if accepted by the Federal Government would:

Put a minimum twelve month freeze on the price of Australian crude, thereby nullifying Labor's proposal,

be an on-going policy as distinct from a 'on off' proposal,

provide all consumers with twelve months' notice of precisely what the next price increase will be,

give our primary producers some competitive edge over their competitors in other countries as called for by the Rural Policy Committee."

That clearly says that the National Party intends to create a smoke-screen, because it knows very well that, because of the coalition's connection with the Federal Government, the Labor Party has an added advantage.

While I am speaking about fuel and fuel price increases, let me refer to a question I asked in this Chamber on Tuesday, 20 May 1980. I asked—

"(1) How many oil test wells have been drilled in the Roma/ Moonie basin?

"(2) How many of these wells have been sealed off?

"(3) What method was used to seal off the wells?

"(4) What is the possible production of the sealed wells if they were reopened?

"(5) Do previous test wells indicate that a large quantity of oil may be just below the depth that the wells were drilled to before sealing off?"

The answer was—

"(1) Approximately 540 wells have been drilled in the Surat and Bowen basins in the search for petroleum in the Roma/ Moonie area.

"(2) Approximately 220 of these wells have been plugged and abandoned.

"(3) Wells were sealed off by the placement of cement plugs between porous zones and at the surface.

"(4) The wells were all tested and found to be non-productive, and therefore it cannot be anticipated that reopening would lead to any production.

"(5) Although some wells were not drilled to absolute basement they were completed at depths considered at the time of drilling to be below the potential producing horizons. There is no available evidence that the deepening of these wells would locate oil."

An article in the "Sunday Sun" of 3 August 1980 carried the heading "Strange case of the Roma gusher". The article stated—

"A former Roma man says he has proof the Mines Department has been sitting on a major oil discovery for the last 50 years.

"Mr Peter Pring, son of the official Mines Department photographer of the 1930s, said last week a high grade oil find north-east of Roma had been capped by the department in 1935.

"But the department says it has no record of the discovery and won't be investigating the claims.

"The denial comes in the face of official photos taken by Mr Pring's father showing the 1935 Mines Minister, Mr Alf Jones, accepting the first light crude struck at Roma Block 16.

"They can't tell me there is no oil there," said Mr Pring, 'I've seen it—I was there.'

"He said other pictures taken by his father showed the well in full operation and striking oil.

"There were wells being sunk everywhere and anyone who says they never found oil is wrong," he says."

Without going into detail and reading the whole article, I think that, when a man in his position has made such a statement and the document clearly shows the oil coming from the ground, the Government should fully investigate the matters I raised instead of just passing them off.

Mr Davis: He's not the only one. I agree with him.

Mr KRUGER: That is right. The member for Brisbane Central was brought up in that country and knows a bit about oil. He clearly agrees with the gentleman concerned, and that also is ground for the Government to take action.

What is this Government's track record in regard to small business? For many years, as we are all aware, the Liberal Party in particular was propped up by small business enterprise, particularly in the provincial cities of South-east Queensland. In recent times, however, the Liberal Party has completely dumped small business people and has given them no encouragement to continue with their businesses in a way that could be considered to be acceptable. A committee has been set up by various parties to consider small business enterprises, but nothing seems to come of it. Every now and again we read in the Press that certain aspects are to be investigated, but there is no finalisation of the matter and no action that would make small businesses more viable.

There was a similar situation with the Queensland Fish Board. When it got into difficulties, there was just a lot of hot air. There seems to be very little improvement in that sphere. I do not know where the Liberal Party intends to go to do something for the small enterprise in Queensland. Those businesses have been a great asset to the State and should be encouraged. Because of the smoke-screen put up by the Liberal Party it has only been in recent times that the small businessmen have started to realise that the Labor Party—the party representing the working class—is the one to make their businesses viable.

I pass now to the needs of the working class, which has never had it tougher than in the last few years. I am speaking of those who are receiving less than white-collar workers. White-collar workers tend to forget at times that they are working people as well. Much has to be done to make sure that there is equality within our community. Irrespective of the class of work being done, everybody is entitled to a reasonable living and a reasonable amount of enjoyment out of life. Most of those we generally refer to as the working class can no longer exist on the money they are being paid.

Then there are those who are even less fortunate—those who are completely out of work. Whilst there are still those people who continue to refer to them as “dole bludgers”, a big percentage of them do have a problem. They are legitimately seeking work but are unable to find it. Until this Government and the Federal Government take action to make jobs available through job-creating initiatives, their plight will worsen. Employment will not improve at all.

There is no concession in the Budget for our ageing population. I have looked through the Budget and can find no increase at all. A section of my electorate—particularly at the Redcliffe end—has a great number of ageing people. The housing accommodation for the aged is minimal. When the amount of money they are paid as pensions is compared with the present cost of living, it is obvious that they have very little left for their personal needs. It is deplorable that aged people are on the poverty line. The item in the Budget relating to rate remission was mentioned this morning by our leader. Information about the possible advantages to pensioners by way of rate remissions was leaked to the Press some time earlier by the member for Redcliffe.

Mr Davis: Actually, everything that he said was leaked.

Mr KRUGER: Yes, it added up to what was in the Budget.

If we look at the proposal, we see that in a number of shires it will be of no great advantage to pensioners. Until money is paid to local authorities by way of subsidy and it is made mandatory for local authorities to grant rate remissions to pensioners, the problem will not be solved. The confusion that now exists in the minds of pensioners will continue. For example, pensioners in Redcliffe are in a different situation from pensioners living in the Pine Rivers Shire. Confusion arises because people do not know what they are entitled to, and it is up to the State Government to intervene and ensure that people know where they stand in regard to rate remissions. All local authority areas should be on an equal footing.

Dr Edwards: With a member like you, it is no wonder they are very confused.

Mr KRUGER: I say to the Deputy Premier and Treasurer that the confusion is caused by the Government of Queensland, not by me. It is taking me a great deal of time to solve the problems of the people in my area. In many instances those problems are caused by the Deputy Premier and Treasurer's lack of interest in pensioners. The fact is that he has done nothing to ease the problems for them.

Dr Edwards: That is not what they say in the letters that I receive. It is not what your brother said, either.

Mr Davis: Who would be stupid enough to talk to you?

Mr KRUGER: The honourable member for Brisbane Central is quite correct.

Let me turn now to the lack of value in the dollar and what people can buy with the pension. As I mentioned earlier, there is the cost of fuel. Then there is interest on housing. Medical insurance, of course, is a Federal issue, but the principles of it have been accepted by the Government of this State. Then there is the cost of food—groceries, beef, fruit and vegetables. I mention that because earlier in the debate we heard National Party members say that the people on the land are not getting the return due to them. They are not doing very well and, at the same time, people are paying through the nose for these commodities. It is high time that the Government changed its attitude and I assure the people of Queensland that, after the next State election, a Labor Government will take the matter in hand.

I should like to bring to the notice of the House some figures that I have taken out recently relative to the price of household commodities. The price of bread has risen on seven occasions. In the last five years, the price of cabbages has increased by 337 per cent, oranges by about 296 per cent, rump steak by 285 per cent, apples by 223 per cent and potatoes by 133 per cent. A home for which a person paid \$10,000 about five years ago would now cost \$35,000, and electricity charges have risen by 50 per cent in just three years. Looking at the prices of those essential commodities, one can see why people are having trouble making ends meet, and I believe that it is the responsibility of the Government to try to overcome problems of that type.

Another major problem that exists in the electorate of Murrumba is the situation in what is known as Snook Street, Redcliffe. It is to become a major through road, which will entail the use of quite a bit of park land. I understand that originally it was accepted by the local authority from the subdividers as park land, but it has now been proposed that the land should be rezoned and used for a four-lane highway. Articles in “The Redcliffe Herald” of 21

November 1979 indicated that that was so. Many people in Snook Street objected to the proposal, and recently people living in Elizabeth Avenue, which is now the main through road, have objected to that road being brought up to four-lane standard.

The changes are to be made to cater for the two lanes provided by the Main Roads Department over the Houghton Highway. The proposed four-lane highway will not really be required till the two lanes on each bridge are operating. Because I have received complaints from a number of people, I should like to know exactly what will happen. By doing it this way, will the local authority there set a precedent and will local authorities be able to obtain land as park land and then convert it into a freeway? I would like to know whether freeways can be established in this way.

I will now quote from a letter that a Mr Bullock wrote to me. The first section of the letter is only a preamble, but later he says—

“During either of the months of February or March 1979, surveyors’ pegs appeared in the long grass portion of the park and recreation reserve behind my property known as Snook Park.

“When I agreed to purchase this property in December, 1975, . . . I was advised by the Town Planning Department of Council, that the block adjoined a park and recreation reserve which was to provide a Park and also act as a buffer between the residential development and the industrial area to the west of the Park.”

I will not read the whole of the document, but it is obvious from his inquiries and those of three neighbours that it was to be park land and nothing else. Later it became obvious that a four-lane highway was to be constructed. Mr Bullock and a lot of other people believe that they should have been told by the local authority some time earlier that it was to be a main road.

The following information is enclosed with Mr Bullock’s letter—

“The Park is part of four Portions of land, 163, 162, 525 and 161.

“That, in Portion 163 is a gazetted Park and Recreation Reserve (Reserve 2547).

“That, in Portion 162 was proclaimed to be held by Council for the purposes of Park and Recreation, in the Government Gazette dated 2nd June, 1973, at page 962.

“A search of the Titles Office shows that that part in Portion 525 was taken by the Council for the purpose of Parks and Recreation, transfer being registered on 2nd September, 1977.

“That portion behind my property, Portion 161, was resumed for the purposes of Parks and Recreation, being registered on 1st May, 1975.

“Mr N. R. Miller of Pacific Land Company Pty Ltd., has advised me by letter dated 30th May, 1979, that Portion 525’s part was resumed from the Company for the above and enclosed a copy of the gazettal of same from the Government Gazette dated 30th June, 1977.”

The land was obviously taken from the developer for park purposes in the development. It has now been rezoned for a four-lane highway. Such a precedent should not be set. Land should not be obtained for park purposes and be used for something different. I am not saying whether Snook Park or Elizabeth Avenue should be the four-lane highway, but local government should make it quite clear to people in the area just what is intended.

As a result of all this, I want to know the attitude of the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police to the use of this land for a four-lane highway, whether the extra cost will be met by the ratepayers if the street is developed by the local authority, or whether the road is to be developed by the Main Roads Department. I want to know the present planning stages in the Council and Main Roads Department so that the people may know what to expect. Another question that comes to mind relates to which aldermen, if any, have land in the Snook Park area and who could be advantaged by the development of this four-lane highway.

I now come to the proposed railway line to Redcliffe. Although the responsible Minister is not present, I am sure that he is aware of my interest. A corridor has been set aside under the Rothwell plan. I asked questions this morning about this matter so far as the Brisbane City Council is concerned. The Pine Shire Council believes that the route set out roughly in the maps will be acceptable to the area. Because a certain amount of money has been set aside for planning and organising of the rail link, I am interested in finding out when funds will be made available for land resumption.

While I consider the rail link essential, I am very concerned about the area of land that cannot be developed at this stage because of the 20 to 25 chain proposed corridor under the Redcliffe City Council’s Rothwell plan. If the rail route was designated, the development of land on either side of it could go ahead. People would know from the town plan exactly what they could do with the land that is affected by this rail link proposal. As there are only a couple of houses along the proposed route, it is reasonable that resumption take place so that there can be orderly development on either side of the corridor. Resumption is not an expensive item according to the estimated costs. It is essential that the Treasurer make money available as soon as possible to have the land resumed.

There is quite a lot of tourist potential in Queensland. Even though some tourist development has taken place, the Government should look at tourism in greater depth so that a flow of tourists can be maintained through the State. It is quite wrong to rely solely on Queensland tourists for a good deal of our income. Both interstate and overseas tourists can be attracted to Queensland. The tourist potential of small towns such as Redcliffe, which is close to Moreton Island, is untapped. It has good prospects in tourism. Possibly the town itself is not a tourist attraction, but its potential could develop.

There is enormous scope for development of the tourist trade right along the Queensland coast, and the further north we go the greater are the possibilities. In the North, of course, we would be looking for international airports. Their provision has been considered and they might be provided in time to come.

I believe that the Budget lacks lustre and initiative. Additional money should be made available in certain areas. There should be no cut-backs in any areas. I am worried greatly about merely maintaining the status quo in education. The additional teachers to be made available are not sufficient in number to meet the needs.

I have had complaints from a number of schools. One school has lost five teachers and only one will be appointed. One class has had seven different teachers so far this year. There is no way in which a high standard of education can be maintained if children have that number of teachers in a year. More money should be made available to improve the teacher/pupil ratio.

Mr LANE (Merthyr) (7.38 p.m.): This is a very important debate because it concerns the expenditure of some \$2,511.3m of the taxpayers' money in the coming year. That is an increase of more than 13 per cent on the amount expended on behalf of the taxpayers in the preceding 12 months.

Before I go into details and make comments relevant to public expenditure, I should like to say something about the previous speaker. The honourable member for Murrumbidgee sat down after subjecting us to 60 minutes of the most boring tirade of rubbish ever heard in this Parliament. He is the Opposition spokesman on lands and forestry matters. He is the alternative Minister for Lands. If the Opposition were elected, he would control the expenditure of \$36.5m. There are people in the gallery and members in this Chamber who heard him speak for the last 60 minutes. I ask them quite frankly if they would trust him with that sort of money, even if it belonged to him. It is, of course, taxpayers' money held in trust on behalf of the Crown, and that is the man who would be in charge of it. He would be administering a department which has almost 2 000 officers. Does he sound to

you, Mr Gunn, like the sort of person who could take command of a department with a staff of that size? He would not know where to start. I venture to suggest that he is the sort of individual who would be a lot happier and a lot more comfortable personally if he were somewhere further down the ladder in terms of the administration of the Department of Lands, dressed in a uniform somewhere around the front door with a broom cleaning out the entrance hall. He would do an excellent job; he could push something like his own weight around there.

As we come up to this election, it is quite important that the people of Queensland examine these individuals opposite, these "honourable members", these "gentlemen" who purport to take over the administration of our 18 departments. I think we have no more classic example than the honourable member for Murrumbidgee. We have had some interjections along the way from the honourable member for Brisbane Central who, of course, if the Labor Party were elected, would be the spokesman—

Mr Yewdale: Why don't you talk about the Budget?

Mr LANE: I am talking about public administration and public expenditure. I am talking about the responsibility of administering the public purse, something that I suggest very few individuals opposite would be capable of doing.

Getting back to the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who would be Minister for Transport in a Labor Government in this place—just examine him; have a look at him! He is the man who would be in charge of the Department of Transport; the Commissioner for Transport would come under him—

Mr DAVIS: I have to take a point of order to correct the member for Merthyr because he is out of date. I have been the Minister for Works—

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

Mr LANE: We are used to all sorts of strange deals being made in the Labor administration, and with its continual game of musical chairs we are never quite sure whether an individual is one thing or the other. I will go through the Budget papers and find the Estimates for the Department of Works and Housing and we will examine just whether the honourable member for Brisbane Central is capable of administering that department which will control the expenditure of \$70,684,000 during the coming 12 months.

Mr Davis: No problem.

Mr LANE: "No problem", says the honourable member for Brisbane Central. Have a look at him! He could not run a service station out at Windsor, and he had a staff of only one—himself. He went broke. If he were the Minister for Works and Housing in a Labor Government he would have control of 1 162 personnel on the State pay-roll.

Mr Davis: It would be more.

Mr LANE: It would be more, would it? I thank him very much.

Mr Davis: Under Labor policy.

Mr LANE: That is right. I am up to date with his party's policy. I do know the Labor Party would increase the day-labour force.

Mr Davis: My word we would.

Mr LANE: Would he care to tell us if he would double them?

Mr K. J. Hooper: Mr Lane—

Mr LANE: I do not want to talk to his ventriloquist's dummy sitting behind him, I want to hear direct from his mouth just how much he would increase the day-labour force, how many private contractors he as Minister for Works would put out of business in this State. That is what I would like to know: how much work would be taken out of the hands of competitive tendering, taken out of the hands of contractors prepared to compete against each other in the private market, giving the best price and delivering high quality work? How many of those people would he put out of work? How much of that work would he have done by a permanent day-labour force?

Mr K. J. Hooper: Mr Lane—

Mr LANE: I want to hear from the little chap sitting in front of the honourable member for Archerfield.

Mr Davis: I would get rid of your Liberal mates.

Mr LANE: He would get rid of all the Liberals in the Works Department. I thank him very much. I think that will be of interest to the State Service Union: all the public servants working in the State Department of Works and Housing would be sacked by the Minister for Works in a Labor Government. They would be put off because of their political views. I thank the honourable member very much; that has confirmed for us here tonight—

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. Because it is an election year we must get the record straight. I said what we would get rid of would be the jobs for the boys that the Liberal Party has put in, so that would be the Liberal contractors who got their jobs because of the payola from this Government.

Mr LANE: It is on the public record. All the contractors who happen to be supporters of the Liberal Party will not get any more contracts. If a tendering system still existed under the administration of the member for Brisbane Central, there would be no point in anyone who happened to hold Liberal beliefs tendering because he would not get the contract. That is well placed on the public record here tonight, and we will be happy to repeat it in other places. The Labor Party has a spokesman, and he has spoken. We have listened. The "Hansard" reporters have reported it. What the honourable member has said here tonight is now in the official record. We will be happy to tell everyone in this State exactly where the Labor Party stands in 1980, first of all in respect of day-labour and, secondly, in respect of competitive tendering.

Now I think I might get on to some positive comments about the Budget.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Mr Lane—

Mr LANE: Does the honourable member want to compliment me about the roses that grow in Newstead Park?

I now turn to some of the positive aspects of the State Budget. I think that the State Treasurer (Dr Edwards) is to be complimented for an excellent job this year. It was a quite outstanding Budget. Despite the efforts of the Opposition to condemn it here today, it was an excellent document. It will satisfy many people in the community. Let me look at a measure of the Opposition's worth here today with respect to this Budget. The Leader of the Opposition was reported in the Brisbane "Telegraph", which was distributed in this Chamber at 11.30 this morning, as making his criticism of the Budget. It was on page 1 of the city edition of the Brisbane "Telegraph". The article read—

"The Queensland Opposition today warned . . .

"In a speech to State Parliament today . . . the Opposition Leader, Mr Casey, said . . ."

He had not even delivered the speech at the time the report appeared in the Brisbane "Telegraph". That shows a disregard for the institution of Parliament and a total contempt for his role as Leader of the Opposition in this place. It is something that he should not have done. He should have come in here first and delivered his speech with dignity and decorum. He then could have circulated it to the members of the Press who then could have reported it. Instead, we have this cheap tactic of his giving the speech to a reporter at 6.30 this morning so that it could be reported in the city edition of the Brisbane "Telegraph".

Now I would like to tell honourable members what the sub-editors of the same newspaper thought of the speech by the Leader

of the Opposition after he had delivered it. Before he delivered it, reference to it appeared on page 1. After he had delivered his speech, reference to it appeared on page 15. In the final edition of the Brisbane "Telegraph", reference to the speech by the Leader of the Opposition appears on page 15. What appears before the reference to his speech? There is a report about a rose show. There is a report about the Chelsea flower show, and the fact that a drain was clogged up. What story replaced the story about this speech on page 1 of the final edition of the Brisbane "Telegraph"? There is a story about dogs mauling a postman. That is bigger news in this State than the criticism that the Leader of the Opposition can make in this Parliament of this Budget.

We know that he had very little to say because it was a very positive Budget. It is a Budget that caught the Opposition off guard. For example, the pensioner rate rebate offered in the Budget has been acclaimed as a first far and wide by elderly people in this State. It was a very good thing. The number of telephone calls that I received in my electorate office over the week-end, asking me to pass on the thanks of the pensioner community to the Treasurer for this concession, was quite outstanding.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Could I have your attention for just one moment?

Mr LANE: The member for Archerfield is going red in the face trying to say something.

Mr K. J. Hooper: I do not want to interrupt your speech, but I would like you to acknowledge the vice-president of the Liberal Party, Mr Greg Vickery, sitting in the public gallery.

Mr LANE: I thank the honourable member for Archerfield very much. The vice-president is a very fine gentleman. He is a man who has the interests of the State at heart. The Liberal Party's candidate for South Coast is also in the gallery, if the honourable member for Archerfield would like to have a good look at him. He is also a clean-cut, decent, moderate young gentleman.

The pay-roll tax concessions offered in the Budget have also received a great deal of acclaim from the business community. I personally thank the Treasurer for agreeing to my representations in support of the submission by the Committee of Catholic Bishops with respect to subsidies and per capita grants to non-Government schools. The increase of \$3.9m in capital grants payment to non-Government schools, which will appear in this third term, has been acclaimed far and wide. Many members on this side of the Chamber have already received a great deal of thanks and appreciation from that circle. Primary student payments were increased by 15 per cent, from \$195 to \$225 per annum for each primary school student throughout Queensland.

Secondary school student payments were increased by 17.5 per cent, from \$309 to \$363 for the coming year commencing in the third term.

I am sure the honourable member for Brisbane Central sends his children to a private school at Windsor and I am sure the committee at that school will be the first to write to me and thank me for my part in achieving that increase. In fact, the letter will probably be signed by his wife, who is president of that committee. The efforts of that committee are very much appreciated because I know how hard he and his wife work for that school and what a fine school it is.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr LANE: What would the honourable member for Brisbane Central do about it if he was in Government? What sort of per capita grants would we have?

Mr K. J. Hooper: Mr Gunn, is this type of chat across the Chamber allowed? I want to listen to a speech.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Gunn): Order! The honourable member for Archerfield is one of the worst offenders.

Mr LANE: Another pet project of mine in which I have taken a great interest over the last nine years is the development of the Brisbane Forest Park. I was very pleased to see the provision of \$200,000 for development of recreation facilities in the Samford State Forest and at the bush camp near Mt Nebo. Brisbane and its environs are becoming more densely settled and people, particularly those who live in high-rise developments such as exist in my electorate, will be able to get a bit of relief in natural Australian forest. The Brisbane Forest Park stretches from Mt Coot-tha right up the D'Aguilar Range to Woodford. I tell honourable members that that project is an initiative of the Liberal Party, something that was raised at a Ryan area conference of the Liberal Party back in 1970. That proposal was carried into Cabinet by Sir Douglas Tooth, who was then Minister for Health and who is now Chairman of the Brisbane Forest Park Authority. It is a proposal that is now coming to fruition. Many people now go to this park.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr LANE: I do not imagine that any members opposite have gone to the trouble to go and have a look. I do not know who is the Opposition spokesman on matters such as the Brisbane Forest Park but I bet that he has not been up to have a look at it. He should take a drive up to Mt Nebo and down to Bellbird Grove and see the thousands of people who are there every week-end. Thousands of people are liberally sprinkled through the natural Australian bushland where there are clear, flowing

streams and the sounds of bellbirds in the trees. The barbecue areas are well kept and are available to the families who wish to go there. Swings and other equipment are set aside for the pleasure of the many family groups that go there at week-ends. I invite honourable members opposite to go and have a look at it, particularly the honourable member for Brisbane Central. I am sure he would appreciate it.

As budgetary matters affect all areas of Government administration and responsibility, I think it is fitting here tonight for me to raise a matter of great public interest, something that concerns the people in my electorate and the people at large in Queensland. The subject, which is very topical at the moment, is the fight against the increase in drug usage in this State and in this nation.

We all know that several months ago, following the recommendations of the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs headed by Mr Justice Williams, the Federal Liberal Government, formally and rather suddenly, I thought, disbanded the Narcotics Bureau in accordance with the recommendations of that report. When it did so, it explained that it was done on the basis of the recommendations of that report, which said that the services of that bureau had been unsatisfactory. The enforcement of the drug laws in this country at Federal level was passed into the hands of the Australian Federal Police, which Sir Colin Woods had been brought out from Britain to establish and administer.

I was concerned at that time about the future career opportunities of many of the excellent officers who staffed the Narcotics Bureau. They were, it is true, quite a mixture of people. Some of them were more public servants than detectives; some were more clerks than investigators. Still, amongst them was a hard core of solid law-enforcement officers who had had previous experience in other services. A large number of members had joined the Narcotics Bureau from the various State police forces throughout Australia. They, I suggest, were the real strength in the Narcotics Bureau. They achieved the things that it was able to achieve under the old arrangement.

Unfortunately, they had with them a number of inexperienced officers who had been seconded from the Bureau of Customs—men who were more in the line of odd-jobs men in that they were searchers with experience perhaps with ships, but no formal training or experience as investigators. A number of white-collar workers—clerks—came from the general Commonwealth Public Service. It was an unfortunate bureau that was established at the time. I must concede that the Federal Government was quite right in disbanding it when it did.

One of the recommendations of the Williams report—it is the second recommendation, following the recommendation that the

Narcotics Bureau be disbanded—was that all members of the Narcotics Bureau be given the option of remaining with the Bureau of Customs or joining the Australian Federal Police on terms at least equal to those then enjoyed. Of course, that is a very decent and proper industrial arrangement. It is a type of grandfather clause, which looked after the existing members and reinforced the contract that a Federal Government must have with its employees.

These officers were very quickly sorted out. Those of us who have some contact with law-enforcement agencies know that almost all of the officers who are kept on in the new drug unit, which is now a section of the Australian Federal Police, were former police officers from other forces—experienced investigators. Most of the other gentlemen, unless they showed particular aptitude and were highly recommended by senior officers, now enjoy employment in the Bureau of Customs, some of them as detection officers, some of them as boarding officers, some of them as searchers and some of them down at the customs barrier checking people coming in from overseas. So they have all been looked after with employment in one way or another, as was their entitlement.

A number of other recommendations were made in the report and I would like to refer to a few of them in this speech. It was recommended in the Williams report that the Narcotics Bureau drug intelligence holdings and the facilities of the central intelligence records bureau be transferred to the National Criminal Drug Intelligence Centre in Canberra so that all the intelligence information on hand would be in a central place and would not be lost. That has been done.

It was also recommended that the Bureau of Customs should organise its resources to create and maintain a barrier against all forms of smuggling. The Bureau of Customs, of which the Narcotics Bureau previously had formed part, had the sole responsibility of maintaining that barrier, by one means or another, against all forms of smuggling. That, of course, included the barrier at the formal places of entry—at airports, on the wharves, and so on—around the nation, and also a barrier against smuggling by means of illegal entry along the coast.

It was written into the report by way of recommendation that the Bureau of Customs should no longer try to combat drug smuggling by going past the customs-barrier themselves to investigate offences further, particularly by following smuggled drugs beyond the customs-barrier. That was a very sound recommendation that there be a division between the investigatory staff, on the one hand, and the searching staff or the revenue-collecting staff, on the other hand, and it also has been enforced. The Federal Government has acted on many of the basic recommendations set out in the Williams report.

The report said that the Bureau of Customs should rely on the Australian Coastal Surveillance Centre in Canberra for information on possible breaches of the customs screen. That centre is a co-ordinating body that organises the forces of the RAAF, the Royal Australian Navy and such other forces as operate off our coast to keep the coastline under surveillance to prevent it from being breached by people coming from overseas, perhaps in their own boats or light aircraft, as has been done in a number of instances. It was a sound recommendation that all activities should be co-ordinated from a central place.

The comment that I wish to make tonight is that, in spite of the obvious goodwill on the part of the Australian Federal Police and the Federal Government to observe these recommendations and to act in accordance with them, because of the enormous bureaucracy associated with the Federal Government, the Government has been very slow in doing anything about them. At the moment, we are in a sort of vacuum in relation to the proper enforcement of laws relating to drugs as they pertain to international affairs. I suggest that the Federal Government has indeed been negligent in not moving fast enough to implement all of the recommendations of the report regarding its own agencies. It has, for example, not employed sufficient staff or gathered into its organisation sufficient members to do a workmanlike job.

It might surprise honourable members to know that the drug unit of the Australian Federal Police in Queensland consists of five men. Admittedly they are capable men, but there are only five of them. I was in touch with the superintendent of the Australian Federal Police this morning to ask him what had been done about increasing staff in his area. He told me that he has only five men to investigate the importation of illegal drugs and to break up the organised crime that goes with the drug trade throughout the vast State of Queensland. That is just not good enough, and the Federal Government stands condemned for its lack of action. It ought to get on with the job. I know that at present it is bogged down in administrative procedures. It is waiting for the Public Service Board to sort things out; it is waiting for amendments to be made to various pieces of legislation. It ought to give the matter priority. As I said, only five narcotics agents are employed by the Federal Government for the whole of Queensland at present.

The Brisbane phone book, in an entry headed, "Australian Federal Police", contains a reference to the Drug Intelligence Reporting Centre. People are advised by that listing that they are entitled to a free phone call, by STD or by a reverse-charge call, if they dial the number to give information to the drug unit of the Australian Federal Police. That is a great pose, a good advertising gimmick, because there are only five men to carry out any investigations that may be warranted.

An Opposition Member: If you dial you get a recorded message.

Mr LANE: If a person dialled, I wonder who would answer the phone.

Another recommendation of the Williams report is that the three Nomad aircraft on hand for the Customs Department should be dedicated to Customs surveillance under the control of the Australian Coastal Surveillance Centre. I emphasise that there are three Nomad aircraft for the whole of Australia—not for Queensland only. One is based in Townsville, another at Darwin and the third at Port Headland. Anyone who knows a little about Nomad aircraft is aware that they are an excellent, safe, air-worthy plane, and that they are extremely slow. Any smugglers who fly across our coastline, over the Gulf of Carpentaria or from Groote Island in fast, twin-engined aircraft from South East Asia or the Pacific Islands, could easily outstrip the Nomads. They would not have a chance of leaving one of the three bases and catching them. Anyone caught crossing the coastline of Australia with drugs is caught by sheer luck rather than good management. It is probable that the Darwin radar operates a 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. shift, five days a week. It certainly does not provide adequate surveillance of our vast coastline.

In the southern States the weather radar is used in conjunction with the normal surveillance radar to detect foreign vessels or aircraft coming in from the sea. But Queensland is too mountainous and vast, and the weather radar is quite inadequate for that purpose. We have an inadequate radar facility in Darwin and three Nomad aircraft to maintain surveillance of our coastline. Unless the Federal Government does something dramatic, I venture to say that it is not sincere in its attempts to crack down on the drug trade.

Mr Moore: It is simply window-dressing.

Mr LANE: It certainly is. In a moment I will get on to ways in which something can be done about the situation. I am pointing out what is being done now.

Another recommendation in the report is that we should have a police unit from Australia based in Thailand to liaise and work actively with the Thai police and track down drug importers and the big dealers in drugs in South East Asia before they send their goods to Australia. But that has not been done. At the moment two Federal police officers are based in Bangkok on liaison duty, one at Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia and the other at Jakarta. There are five Federal police officers in the whole of South East Asia whose major role is liaison. That probably means answering the telephone and replying to telex messages from Australia rather than playing an active participatory role in an investigatory sense.

What is the answer? As someone who has had some experience in investigation, I suggest that the way to curtail drug imports is to implement a system of crime intelligence, a system of undercover agents, a system of in-depth investigation and surveillance that starts with the big man and works down rather than starting with the street user and working up. Inevitably the drug-pushing chain is broken somewhere along the line. Safeguards are deliberately built into the system so that the investigator never gets to the top man.

At the moment we are fortunate to have revealed to us something of a world-wide network of syndicated drug runners which was associated with the murder of the Wilson couple in the South. That has given members some insight into what goes on in this area. Members should be aware that it is little thanks to the Narcotics Bureau or the Federal Police that this group was tracked down and identified, with some being brought to justice and some still being sought.

The initial good work that was done in this regard was carried out by the Queensland Drug Squad. It was done on the initiative of detectives attached to the Criminal Investigation Branch. In the first instance they identified the international criminals involved and followed it up. They checked the fingerprints to identify them. They used their judgment and initiative and were able to smell the trail. They did the hard, slogging work that led right across the chain of events that we have seen portrayed in recent days on television and in the daily newspapers. Every Australian who has had an opportunity to follow the story in the Press knows how serious the problem is and knows that great profiteers and multi-millionaires are involved in the drug trade. The first big breakthrough in any of these investigations was made by the Queensland Police.

I would be pleased if, in due course, I heard some members of the Opposition pay tribute to that fact. I am so disappointed to hear them continually denigrate the members of the Queensland Police Force, run them down, criticise them and discourage them in every way they can. Those officers deserve every compliment and commendation for what they did in this case.

The Queensland Drug Squad has a full strength of 22 members.

Mr Wilson: Do they miss you?

Mr LANE: The honourable member for Townsville South obviously thinks it is a great joke. I know it is all a little beyond him, and that he is not seriously concerned about the drug problem in this country and how young people are being sucked into drugs. He is not concerned about what goes on in his electorate in regard to this problem. I would have thought that, as a North Queenslander, he would be one of the first to acclaim the good work done by the Queensland Police Force and to encourage greater coastal surveillance in the North,

which is the entry point of many drugs, instead of approaching the problem in a lighthearted manner.

I was endeavouring to tell members that the full strength of the Queensland Drug Squad, which is based in Brisbane, is 22 members. At the moment, the squad has 20 members and vacancies have been gazetted for two more—another sergeant and a detective. So it is being increased to its full strength of 22 members in the near future, which is more than four times the strength of the Federal Police Drug Unit in Queensland.

I suggest that those federal politicians who like to posture and criticise the State Government from time to time should look at this very serious problem and do something about implementing the recommendations of the Williams report. When we have an adequate drug unit in the Federal Police we should see an increased emphasis placed on the exchange of information. The forces will have a mutual respect for one another and be able to work together in co-operation for the common good, but while we have a small team of five men employed by the Federal Police and 22 by the State I suggest that the Federal Police in this State cannot be taken very seriously.

It has been suggested that there should be a regular secondment of State officers to work with the Australian Coastal Surveillance Centre for periods of not less than three months so that every State force will have a body of officers familiar with the details of the centre's work. That is a suggestion with which I agree, and I call on the Federal Government to do something positive about it. By the time the Federal Government fights its way through the administrative bureaucracy to implement the report's recommendations many more kilograms of hard drugs will be brought into this country and many more of our young people will be led down the path towards degradation and death.

The Williams report, which was a very comprehensive document, is not the only report that makes recommendations of this sort. The one commissioned by the New South Wales Government, and presided over by the Honourable Mr Justice Woodward, makes very similar recommendations, as those who have gone to the trouble of reading it would know. For those members opposite such as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr D'Arcy), who has advocated the legalisation or decriminalisation of drugs such as marihuana, I point out that the inquiry set up by the New South Wales Government does not go along with that. In his first recommendation Mr Justice Woodward says that the cultivation, possession, supply or use of cannabis should not be legalised. So once again the Australian Labor Party is out of step with responsible opinion.

Mr Justice Woodward has confirmed Mr Justice Williams's recommendations in that he, too, agrees that there is a need for a

small professional unit of Australian law enforcement officers, both State and Federal, to be attached to the police in Bangkok with full clerical assistance and adequate transportation so that they can integrate their efforts, set up personal liaisons with officers of the Thai police and start to get at the big men in the drug-pushing world. He believes that both State and Federal Governments should offer some assistance to the Thai Government in the training of personnel and the supply of equipment. Thailand is still an under-developed country to some extent, and some of the trained personnel and modern items of equipment we have in this country could make a definite contribution in assisting Thailand which, I believe, has been genuine in its efforts to stamp out the source of many of the drugs that come into this country. Mr Justice Woodward also agrees that there should be an increase in personnel liaising with police officers in countries such as Thailand.

He makes the point that the Police Department should divide its manpower resources so that at least 65 per cent of the drug law enforcement effort is spent in attempting to intercept traffickers above the street level. On hearing all the evidence, he of course recognised that whilst picking up a hippie with a couple of joints of marijuana in his pocket may be a very important thing to do in the interest of the health and well-being of that unfortunate individual, it is not the way to break the drug trade. The traffickers in drugs at a higher level, the organisers, the Mr Bigs, are the ones to get at, and all the surveillance around our coastline will only pick up that stray aircraft that happens to fly across when our Nomad aircraft or patrol vessels happen to be on the spot by luck or coincidence.

There should be an expansion of divisional units of police engaged in drug-related investigations right throughout the State, and I call on the Queensland Government here and now to establish a specific Drug Squad on the Gold Coast, which is one of the major trouble spots for this sort of activity, and in the major northern cities of Townsville and Cairns. There should be a Drug Squad associated with the CI Branches in those places. They would have the special responsibility to attend to this sort of work. It happens to be a fact—I have said it in this Chamber many times before—that in police investigations, what is everybody's business ends up being nobody's business. So it is necessary to have specialist officers with a specific area of responsibility to which they can apply their time and efforts. This is just some of the background to some of the major social problems that exist in this State.

One should acknowledge the great wealth and strength that exists in this great State of Queensland. If any of the other States had suffered losses in revenue of up to \$4.3m week after week from a strike as disastrous as the Central Queensland coal

strike and still been able to bring forward a Budget that met the needs of the people, and contained as many pluses as the one brought down by this Treasurer, then that State would have been justly proud of itself. Only in Queensland could we sustain such a healthy economic environment, despite this great set-back with its indirect effects on industry in the southern parts of the State. It is of great credit to all of us in Queensland.

In conclusion, I should like to acknowledge the work of the officers of the State Treasury who slaved long and hard late at night continually adjusting the Budget figures so that the books would balance. They did this each week as the strike cost the State anticipated revenue. For their technical competence in this respect they deserve every acclaim and commendation that this Parliament can give.

Mr NEAL (Balonne) (8.24 p.m.): In rising to speak in this Budget debate, I congratulate the Treasurer on again introducing a balanced Budget. Notwithstanding the critics in the ALP, it is a Budget that I believe will allow the State to continue along the pathways of progress and development. In addressing myself to the Budget I shall cover a number of aspects of it and deal with a few of the problems that concern constituents in my electorate.

The operations of this Government are conducted on a large scale. The resources of this State are only just beginning to be tapped. We are just beginning to scratch the surface so to speak—to unlock the treasures with which this State is endowed. There is tremendous development of our coal and mineral deposits. There is the search for oil and gas, with some success, in the Surat Basin. There is the Rundle project. There is the prospect of the Burdekin Dam. That is to name just a few.

To get full benefit from our resources we must have responsible development and careful management. We have had this over quite a number of years through the National-Liberal free enterprise Government, which has employed sound economic management and that, in itself, is telling the story with the development that is taking place.

Queensland is a State with an exciting future, the State that is destined to be the leading State of the nation. We have huge energy resources and, properly managed in a fuel-hungry world, they must ensure that the people of this State and nation will have a better standard of living overall. If it were not for the tremendous contribution that this State makes to the nation's export income, we would certainly be the worse for it and the nation would be in the red.

The Treasurer has outlined the Government's intentions for development for the next 12 months. He has done this notwithstanding a fairly high rate of inflation and a somewhat tight-fisted Federal Government which has stated policies aimed at continuing

restraint of the public sector, particularly of capital works. The Treasurer has brought down a responsible Budget. For many years now inflation has been the main killer of initiative and jobs. There is no doubt in my mind that until inflation is brought under control we cannot expect to see this nation back on the road to prosperity, nor will we see any appreciable lowering of the high rate of unemployment.

The simple facts of the matter are that when the ALP was in power it squandered the nation's wealth as if it was going out of fashion.

Mr Booth: What it did was very depressing, wasn't it?

Mr NEAL: It was absolutely depressing.

I wish to mention the track record of the Labor members in this Chamber who hope to govern Queensland after the next election. Of course, if the track record of their federal colleagues is any indication, then we cannot expect much from the ALP in Queensland. I would not want the people of this State, and indeed this nation, to forget that track record.

It is time that people again realised what Labor's legacy to this nation has been. In Government the Labor Party presided over the most destructive increase in inflation this nation has ever witnessed or had to suffer. Of course, it claims that Mr. Fraser has had sufficient time to tidy up the mess, and that is a true indication of the business acumen displayed by the members of the ALP in this Chamber. It is a well-established fact that, after bankruptcy, few businesses rise again. The Fraser Government has had an unenviable task of rehabilitating this country after the free-spending days of the Whitlam Government.

The Treasurer has stated that the Commonwealth allocation for major programs such as roads and housing are well below acknowledged levels. Of course, I believe that this is one area in which we will suffer. That is most unfortunate. Extra money is needed for housing to help overcome backlogs and to meet increasing demands. Appendix C to the Financial Statement shows a higher level of activity in the building industry in this State during the year than on the national level. Less finance means fewer houses and that means waiting lists for houses, people living in accommodation that is not to their requirements, young marrieds living with their in-laws and a whole lot of other things that are undesirable. I know that the Minister for Works and Housing is doing all he can within the limits of his budget. He does a very good job.

To quote the Treasurer, roads were funded well below acknowledged levels. Roads play a very important part in such a vast State as Queensland. The funding of new roads and road maintenance is a matter of great concern not only to road users but also to local authorities, whose work-forces depend

upon it for their livelihood. Roads in rural areas are of paramount importance. They are the main lines of communication and commerce. The allocation of \$127.8m from the Commonwealth Government represents an increase of some 11 per cent on the 1979-80 allocation.

Like our Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police, I look forward to Queensland's share of the Commonwealth-guaranteed road-funding program of some \$3,750m over five years, commencing next financial year. The present allocation gives no significant increase in real money terms. The Federal Minister stated that his Government had to balance road needs with the need for economic restraint in the present financial year.

In view of the inflationary effect of oil parity pricing and the tremendous amount of revenue—something like \$3,000m in a full year—derived from fuel users by the implementation of that decision, I believe that the Federal Government could and should return a portion of the money for road-works. I feel certain that there would be a far greater acceptance of the principles behind world parity pricing if the users of fuel could see some tangible benefit from the implementation of that policy. The industries that are compelled to use fuel—mining and primary production—should be given some consideration because of world parity pricing.

It might interest the Committee to know that the projected expansion in wheat-growing areas of this State is expected to be something like 16 per cent each year. In other words, over the next five years the acreage planted to wheat will be doubled. There is only one thing the primary producer can use if he is to grow that amount of wheat—fuel.

The suggestion that good roads encourage greater use of fuel is, as far as I am concerned, a load of rubbish. Better country roads will save fuel. The overall funds of \$247.8m allocated for roads will, I believe, fall short of our requirements. Apart from new works, there is a need for extra maintenance money to keep existing bitumen roads in good order. Work is needed on many of our bitumen roads to build up shoulders, to effect repairs to pot-holes, and to carry out general maintenance. It is essential that we maintain in good order what we already have.

I was pleased to see that the St George to Hebel road has not been overlooked and that special project funds will be used in its construction. The road needs of the Balonne electorate are many. I know that the Minister for Main Roads is aware of the problems. He has been of great assistance and is doing as much as he can within the confines of his budget. Whilst there are many important roads in my electorate, I do not intend to single any out. As far as I am concerned, all of the roads are important and have their priorities.

One matter I draw to the attention of the Minister is the release of new work. By and large, most of the releases for our main roads and priority roads have been for bitumen 18 feet wide. I notice that for the Mitchell to St George road the Warroo Shire Council has accepted 12 feet bitumen. In the past it has been getting 18 feet pavements, but this time it has elected to take 12 feet, believing that it will go further. I do not agree with the decision. It is the council's decision, but in the long term I would prefer to see wider bitumen. I think it is best.

The Treasurer stated that work-value wage increases that have been granted or are in the pipeline have added a further dimension to Budget planning and constitute a major cost item this year. Some \$248m has been budgeted to cover these and estimated future increases during the year. The Treasurer can only gaze into his crystal ball and hope that he is somewhere near the mark. If he has underestimated, the shortfall must be made up by the cutting of services elsewhere; if he has overestimated, the reverse applies.

One can only agree with the basic thrust of the Budget as outlined in the Financial Statement—

“maximum possible supplementation of the capital program with the aim of maintaining effort and employment opportunities in the public and private sectors.”

I am sure that all honourable members would agree with that. It continues—

“maintenance of existing levels of service with some enhancements and improvements in areas of demonstrated need. No increase in overall administrative staff establishments but increases in police, hospital and teaching staff.”

That is a very wise move on the part of the Government, because increases are confined to areas in which they are absolutely necessary. The Financial Statement continues—

“assistance to non-Government organisations etc. increased in line with cost increases.

“charges generally increased in line with cost to maintain real values.

“no increases in taxation but further concessions in certain areas.”

That is a very responsible attitude, an attitude that the Government has taken over the years. In these times of economic restraint, the thrust of the Budget is one with which the Government can live, and it is proof positive that it is prepared to live within its means.

As to the Consolidated Revenue Fund—provision is made for a total expenditure of \$2,511.3m. Actually, the Treasurer has budgeted for a surplus of \$162,836. Taking into account a small deficit in 1979-80, that becomes a small deficit of \$198,527. Although the Budget is balanced, there is

a small deficit as a result of the deficit carried over from last year.

Turning to receipts—there is expected to be an increase of \$127m, or 13.3 per cent, in the State's entitlement under the Commonwealth's personal income tax-sharing arrangements. That keeps pace in real money terms with a little added. The Treasurer has stated that the estimate for 1980-81 of \$1,079.5m includes a long-overdue correction of an anomaly in respect of an undercounting of the State's population and the application of the incorrect figure to the calculation of Queensland's tax-sharing entitlement. It is pleasing to know that we are at last receiving what is our due, and what has been our due. The Treasurer has not stated whether the Commonwealth Government, having acknowledged the error, is going to give this State full measure for any shortfalls that occurred during the years in which the incorrect calculations were made. The loss last year amounted to about \$22m.

The Treasurer has stated that the Government has given very lengthy consideration to the question of adjustment of rail fares and general freight rates, and that, apart from fixed increases in freight rates in haulage contracts, general freights and rail passenger fares will be increased by an average of 15 per cent. Of course, no-one likes to see fares or freights increase. Unfortunately, it is a fact of life that Governments are forced to take action in the same way as private enterprise is forced to take action to increase charges.

There is no doubt about the wisdom of rail users who have chosen to contract for their haulage. Under the contract system, they have set for the term of the contract the charges that are to be levied. As honourable members are aware, certain percentage escalations are calculated each year under those contracts. It is good business for those using rail transport; it also is good business for the railways. The Railway Department is assured of the contract and knows that it will get the business.

The losses incurred by the Railway Department are massive. The Government must strive to maintain and improve rail services. In the long term the Railway Department should improve its position when one considers the impact of the escalation of fuel costs on road transport. The railway must continue to streamline its services and strive for greater efficiency. Increased mineral haulage will assist the overall railway function. We know how bad the losses in the Railway Department would be but for the profits flowing from the haulage of minerals.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting a delegation from New South Wales. The members of the delegation came to Brisbane to investigate the feasibility of using our rail service to supply their area in conjunction with road transport. Because they were considering using our rail system, they were looking to companies in Queensland to

supply the goods. They came up here to investigate our rail charges and services and the supplying of goods and services because of the Wran Government's decision to close down the railway line serving their area of New South Wales. I discussed the matter with our Minister for Transport. I hope that we can serve them. I know that the Minister will be doing his best. We can certainly be thankful that we have a Government which recognises the importance of the railway system to the rural areas.

In the field of pay-roll tax, once again the Government has recognised the burden placed on employers. It is a tax on employment that has no regard whatever for the profitability or otherwise of an enterprise. This is what the Treasurer's Financial Statement has to say about pay-roll tax—

"As from 1st January 1981 employers with an annual pay-roll less than \$180,000 will be exempt from pay-roll tax. The new maximum exemption proposed is an increase of 20 per cent on the previous maximum of \$150,000 and will be more than double the present maximum exemptions applying in other States.

"The minimum exemption will also be increased by 20 per cent from \$30,000 to \$36,000 from the same date and will apply to all employers having an annual pay-roll in excess of \$237,600."

The burden of pay-roll tax is counter-productive to employment. The 20 per cent increase in the exemption level means that the exemption gives a net gain to employers over and above the wage rises during the year.

The exemption from land tax on land owned personally by residents, or being used by the owner or some other person such as a share farmer for agriculture, dairying or grazing, will also be well received. I do not believe that it will cost the State a tremendous sum of money. As the Treasurer said, the exemptions from pay-roll tax and land tax are expected to mean a loss of about \$8,500,000 in a full year. However, he also indicated that because of increased business activity and the expansion of business throughout the State, there will be a net pay-roll tax increase.

In respect of special capital allocations, \$82.9m will be distributed to special works of an employment-creating or sustaining nature this year. That is about \$15,300,000 less than the amount of \$98,200,000 provided for in last year's Budget. Unfortunately, as the Treasurer said, the allocations have suffered as the result of revenue loss sustained by the miners' strike. If the strike had not taken place, it is estimated that the sum allocated would be well in excess of \$100m. Because of the losses the State suffered during that strike—and they exceeded \$4m a week—there must obviously be a cut-back in services somewhere. Some area will have to suffer as a result of that strike.

Notwithstanding this loss caused by the strike in the Central Queensland coal-fields and the resultant loss of revenue, it is very good to see that pensioners have been given consideration by way of a 50 per cent subsidy to local authorities on rate rebates to pensioners to apply from 1 January 1981. It will be welcome news for the pensioners and the local authorities, especially those that have, in the past, of their own volition, recognised the position of pensioners and given them a rate rebate. I will be interested to see the overall application of this scheme.

The general purpose untied grants are welcomed by the local authorities. They look forward to them. I share their aspirations that they will continue to be included in future Budgets.

The \$3.8m for operating and capital subsidies for local authority libraries represents a 15 per cent increase over last year's allocation and is therefore a small gain in real money terms.

Local authorities should be generally pleased with the increased entitlement under personal income tax-sharing arrangements of \$36, which will mean an increase of \$13.3m, bringing the total to \$50.7m for this year. This increase is, in fact, the honouring of the Federal Government's undertaking of 1977 to increase local government's share of personal income tax collection to 2 per cent.

In discussing the provision of moneys for our hospitals and our health services, I realise that the Government is having its share of problems in relation to the Federal Government's insistence that the program of cost-sharing on a 50:50 basis not include additional facilities or any element of enhancement. This has meant an added burden to the States so far as these services are concerned. This is quite disturbing but so also is the inability of some country hospital boards to raise loan moneys for their projects.

I should like to draw attention to the problems of the Balonne Hospitals Board over the past 18 months to two years. Of a total of \$1.5m sought in loan funds, it has been able to raise only something like \$250,000. I do not know what can be done in this area to assist, but I do know that, for every year that goes by, the construction costs escalation and the additional interest payable will mean that, when the hospital is finally built, the overall cost will probably be something like double the original estimate. The whole situation is unacceptable. I ask the Treasurer to give very serious consideration to this problem, which is not confined to the Balonne Hospitals Board.

Mr Yewdale: You had better write to him; he did not hear you.

Mr NEAL: The honourable member would know all about it if it happened in his area.

I am disappointed that consideration was not given to the supply of an aircraft for the second Flying Surgeon Service based at Roma large enough to accommodate a stretcher patient. I understand that the plane contracted for will be similar in size to the plane already operating the Flying Surgeon Service out of Longreach. As the Aerial Ambulance Service is virtually non-existent in my area—

Mr K. J. Hooper: Where is that?

Mr NEAL: If the honourable member does not know, he should. Obviously he does not come out there because there would be no point in his doing so. He knows he will be well and truly done over.

The Aerial Ambulance Service is virtually non-existent in my area and, in emergency cases, charter planes have to be engaged. In some instances they have to come from as far away as Brisbane. There are no suitable charter planes in the immediate vicinity for such purposes. Difficulties in chartering arise, especially over week-ends. In such emergency cases, when the Flying Surgeon has been called in, it would be sound practice to have a plane on the spot capable of doubling as an ambulance for the cases that have to be sent urgently to larger hospitals for attention.

The significant increase in assistance for home nursing services to take account of the movement in award rates and the implementation of the new Domiciliary Nurses Award is welcome news. There has been an increase of 22 in their number, and I noted the fact that nine of them are to be allocated to the St Vincent de Paul Society. That is a very good thing. But while on that subject, I would like the Minister to give consideration to a request that I know is in the pipeline for one of these nurses to be appointed to the Miles area. Her proposed area of coverage would include places such as Condamine, Miles, Drillham, Dulacca and up to Wandoan and Taroom. There are a number of organisations within that area which support the concept of such a nurse including the Murilla Shire, and the Church of England Minister at Miles is working very hard to try to get this proposal off the ground.

The Education Vote has once again drawn some criticism, and this is only to be expected. It always draws criticism, and I believe that no matter how much money was allocated to education it would still be criticised as being insufficient. The increase of 15.3 per cent on last year's allocation to \$600.9m more than keeps pace with rising costs and, as the Treasurer has pointed out, is in line with the increase in State resources. Whilst I certainly would have liked to have seen a greater allocation of money to education, I would also have liked to have seen a greater allocation of money to housing and roads. If it cannot be done, it cannot be done and that is that. Any greater allocation to education would obviously mean a corresponding lesser

amount elsewhere, and who is going to suggest where that would be? The overall allocation for education is in excess of that for other Government services generally, so I believe that it is fair and reasonable.

It is pleasing to see that non-Government schools will be assisted by the increase in per capita grants by 15 per cent from \$195 to \$225 per annum for primary students and by 17.5 per cent from \$309 to \$363 per annum for secondary students. These amounts represent an increase of 5 and 7 per cent respectively in real money terms. Non-Government schools play a very important role in the overall education system. Without them many students in isolated areas would be denied the benefit of a good education. I fully support the Government's measures for assistance to these schools. It does, however, disappoint me to see that there has been no increase in the assistance provided through remote area scholarships and remote area allowances. The parents of children who are compelled to use the services of independent schools are still faced with escalating costs. The cost of school fees has been rising over the years and this has meant an added burden on parents. I had hoped the Government would have been able to give some assistance by way of an increase in those allowances. They are a very deserving case because, as I said earlier, it is the only way in which such children can obtain an education. School bus operators play a very important role in our rural communities. They received a 12 per cent increase in the Budget, along with those who convey children privately.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Are you talking about Tara or Meandarra?

Mr NEAL: I would point out to the honourable member for Archerfield that in many instances people in those areas have to travel over gravel roads, and this in itself creates a problem, but it appears that the honourable member for Archerfield even has problems driving down a bitumen road. The increase in the amounts paid to bus operators and parents who convey privately will keep pace generally with rises in costs.

I now wish to touch on the Police Vote. It is pleasing to see an increase of 23 per cent, from \$100.4m to \$123.5m, in the allocation for the Police Department. There is provision for the appointment of 160 new officers, and for a further 37 to overcome the understaffing situation. The purchase of an additional aircraft—

Mr K. J. Hooper: What about some of those old poddy dodgers in your area?

Mr NEAL: I am just referring to the aircraft that is to be purchased. I believe that it could be used in apprehending some of the gentlemen to whom the honourable member just referred. Special funds are being provided for computer development, additional vehicles, radios and other equipment in order to provide a higher standard of service. All of those things will be of assistance to the Police Force.

I am particularly interested in the appointment of additional police officers and trust that the Minister will be able to allocate an extra man to the Tara police area. I have raised this matter with him on numerous occasions as I believe that an extra police officer is well and truly warranted there. The area serviced by the two-man station is extremely large. The men do an excellent job, and I certainly have no criticism whatsoever of their work.

I also believe that the overall service is spread too thinly. It was a three-man station, but it was reduced to a two-man station and the area was increased. I hope that one of the additional police officers will be allocated to that particular area. When the strength of the Tara Police Station was reduced, the Minister indicated that he was not prepared to establish a one-man station in the Moonie area, which is in the Tara police area. Of course, that would have relieved the situation. However, he said that he would give consideration to increasing the strength at Tara.

While he is giving consideration to it, I would hope that he will also give consideration to at least equipping the Tara station and vehicle with one of the new radios that will be purchased. What is needed is a radio system that is effective over a range sufficient to enable contact from the furthest point within the area covered.

Police housing, particularly in the St George area, is another matter which I wish to mention. We have problems of varying degrees from time to time. As accommodation problems are overcome, transfers or other circumstances seem to create other problems. I am certainly at a loss to understand why the allotment adjoining the police station was used for a Housing Commission home instead of a police residence. I believe that it would have been only common sense to have built a police residence on that allotment.

I have already touched on the railways. One can only say again that the losses are massive. They have increased from \$60.9m last year to \$91.7m this year, and they are only the operating losses. Losses on general rail operations, exclusive of mineral haulage, are estimated to exceed \$200m which, when added to the general debt servicing cost, will mean an overall loss in excess of \$242.6m, some \$30m up on last year's losses. From the Treasurer's figures, it would appear that profit on mineral haulage this year will be about the same as last year, notwithstanding the haulage from the new Norwich Park and Gregory mines. Apparently the extra profits that would have accrued from the haulage from those two new mines will be more than offset by the overall loss of profit as a result of the miners' strike. It has indeed been a costly strike.

I now wish to deal with the Vote for the Primary Industries Department. Of course, while doing so, I wish to take the

opportunity to express my appreciation of the services rendered by the former Minister for Primary Industries, Vic Sullivan. He certainly did a very good job in that portfolio over many years. He was always approachable and he did his best to assist at all times. He was always sympathetic to the people of the vast inland areas. He appreciated and understood their problems.

I wish to congratulate the new Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Ahern) on his appointment and look forward to working in co-operation with him. I believe he has started on the right foot, so far as the people of the South-west are concerned, by undertaking his recent visit to the drought-affected areas immediately after his appointment as Minister. Many people throughout that area have already expressed their appreciation of his willingness to go out and see at first hand the problems with which they have been faced as a result of this disastrous drought.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the assistance that has been rendered by this Government in the drought-stricken areas. That assistance has been given by way of rail freight rebates and road transport rebates on the cartage of stock for sale or slaughter, to agistment, for reconsignment to further agistment, return from agistment, for restocking purposes and for the cartage of fodder and water. The rebate for rail is 75 per cent and for road it is 75 per cent of the loaded road journey up to a maximum of 75c per km for a loaded cattle deck of 32 feet, whichever is the lesser amount. Other decks, of course, are calculated on a pro-rata basis. For sheep decks the maximum rate payable per km is two-thirds of the cattle deck rate.

Essential machinery and equipment including water troughing, piping, windmills, tanks and related essential materials to provide water for drought stock, as well as tractors for pushing of fodder trees or to desilt dams, and harvesting machinery, attract a 50 per cent freight rebate. All these concessions apply as well for the use of private farm vehicles in the cartage of these goods.

There is also a 50 per cent rebate on the cartage of essential fuels for drought mitigation purposes, which applies in remote areas where extra freight is charged by a carrier required to travel beyond a specified distance from a scheduled differential point.

For the droving of stock, a subsidy is payable on the stock routes and reserves. For contract drovers it amounts to 25 per cent of the contract charges. For families and hired labour it is \$15 per day per plant. These measures are of real benefit to the people in those areas.

On his recent trip the Minister saw at first hand just what a benefit these measures are. In one particular instance we met a widowed grandmother with what is left of her cattle herd on the road. She was on horseback in charge of her cattle and feeding them along the road. She had been

with them on the road since March. She told us that she was appreciative of the drought-relief measures and that whilst she had not at that stage submitted an application to claim some benefit, she certainly would and the \$15 a day would mean a considerable amount to her.

Of course, all these measures require prior approval from the stock inspector and it is only reasonable that, where public funds are to be expended in assistance, checks should be made. Prior to any movement, it is required that the stock inspector be advised. At the same time, he is in a position to advise land-holders of the measures that apply to their circumstances. By and large, the administration of these concessions has functioned well, but there have been some hassles with the returns. The Minister has indicated that he will streamline the operations to permit a faster return of the rebates to the applicants. That will be welcome news.

I also wish to pay a compliment to two of the members of the Department of Primary Industries who head the drought secretariat. They are Mr Ian Robertson and his 2 i/c, Miss Drynan. I thank them for their assistance, understanding and co-operation. At all times they have been most helpful. Mr Robertson accompanied the Minister on his recent trip out West to the drought-stricken areas and he certainly assisted in engendering in the people that he met in those areas a great deal of confidence in the department.

The Government has also made available drought relief loans for carry-on purposes, including sustenance, essential property operations and payment of rates. The loans are for an amount of \$100,000 per property, but with provision for a similar amount if necessary because of the duration of the drought or the scale of enterprise. They attract a 5 per cent interest rate and are for a maximum term of seven years, with a provision for deferment up to three years providing the loan and interest charges are fully repaid within seven years. To be eligible, producers must comply with certain criteria. These are that they must be (i) in working occupation of their property; (ii) in necessitous circumstances due to the drought; (iii) unable to obtain sufficient finance through normal commercial channels; and (iv) considered to have a potentially viable enterprise with the assistance proposed. The loans are administered by the Agricultural Bank. So far over 250 landholders have received those loans.

There have been a few problems associated with the loans, mainly because some people were of the impression that they were available to any landholder in a drought-declared area. Unfortunately, that is not so. Whilst it may have been the wish of the Government to be able to make loans available in such cases, it has simply not been possible. The State does not have that sort of money available to it. Unfortunately in droughts

there are many who are deserving of such loans but, either through good management or prudent management, are denied them. In many instances, those who have done the most to help themselves are the last to get Government help.

The Lands Department has also introduced concessions to landholders in drought-declared areas. They include—(i) waiver of fees for permits issued to allow depasturage of stock on stock routes and reserves for travelling stock from or in drought-declared areas or from properties declared drought stricken; (ii) extension of time for payment of Crown rents and reduced or waived penalty interest rates; and (iii) instalment payment of arrears to be considered for individuals experiencing genuine hardship. All of these measures of drought assistance that the Government has introduced are assisting people. They have enabled the preservation of many of the breeding flocks and herds of the South West. The Government has been playing its part in this drought as in past droughts. The people in the inland know that this Government has not forgotten them; that we are the ones who understand their problems; that we are the ones who will assist when they need assistance. I have recorded in "Hansard" these measures of assistance as I believe they are measures of which this Government can be proud.

I now turn to sport and youth, funds for which the Treasurer has indicated will be substantially increased. The subsidy for the sporting facilities scheme is certainly of great benefit. It has enabled clubs to provide better facilities than would have been possible from their own resources, and I know that the sporting organisations in my electorate appreciate this fact. The increase of 33 per cent on last year's allocation should mean that more clubs will get through the gate, so to speak, in their applications for subsidy. The allocation of \$5.9m, up \$1.5m on last year, should certainly mean just that. I trust it does and look forward to receiving a favourable slice in my electorate.

Whilst on that subject, I must commend the Director of Sport for the manner in which he carries out his duties. Being a sportsman of note himself, and actively involved in sport in his private life, it is only to be expected that he would understand the requirements of sporting organisations.

The various measures outlined by the Treasurer in the Budget, such as the increase from \$180 to \$200 a week for full-time administrators and coaches and the increase in the subsidy from \$75 to \$85 for part-time administrators and coaches, keep pace with inflation, and, of course, the \$3,500 towards the cost of staging seminars will also be of benefit. Although I doubt that many seminars will be staged in my electorate, I support the proposal.

I support, too, the \$50,000 special grant to the Mater Hospital to enable it to

provide a sports medicine therapy centre at the hospital for the Australian Sports Medicine Foundation.

It gives me pleasure to support the Treasurer in his introduction of the Budget. As I said earlier, I believe that overall it is a responsible Budget in which the Government is seen to be living within its means, a Budget that the people of this State will accept under the present economic circumstances.

Mr FOURAS (South Brisbane) (9.11 p.m.): The best description that I could give of the State Budget is that it is insipid. It attempts to maintain the status quo but does nothing to overcome the major problem of unemployment or to provide services to improve the quality of life of the average Queenslanders.

One of the problems in this State is that there is a chill over the Sunshine State's manufacturing industries. Rationalisation of industry is taking place and firms are shifting their plants down south. Consequently, many jobs are being lost to Queensland, and I believe that the Liberal Treasurer of this State should be criticised severely for not making an attempt to stop the rape of our manufacturing industries.

This morning, when speaking about the work-force, the Leader of the Opposition gave statistics showing that although Queensland has 15 per cent of the Australian work-force it has less than 10 per cent of the manufacturing work-force. In the last year or so, two take-overs have taken place in my electorate that have very severely affected employment. The first was the take-over of Malleys at Stones Corner by Simpson. They shifted the majority of their operations to Adelaide and, as a result, 300 jobs in my electorate were lost. More recently there was the take-over of Paterson Reid & Bruce Ltd. It was sold out and fleeced, and 150 jobs were lost. Similar things have been taking place throughout the State of Queensland, and it is time some protection was given to manufacturing industries and the jobs of Queenslanders.

The honourable member for Merthyr, who preceded the honourable member for Balonne in this debate, made scurrilous personal attacks on two members of the Opposition, the honourable member for Murrumbidgee and the honourable member for Brisbane Central. In criticising them personally, the honourable member for Merthyr brought little credit on himself or on this Parliament.

One of the matters about which the honourable member for Merthyr boasted was the fact that the Budget provides for pensioner rate rebates, as if the Liberal Treasurer was concerned for the welfare of pensioners in this State. I am sure that nobody is unaware that Governments in southern States have been giving 50 per cent rate rebate subsidies for many years. All that the Government of this State is doing is giving 25 per cent on top of that. Of course, in

other States local authorities receive the 50 per cent subsidy and are able to pass it on by way of cheaper rates. In Queensland, local authorities will still have to find 50 per cent. Therefore, Queensland will still be behind the other States and the Government is not being nearly as generous as it pretends it is.

Under the leadership of the Treasurer, the Liberal Party in this State has done very little to support Brisbane electorates. Let us look at transport costs. In the last two Budgets, a 50 per cent subsidy has been provided for city transport. Every other capital city in Australia receives a 100 per cent subsidy on city transport. This year, it will cost the Government of New South Wales \$70m to fully subsidise city transport. On the other hand, in Brisbane the rate-payers, whether they use public transport or not, have to subsidise public transport to the extent of \$12m this year.

If one looks at the take-over of the Brisbane City Council's profitable electricity undertaking and the fact that pensioners are not receiving rate rebates similar to those in other States, it is easy to see that the ratepayers of Brisbane are being sluggish. They are sluggish simply because the Liberal Party in this Parliament will not stand up to the dictates of the National Party. The Liberal Party is meek and subservient. It is a paper tiger. It is appalling that Liberals go to the electorate and say, "Give us the numbers and we will give you better government—a more tolerant government." It is well that the Liberal Party should be shown up for the sham that it is. In the three years that I have been in Parliament the Liberal Party has not stood up for the wishes of the people of Brisbane.

Recently I made a trip to the North with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I was told by everybody up there that the major issues worrying them were interest rates, freight rates and petrol prices. Mr Fraser, with the strong support of Government members, promised that he would drop interest rates by 2 per cent. However, they have sky-rocketed. After the Federal election it is likely they will rise by 1 or 2 per cent. Interest and redemption charges have been so increased that local authority works have had to be curtailed.

Worse still, because of the tight liquidity situation scarcely any local authority is able to borrow its loan allocation. Most are able to get only 20 per cent or 30 per cent of their allocations. They will be lucky to fill them before the end of the financial year. Because of high interest and redemption charges, and because local authorities cannot raise the loan funds permitted by the Loan Council, unemployment is increasing in rural areas. The Fraser Government cannot be exonerated from blame. The position is similar to that in 1974 when Labor was wiped out because of the blame attributed to the Whitlam Government. On this occasion the Government parties will reap their just rewards.

It is very important to keep in mind what Federal Government members have been saying about petrol prices. In this context I will quote an amazing statement made on 18 July by the Minister for Finance, Mr Robinson. It is intriguing that this statement was made at Kingaroy, which might partially explain it. But it was also made in Canberra; it was not just a slip of the tongue. It was in these terms—

“Cheaper oil—which is the policy proposed by the Socialist Labour Party—would have a catastrophic impact on the living standards of people in the rural areas.”

What an extraordinary statement! Mr Robinson's statement went on to boast about how the Government was paying \$123 million in freight subsidies. In the next breath, he explained that the Commonwealth Government had no constitutional power over pricing and was therefore not responsible if the oil companies chose not to pass on all or any of their \$123 million. He finished with this astonishing remark—

“Rural communities have to accept that import parity pricing for oil was essential to living standards”

The Prime Minister has broken so many promises that he has lost the respect of the whole Australian electorate, and the next election will show that. On 21 November 1977, Mr Fraser said—

“Petrol prices in all country areas will be reduced to within 1 cent a litre of the normal city retail price.”

What a hollow ring that promise has. Country people know how true it is. On the weekend that I left to go to North Queensland I filled my car's petrol tank at a cost of 29.9 cents a litre. Just outside Townsville, people were paying 39 cents a litre. I wonder why the Prime Minister did not keep his promise? It is absolutely amazing. We have heard excuses from Government spokesmen about the difficulty experienced in keeping the differential to one cent. Mr Garland said—

“There are other cost components that have to be taken into consideration in determining the difference between city and country prices.

“These are matters which are beyond the control of the Federal Government which has no control at all over retail prices.”

That is not entirely true. The Federal Government has some power under the Trade Practices Act, but it has refused to use it. In any case, I do not believe that Mr Fraser's initial promise was in any way hedged. It was a promise truly made and a promise that has been broken so far as the rural electorates are concerned.

What we have is the Federal Government paying \$122m—and it is going down the drain—ostensibly to subsidise cheaper petrol for rural communities. Where the money goes

is a total mystery. I do not think that the Government cares; it does not want to know where it goes. Recently, however, because it has been embarrassed by statements from the Opposition, it has instituted an urgent inquiry.

I should now like to pass to the second theme of my speech on the Budget. The Budget does not attempt to reduce unemployment, and the policies of this coalition Government and the Federal Government are going a long way towards making the situation worse.

Recently, the Roman Catholic Church released a document entitled “Poverty, Power and the Church”. The document examines the problem of poverty in the midst of relative affluence. The conclusions make uncomfortable reading.

A distinguished gentleman, when asked to give a speech on the problems facing Australia, said, “The two great problems facing Australia today are apathy and ignorance”, and he sat down. Asked why his speech had been so short and why he had made those comments he replied, “I don't know and I don't care.” It seems to me that the problem of poverty in Australia today exists because we have this general attitude of apathy and not caring. Ignorance about the situation and the “I'm all right, Jack” syndrome are responsible.

This attitude originated in the 1950s when we had a “lucky country” economy, when most Australians believed that they were living in a time of abundance and that everybody was sharing in this new-found national affluence. To most people poverty was something that existed only in underdeveloped countries, having long been banished from Australia.

There are two main reasons for this. The first was the old myth that Australia was an egalitarian country with limitless possibilities for all people provided they worked hard. The second was that people were dazzled by several beguiling events that changed their lives. They included the ready availability of money, the rapid expansion of hire-purchase, the massive range of consumer goods available, a home-building boom, overfull employment and, of course, the mining boom of the 1960s. With all of these signs of affluence, it was easy for Australians to believe that all people had an equal chance to enjoy this prosperity and to live out the rest of their lives in ease and comfort.

By the late 1960s, however, some doubts were beginning to creep in. Welfare organisations and pensioner groups began redoubling their efforts to expose the plight of the poor and to keep matters such as inequality and social discrimination before the public.

Since then we have had the Henderson report which, more than anything else, has brought our attention to the plight of the poor in this country and in this State. This report of 1975 revealed that this State had 15.6 per cent of income units with an income

below the poverty line. I would imagine that with the increase in unemployment since 1975 and the freezing of benefits paid to pensioners, particularly those with children, this percentage would be much higher. It certainly would not be lower. This means that, of the total Queensland population, 340 000 Queenslanders are living below the poverty line.

We have apathy and ignorance in this country and people do not seem to care. It is about time that people in our community raised their threshold of tolerance and made themselves more humane. We ought to stop blaming the victims and start thinking about doing something for them.

Who are the people who are poor? They are not merely the inhabitants of the Salvation Army or the St Vincent de Paul homes. They are not those who queue up morning after morning to receive a sandwich and a cup of coffee from the coffee brigade. They are but the tip of the iceberg.

The poor of this State and this city are the unemployed, the majority of age pensioners, the handicapped, those on invalid pensions, the widows, the lone parents and the low income earners with large families. These are the poor.

Anyone who is receiving any kind of social security payment is automatically poor. This is not new. Honourable members may be interested to know that only once has a group of welfare recipients ever received an income that was above the poverty line and they were the pensioners under the Whitlam Government. That was the first time ever that pensions were above the poverty line.

The State Budget does little to redress the problems confronting all of these people. I know that income maintenance is a Federal responsibility but this Budget does nothing to help provide services that would ease the problem. I will speak more of that later.

I would now like to talk about poverty and give my definition of it. The best definition of poverty I have seen was that given by the Australian Council of Social Service. It described poverty as—

“... a life condition created by a constellation of deprivation factors which together result in a standard of living significantly below that acceptable for and by the Community.”

That means that being poor is to be undervalued, to be deprived of dignity and to be deprived of opportunities to realise one's full potential. Being poor is to feel a sense of exclusion from those things which the rest of society takes for granted and which are constantly placed before one on radio and television as desirable and reasonable aspirations. Being poor is to be at the mercy of the expectations and judgements of those in authority—be denied assistance because one has not put in the right form, to be checked upon to ensure one is telling the truth, to be judged as an “unsatisfactory”

family and denied housing, and to be criticised for indulging in occasional luxuries which are the normal fare of others in the community. To be poor is to be powerless, to find the law is not a protective shield but a potential weapon to be used against one. Being poor is to feel constant anxiety about how one can manage, how to meet rent that consumes two thirds of one's income and does not leave enough for food or how to provide one's children with an education.

What we have as a response to this tremendous social problem facing possibly 20 per cent of our society is that conservative Governments go around blaming the victims and making scapegoats of them instead of having compassion and feeling and trying to redress their problems.

I would now like to look at some of the freezes on social security benefits that have been implemented by Fraser since he came to power in 1975. We have hundreds of thousands of poor families with children who have been thrust into poverty ever more deeply by inflation and the Federal Government's deep freeze on key anti-poverty benefits. I believe that some of these families, and there would be more than one million of them in Australia, have lost up to 40 per cent of the real value of their benefits because of this callous disregard through the non-indexing of benefits other than basic pensions at a time when the cost of housing and feeding, clothing and caring for children is rising rapidly. Their allowances have been eroded in real terms by at least 10 per cent a year. This has frightening repercussions. Australia-wide we have nearly 500 000 children of pensioners and 300 000 children of low-income earners who are suffering because of this callous, inhuman disregard of their welfare. For example, a lone-parent family with three children now receives \$27 a week less in total benefits than it would have if benefits had been indexed since 1975. This means that it is 22 per cent worse off. No other section of the community would tolerate such a massive drop in income as the pensioners are forced to accept. Certainly no trade unionists, doctors, pilots, lawyers or anybody else would accept what is foisted on the poor and powerless in our community.

Let us have a look at some of the other cases. I believe that these benefit freezes have been an exercise in appalling discrimination against pensioners with dependent children, particularly lone parents, and the unemployed, and I believe that society will be judged on this as a repudiation of social justice. The \$7.50 a week allowance for each pensioner's child has been frozen for the five years since 1975. Had this amount been indexed, it would now be \$10.90 per week. This means that a family with three children is losing an appreciable amount. The more children a family has, of course, the greater the discrimination and the further it falls below the poverty line.

Then we turn to the family allowances paid to all parents with dependent children. The Fraser Government has not increased these allowances since 1976. It has remained the same at \$3.50 for the first child, \$5 for the second and \$6 for the third, fourth and subsequent children. Again, that freeze affects people with large families more.

Let us look now at rent assistance. It has remained at \$5 for nearly six years, and if this amount had been indexed it would now stand at something like \$11 a week. At a time when rents have increased dramatically, we have a situation where there is little help for those who have to pay rent, particularly pensioners who cannot obtain a pensioner unit.

Many pensioners in my electorate have been waiting at least two years for a pensioner unit and are paying rents that they really cannot afford. Those people—the poor and the powerless—are living in abject poverty. I think it is about time that we in this Parliament and the community in general did something to redress these wrongs and were concerned about the plight of the large number of people living in poverty.

One other group that has serious problems is the Aborigines in our society. Recently I was given the responsibility of being the Labor Party spokesman on Aboriginal affairs. Just recently the Premier of this State made the statement that the Aborigines in this State have never had it so good and have been marvellously well looked after. I believe that that is completely wrong. There are serious problems in Aboriginal housing, health, employment, education and general living standards. Aboriginal children are dying in disproportionately high numbers. Of those who live, many will be blind or malnourished to the point of brain damage. Aboriginal Australians are grossly over-represented in poverty, unemployment and crime statistics. Whilst the Prime Minister buys himself two aircraft worth \$40m for his personal use, this Government this year allocated \$35m less for Aboriginal assistance than did the Labor Government in 1975. This Government has returned to the Commonwealth Government more than \$2m for welfare housing for Aborigines, which it did not care to use. It has aided and abetted the Boonah Shire in refusing to establish an alcoholic rehabilitation centre in that area which would have taken some Aborigines from our parks and given them a chance in a rural setting to be rehabilitated.

We have very serious health problems in our Aboriginal community. One-third of aged Aboriginal men and almost one-half of aged Aboriginal women have sight-threatening trachoma. Some 30 per cent of Aboriginal children under the age of 11 years have active tract trachoma that will lead to blindness. Average Aboriginal life expectancy is some 16 years fewer than for the average Australian. Rates of sexually transmitted diseases

and other infectious diseases in some Aborigines are amongst the highest in the world.

I believe that what this State Government has to do with regard to the health of Aborigines is expand the community-based Aboriginal medical services and increase their numbers dramatically. I believe that we must use these services as training centres for Aborigines so that they can work within their own communities. Moreover, we ought to be training more health workers right across the spectrum of health care. We need more Aboriginal health workers. I believe that that would go a long way towards solving the problem.

Let us have a look at employment. It is appalling that over 50 per cent of adult Aborigines in this State are unemployed. This is about eight times the Australian average. I believe that the first thing that could be done by this Government is provide funds for job creation, particularly on reserves. I believe that market gardening and fishing and poultry industries could be set up there. Boomerangs and similar articles could be made.

I was amazed when I learnt recently that some two years ago the State Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement Department in Brisbane began to reject authentic mahogany boomerangs made by Aborigines in Bundaberg. The department had previously been purchasing these boomerangs. It began to purchase inferior products from white manufacturers in Bundaberg and Childers. I believe that these manufacturers were making substantial profits from their sales. I think it is appalling that the State Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement Department created that sort of situation.

I believe that the greatest crime has been committed, and the greatest disadvantage arises for Aboriginal children, in the area of education. There are about 60 000 Aboriginal children of school age in Australia. Some 15 per cent of them are currently studying at secondary level. Only 2 per cent will proceed beyond grade 9, whereas the figure for other children is 24 per cent. I believe that there is a need for numeracy and literacy skills to be taught to Aborigines in this hard-job environment. In our community, some 90 per cent of unemployed Aborigines are totally unskilled. It is about time that something was done to redress this situation. I think that any community is judged by its concern for, and the way it looks after, its underprivileged. I believe that history will judge the whole of Australia for this total neglect of, and its paternalistic attitude towards, Aborigines.

We need more Aboriginal teachers, and allowance ought to be made for them to be trained in our teacher colleges. There is a truancy problem with Aboriginal children at one of the schools in my electorate. Through a special disadvantaged programs grant this year we were able to get an

Aboriginal lady as an aide at the West End State School. Because she was able to talk to the parents and by having parents' meetings at the school, we have had a much better attendance factor. In fact, there has been a doubling of attendance by Aboriginal children at the school. These are the sorts of far-sighted programs that are needed. Of course, the money was only made available through the disadvantaged school program, not by the State Government.

I believe that it is important to raise the standard and the respect of Aboriginal society. I am aware that the Aborigines Act is repressive on the reserves. It delegates the authority of Parliament to the Director, Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement, or his managers. It takes away basic civil rights. It is totally repressive and it ought to be repealed. But more than that is required. Aborigines have to regain their own dignity. We have to help them to regain their own self-respect so that they can walk tall as equals in our society. We need programs that teach the Aboriginal culture in our schools and we ought to have bi-cultural educational programs for Aborigines. As a Christian democratic society, we should be looking at those problems.

As Opposition welfare spokesman, I wish now to speak of some welfare issues. As I said previously, no attempt has been made in this Budget to redress social wrongs or to do anything to improve the quality of life and the provision of services to many underprivileged people in the community. Some little things can be done. In New South Wales bond money is given to women's refuges so that a woman can have sufficient bond money to be placed in a home. Having to stay in a refuge for some time so that she can accumulate \$150 for a bond is absolutely traumatic for a woman, and I believe that the refuges would work more effectively if the bond money was supplied to the refuges. I realise a lot of it would be lost but that is a price that would have to be paid. However, people who have come from a traumatic situation would be able to get into a stable environment sooner. If the Minister for Welfare happens to read my Budget speech, I would recommend that he look into this matter.

It is appalling that once again the Budget does not supply the required money to fully fund women's refuges. Western Australia and Queensland are the only two States that do not fully fund the difference between the Commonwealth subsidy and the costs of running refuges. Of the 80 refuges in this State, I am aware that some eight or nine are having extreme difficulty in finding that 12½ per cent of running costs to keep going. They do not have sufficient staff to help settle people into the refuge and to get them out into the community more quickly.

It is appalling to have such a penny-pinching attitude displayed by the Government. In fact, about a month ago in my

electorate a woman, who had been continually bashed by an alcoholic husband, decided that she could take no more and went to the community centre at East Brisbane with which I am involved. We rang every refuge in Brisbane but not one place could be found for the lady. We had to find a kind soul to give her accommodation. That shows that, because of the policies of this Government and because of its inability to shift people through refuges more quickly, there are not enough places in our refuges.

Before I get on to the major issues of welfare, I want to look at a couple of other smaller points. Last financial year the Queensland Council of Social Services was funded to the tune of \$80,900. This body, which is supposed to co-ordinate voluntary programs, was not able to function for the last three or four months of the last financial year in any capacity whatsoever. Last year the New South Wales Government gave \$365,000 to the New South Wales Council of Social Services. All the State Government can find is the penny-pinching amount of \$80,900. That figure has been increased only marginally this year.

At the same time as we are saying that we ought to be moving towards community-based programs—using the voluntary sector to provide much-needed welfare services—we are starving a body that is supposed to help co-ordinate programs of that sort. It is about time that this Government was severely admonished. We spent some 27 per cent less on child welfare in this State than the Australian average, yet we have the most outdated and inadequate services in this country. There is no doubt at all about that. Whatever range of indicators one looks at—and many have been published—that is implicitly indicated.

Apart from not spending enough, the Government is misdirecting the welfare funds in this State. Although the Minister (Mr Doumany) has said that he accepts the concept of moving away from institutional programs towards community-based programs, he has said that this would be limited because of lack of resources and funds. That is absolute nonsense. The desirability of community-based programs rests on their being more efficient and cheaper. It is misleading for the Minister to publicly suggest that they cannot go on at the rate that they ought to. It is about time that we debated the appalling state of child welfare in this State.

Prior to the last election we were promised by the Bjelke-Petersen Government that far-reaching family welfare legislation would be introduced in this Parliament. It is obvious by now that that legislation will not surface. This Government is unwilling and unable to tackle the serious problems of welfare in this State. As spokesman for the Labor Party in my recent trip up north I was able to speak to a large number of people involved in the voluntary welfare sector. They accept

that they can do a job. It is a good thing that they can provide services. However, they would like a little more assistance from the State Government. The Labor Party's policy of giving a 50 per cent subsidy to community social workers in local authorities is very worth while. These community social workers, apart from going out into the community and doing community profiles, would act as a catalyst; they would act as the means by which the local authority, the State Government and the voluntary sector could co-ordinate their programs.

A regional welfare centre could be established in each area, with a consultative committee comprising people involved in the voluntary sector. In that way the needs of an area could be best ascertained and the Minister would know what the needs were. The Minister for Welfare rejected this proposal, although he said it had some merit. I think that that is lousy. Because local government is nearer the people, it allows people to participate in the control of their own communities; it allows people to make a contribution towards the development of welfare in their communities and to develop the level of services and quality of life acceptable to their communities. I believe that local government increasingly is accepting that role; it is accepting that it is responsible for the interaction of residents on community issues. It is finding it increasingly important to play a role in that sphere of concern. I believe that community services have their roots in a more personalised concern of people for each other and are highlighted as a response to the breakdown of the extended families and neighbourhood networks which in earlier times provided the help and support that individual families need from time to time.

I strongly urge the Minister to have another look at the provision of community social workers. Perhaps he should also consider the prospect of subsidising community youth workers in some areas to provide facilities for youth and to create an environment in which they learn how to use their leisure and so on.

The worst aspect of welfare in this State is the scandalous shortage of child-care officers in the Department of Children's Services. Staff are overworked, with case-loads in excess of 100. Professional child-care officers cannot do their job if they have such inordinate case-loads. All they can do is apply band-aids in extremely serious cases.

No increase in the number of child-care officers is provided for in the Budget. In my opinion, at least 100 more need to be employed. It is about time that welfare was given some priority by the State Government. Unfortunately, unless people go out and organise on the issues so that they can educate the community as to how serious the lack of facilities is in this

State, unless there is some agitation on the issues, the State Government will not show any response.

Tonight I was told that the staff of the Wilson Youth Hospital are thinking of going on strike because some of the children there have been creating havoc and doing physical damage to some of the staff. The Wilson Youth Hospital is one of the most outlandish institutions in Australia. It is out-dated and counter-productive. About six months ago, when there was a large number of breakouts from that institution, the Minister said that he saw its shortcomings and he would try to phase it out. Yet in the Budget one sees an increase of funds for the Wilson Youth Hospital from \$1.48m to \$1.64m. Therefore, it does not appear that in the next 12 months there will be any movement towards phasing out the Wilson Youth Hospital. It is a place in which good and bad children are mixed, and they are all treated as being mad or bad. Children who are sent there for status offences are mixing with hardened criminals who ought to be in some secure institution. They learn bad habits and are totally destroyed by such an institution. If, as has been suggested, the staff of the Wilson Youth Hospital go on strike, that will definitely highlight the complete breakdown of this horrendous institution, this hospital that is really a gaol masquerading as a hospital, a place in which the majority of children who are there ought not to be there.

Again I should like to look briefly at the problem of crime and delinquency. Problems of crime and delinquency are as old as society itself, and no society has yet devised adequate methods of prevention, control and treatment of anti-social behaviour. Any community concerned about prevention and control of anti-social behaviour must be prepared to approach the problem with imaginative and viable methods and programs aimed at meeting the rapid change in society. I recognise that there is a need to change existing attitudes and practices, and for the evolution of new and experimental programs.

It must also be pointed out that it is obvious to most of those working within our juvenile courts that no amount of legislation standing alone, and no one agency alone, be it police, welfare services, school, family or voluntary organisation, can hope to fully solve the problems of anti-social behaviour in the community.

I do not question the basic principle that the State, through the Children's Court, has the right to intervene in the best interests of the child when the child is neglected or in need, abandoned or abused. However, we must end the pretence that in most cases the juvenile justice system acts in the interests of the child.

In Queensland, there are no community-based alternatives to institutionalising a child found to be in need of care and protection or care and control, and since there is

provision in the legislation for these children to be put in an institution, there is an urgent need to rethink the whole situation.

When a care and control order is made against a child, the courts are in fact finding a child guilty of crimes which are only crimes when committed by children. Such status offences, or, more simply, juvenile victimless crimes, are acts committed by children, such as truancy, promiscuity, drinking or generally being uncontrollable, which would not be considered crimes if committed by adults but which subject children to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. I could make this point more strongly by saying that there are few children in our society who, at one time or another, would not have behaved in a way that would have been deemed, or defined, delinquent.

I do not think the choice rests merely between a strictly legal approach or a definite welfare approach. In either case a court of justice must be used, exercising a civil jurisdiction in one setting or a criminal one in another. There are needs for procedural approaches to safeguard the civil rights not only of the child but also of the parents.

I believe that we should implement a dual court system for children which would separate welfare and punitive measures. There is a need for specialist judges to be appointed to the Children's Court and for all juveniles to be given legal representation.

Until recently no duty solicitor was attached to the Children's Court. The magistrate would direct this question to the parents of the child, "Do you want legal aid?", without the implication being clarified. I have been informed that since duty solicitors were appointed there has been a sharp decline in the number of children charged in the Children's Court. When picked up by the police children are unaware of their rights. Quite often they go through the whole process like stunned mullet. They go through remand, the court and an institution without really knowing what has happened. It ought to be mandatory for an independent adult—not necessarily the parent or the guardian—to be present when children are interviewed by the police. I go further than that: community-based alternatives should be available for these children. There should be group homes, home-support programs and remand foster homes as cheap alternatives to institutional care. It costs about \$20,000 a year to institutionalise a child in an institution like the Wilson Youth Hospital, whereas the cost in a community-based program would be approximately \$3,000. It is about time that we stopped wasting sums like \$1.64m on an institution like the Wilson Youth Hospital. On my trip north I was appalled that, north of Mackay, there should be only two group homes and that there are no remand centres outside Townsville. It is appalling that, in all Queensland, there is only one attendance centre.

When children are placed on probation they should have some place where they can attend to learn social survival skills, where they can be given sex education and taught how to use their leisure time. They must become involved with sporting bodies, be told how to use public utilities and how to get the dole and such things. Yet only one such attendance centre exists in Queensland—the Shaftsbury Centre.

It is time that we involved the voluntary sector and the community, and convinced them about the need to provide such community-based programs. It is about time that we changed the total direction that we are following in relation to welfare. It is vital that we should be aware of where the Government is going. We are still locked into the attitudes of the '50s rather than going into the '80s. It is about time that welfare issues were made issues in this State. Unfortunately in Queensland there are not sufficient people willing to do the necessary research to create community awareness on how serious the problems are.

Fortunately there is a group called RED that will shortly establish a facility in Queensland. It is made up of the Brotherhood of St Lawrence and three major churches, namely, the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church and the Uniting Church. Amongst other things this body will provide basic services, research facilities, education forums and developmental programs. Perhaps it will take some action to raise the threshold of acceptance in the community. I look forward to the work of this association.

I am aware of the good job that the Brotherhood of St Lawrence does in its work and its publication in Melbourne. It does create this sort of atmosphere where people know the facts about poverty and know where disadvantaged groups lie. I am sure that it will gladly help and gladly provide.

As I said before, this Budget does nothing to create employment opportunities. It does not attempt to redress the problem of unemployment. It is appalling that, in this country where tens of thousands of young people are looking for a job and begging for job training, there are no apprenticeships for them, yet we continue to import 20 per cent of our skilled tradesmen from overseas.

Recently the Metal Industries Association made a submission to the Federal Government to import skilled tradesmen from Europe and Korea. It wants to import skilled tradesmen at a time of tremendous youth unemployment and at a time when we have selfish employers who are looking only at profit and not doing their share in providing employment and job training for our young people. It is appalling that this is not highlighted and that support for our apprenticeship system is not in tune with what is required for job training in the 1980s. Possibly there is a need for a group apprentice training scheme under which an industry employs a group of

apprentices and they are sublet to individuals to do their training. There is certainly a tremendous need to have a look at that matter.

The Budget skates about little but the fact that it is balanced, which means that the Government spends what it gets and the Government does no more than maintain services at last year's level. The Budget has very few innovations. It leaves me totally cold, and leaves the whole community totally unexcited. I hope that we will soon have a Labor Government that will show concern and have innovative policies that will do more than service the rich in our society, and will look after the whole of our society and serve the people of our State.

Progress reported.

GOVERNMENT LOAN BILL

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to authorize the making of arrangements by the State of Queensland pursuant to the provisions of the Commonwealth and States Financial Agreement Act 1927–1976 for the raising of certain sums of money by way of loan by the State, and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Dr Edwards, read a first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (10 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The Bill is one of financial machinery only and authorises the raising of loan moneys for expenditure on capital works. The maximum amount that the State can raise each year is determined by the Australian Loan Council and a Loan Bill gives the State the legal authority to raise certain of the moneys that are allocated by the Loan Council.

A Government Loan Act authorises borrowings by the State except those Commonwealth loans made under section 96 of the Constitution, loans raised under the Commonwealth Savings Bank Agreement Act and loans raised by statutory authorities and authorised by the legislation governing the particular authority. The proceeds of loans raised under a Government Loan Act are used for expenditure on public works and services as may be authorised by Parliament or for such other purposes as might be prescribed in the Act. These include the cost of raising the loans. The last Loan Act was passed by Parliament in 1976 and provided for the raising of \$300m.

At the commencement of this financial year authority under this Act stood at \$61m. This is insufficient to cover the State's borrowing program for 1980–81, which in so far as this legislation is concerned has been approved by the Loan Council at an estimated \$77m. A new Act is therefore required.

With that component of our annual borrowing program which is subject to this legislation now in the vicinity of the \$80m, a Bill for \$300m should cover anticipated raisings to 30 June 1983. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Jones, adjourned.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Sir William Knox, read a first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Health) (10.3 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

This amendment to the Health Act 1937–1980 is to provide for the establishment of a cancer registry in Queensland. The new legislation will be cited as the Health Act Amendment Act 1980 (No. 2).

In many countries of the world, cancer registration has been undertaken for variable periods and authorities have recognised a need to gain as much information as is possible in the continued fight against this dreaded disease. Within Australia, registries have been established in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. The establishment of a registry in Queensland will allow this State to describe the nature and extent of cancer in the Queensland population and will allow for a contribution of Queensland statistics and information to the national scene.

The registry which is proposed within this Bill is a population-based type. Basically, there are two different forms of cancer registries: population-based and hospital-based. A hospital-based registry is directed primarily towards improving the care of cancer patients seen in a hospital. Its orientation is principally clinical and, as a result, detailed clinical information is usually collected.

The primary purpose of a population-based registry is to assess the impact of cancer on the community. Its orientation is principally epidemiological and the aim is to collect data on all cases of cancer within a population, although the extent of clinical information collected is limited. Nevertheless, the benefits expected to flow from this type of registry in the fight against cancer are expected to be profound.

With the exception of Victoria, registries in the other States are of the population-based type. It is worth noting in the case of Victoria that, whilst at present the registry is hospital-based, it is understood that moves are being made to expand this to a population-based type. Further, advice received indicates that this type of registry is being considered for the Northern Territory.

Overall, the registry will enable a progressive and detailed monitoring of the incidence and prevalence of cancer in its various forms and associated survival times. As well, it will assist in research, education and the planning of facilities for cancer treatment and it will also assist the medical profession to evaluate the results obtained with the management of cancer patients.

To these ends, the objectives of the registry will be:

- (a) To describe the nature and extent of cancer in Queensland's population;
- (b) To assist in the understanding of what causes cancer through the analysis of data and initiation or collaboration in specific research projects;
- (c) To provide information for use in the control and prevention of cancer;
- (d) To provide information for the education of the public and the medical profession in regard to cancer;
- (e) To assist inquiries into the natural history of cancer and survival times with various forms of treatment; and
- (f) To assist with planning of future facilities and the assessment of the adequacy of existing facilities for management of patients with cancer.

During the course of my department's investigations, many expressions of support for the establishment of a registry in Queensland have been received. From the outset, the Queensland Cancer Fund has thrown its weight behind the proposal. Concrete evidence of that support is the fund's offer to assist financially with an outright grant of \$50,000 towards establishment costs. In addition, expressions of support, both formal and informal, have been received from eminent authorities engaged in cancer research and treatment.

To fulfil the objectives of the registry it will be necessary to obtain details of persons suffering from cancer. Such would include identification details of the person in addition to aspects of, or related to, their disease. To obtain such information will necessarily require the co-operation of the medical profession and authorities in hospital and other institutions.

Obviously, the disclosure of such information would, in the normal course of events, be contrary to the aspects of confidentiality applicable to standard medical practice. Principally for this reason, the need has been seen to have legislation requiring that

information essential to the registry is provided and safeguarded. Both New South Wales and South Australia at present have statutory provisions specifically related to cancer registration.

The Queensland cancer registry will be headed by a medical director and will include clerical staff and a computer programmer. An advisory committee consisting of eminent Queensland authorities involved in cancer research and management has been formed to oversee the development and function of the registry; to provide an interface between the providers and users of data and to ensure that the confidentiality of data is observed.

I would inform the House that during the preparation of this Bill consultations have taken place between representatives of the Australian Medical Association, Queensland Branch, the State Committee of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australia, representatives of the Queensland Cancer Fund, the director of the Queensland Radium Institute, the Cancer Registry Advisory Committee and officers of my department for the purpose of ensuring that the views of these concerned parties are considered.

In view of the suffering caused to individuals by cancer and in view of the significance of this condition as a cause of death within our community, it behoves the Government and health authorities of this State to do everything possible in the quest to overcome this dreaded disease. The attack on cancer not only throughout the world but in Queensland is being conducted by various means. A cancer registry will play a central role in the systematic collection, recording and analysis of data in the struggle against cancer.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr D'Arcy, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—

"That the House do now adjourn."

RESPONSIBILITIES OF OIL COMPANIES

Mr AUSTIN (Wavell) (10.10 p.m.): I wish to raise in this House the specific question of the responsibilities which oil companies ought to have to the community in general. I believe that this is a matter which deserves airing because in the past year—and more recently in last few days—we have seen and heard of actions by oil companies which I believe are not in the interests of the public and are not within the bounds of decent commercial practice.

Members will recall that the question of some of the curious behavioural practices of oil companies in determining their pricing

mechanisms for petrol stations has already been raised in this Parliament, behavioural practices that demonstrate a unique insensitivity towards people and employees, and an authoritarian adherence to the profit-at-any-price principle.

I happen to be a member of a free-enterprise or private-enterprise party, but let me make one thing clear: my party has never believed in the principle of free enterprise or private enterprise at any price and I will never, ever believe in that principle.

Over the last few days members would have read in the Press or seen on television the plight of a Mr Vincent Klein, the proprietor of the Shell Roadhouse at Gailles. It is interesting to hear the comments and interjections coming from the ALP, because members of the Labor Party have no interest in the plight of the small businessman. If they did, they would be listening with a great deal of interest to what I have to say.

Mr Klein operates one of the Shell Company's most profitable sites and was rewarded for his efforts in winning Shell dealership overseas trips and even a silver plate for performance and service. However, this man now finds himself in the position of being evicted from that station site because he dared to conflict with the company in not going self-service, and because he was a prime-mover in organising other Shell dealers in exposing some of the practices that the company was involved in. It is very evident from Shell's dealings with Mr Klein that they do not know the meaning of loyalty to their employees.

But be that as it may, my main concern is about the general responsibility of oil companies to the public. Oil company spokesmen have argued ad nauseam that their responsibility and duty is to provide the public with cheap petrol. They use that argument in justification of their move into self-service petrol stations. But what the public must ask, and what we as legislators must ask ourselves, is this: what is the real cost of cheap petrol?

Some time ago the oil companies embarked on what they termed vertical integration. They have very nearly finished that program. Vertical integration means two things to the general public, fewer jobs and higher prices. No matter what the oil companies say, they cannot deny that. At a time when unemployment is so high, at a time when positions for apprentices are so critical, we see oil companies deliberately moving toward self-service and, in the process, reducing driveway staff to nil, reducing the mechanical back-up services to nil, which is a matter of great concern to me, and reducing job opportunities for apprentices to nil. Regardless of what honourable members opposite say, that is the cost. They ought not support the principle of discount petrol.

When someone like Mr Klein dares to refuse to bow to the oil companies, to sack staff and to go self-service, his own position in that service station then comes under threat. One could be forgiven for thinking that people in service stations are expendable to oil companies. But Mr Klein is not an isolated example. There are dozen of cases where service stations that once employed up to 15 staff, and that once employed young student casuals on Saturday mornings, now have cut these staff to the bone just to make a profit. A policy of more profit to the oil companies has resulted in fewer jobs on the service station driveways of this nation.

It is worth while pointing out that in a recent television program some of the profits of the multinational oil companies were revealed. Exxon's profit was up 37 per cent—\$997m; Shell's profit was up 16 per cent—\$223m; BP's profit was up 229 per cent—\$282m; Mobil's profit was up 81 per cent—\$437m; and Texaco, which is Caltex, had a profit increase of 80 per cent—\$307m.

A recent Morgan Gallup Poll published in "The Bulletin" of 5 August ought to be on the desk of every oil company and on the walls of all their executives. The poll showed that oil companies have suffered a severe drop in popularity in the last 12 months as a result of their policies. The poll was taken before the Minister for Business and Consumer Affairs (Mr Garland) announced his plans to overhaul petrol retailing. Now 33 per cent of Australians believe that oil companies are doing a poor job for Australia. Only 22 per cent believe that they are doing a good job.

(Time expired.)

FEDERATED HOUSING FUND AND INTERCAPITAL FINANCE

Mr MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (10.16 p.m.): Once again I would like to speak about the failure of the Queensland Government to act on behalf of shareholders of both the Federated Housing Fund and Inter-capital Finance. In the past I have outlined how the shareholders stand to lose some \$300,000, yet the Queensland Government will take no action on their behalf.

It has reached the stupid stage where on Friday night a shareholder rang me saying that he had been to the Corporate Affairs Office in Brisbane, where he had been told that that office could do nothing for him and that the best thing he could do would be to contact me; that if he contacted me he would get some action. That is the stage it has reached, and that has happened because the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General in this State will do nothing about the matter at all. That shows that the people at the Corporate Affairs Office believe that something should be done. If they are starting to send along to me people who are complaining, they know that those people really

have a just complaint. When people ring me up making complaints, saying that the Corporate Affairs Office have sent them along, that confirms that the Justice Minister should be doing something.

Mr Blake: It confirms that you are doing something.

Mr MACKENROTH: Yes, it does.

In the speeches I have made I have outlined the people involved in these funds, as well as the change-over of personnel. We found out yesterday that the person who has been the leading light in these funds during the last year—a man named Barry Alfred Brown—resigned because of a nervous breakdown.

Mr Moore: You've given him a nervous breakdown.

Mr MACKENROTH: If I have, I would be proud of it, because all he has been doing is ripping people off and he deserves to be got rid of.

Of course, what has happened is that he has shifted to Melbourne and taken most of the company's money to Melbourne. An office front has been set up on the Gold Coast. It is never attended. The shareholders in Queensland cannot at this stage contact anyone in the company. If they ring the office at Miami all they get is a recorded message.

We formed a shareholders' association in July this year. Each and every one of those shareholders has written to the Justice Minister (Mr Lickiss) asking that he take action on their behalf. He has refused to do anything at all. The shareholders' association has now decided to forget about Mr Lickiss. Quite truthfully, I do not think he is worth worrying about. What we intend is to ask the Premier of Queensland to take some action on their behalf. Perhaps he will. Certainly Mr Lickiss is not going to. We will be calling on the Premier to order the Justice Minister to take some action on their behalf, because they stand to lose a lot of money.

The company has offered the shareholders 40 per cent of their money, payable in six months' time. It will not give the shareholders the name of the purchaser of the shares. It wants them to sign a share transfer form, give it to the purchaser and allow the purchaser to remain unnamed.

Mr Vaughan: 40 per cent?

Mr MACKENROTH: 40 per cent of the money, that's right.

The shareholders' association fears that the proposed purchaser could be a \$2 company. If it is, it would be possible for that \$2 company to buy the shares, sell them within the six-month period and put itself into liquidation. The shareholders, instead of losing 60 per cent, would then lose the whole 100 per cent of their investment.

Most shareholders have between \$4,000 and \$6,000 invested in the fund. I have shown that the Queensland Government just does not care about these people, who come from every walk of life. In the shareholders' association we have a doctor and a detective from the Queensland Police Force. The list goes right through to carpenters, car salesmen and so on. A broad range of occupations is covered. The shareholders represent the broad spectrum of Queenslanders.

The shareholders' association asked the company to supply it with information, and it was at the request of the company that the association was set up. The association asked a series of questions, none of which has been answered by the company. The questions were put to the chairman of the board, Mr Brown, who passed them on to the secretary. When the association asked the secretary for an answer, he said it was not his position to answer the questions, and, of course, the chairman said, "The secretary will answer them." The association went from an office in Melbourne to Miami and then back to Melbourne, but the company will not answer any of the questions that have been put to it.

Over the last six months, I have put forward in Parliament all the reasons why I believe that the companies should be investigated and why the Minister for Justice should step in and immediately freeze their assets by bringing in legislation.

(Time expired.)

THALLON WATER SUPPLY

Mr NEAL (Balonne) (10.21 p.m.): I bring to the notice of the House the disastrous state of the Thallon water supply as a result of the prolonged drought.

For many years the township of Thallon has drawn its water supply from the Moonie River, but the problem has arisen because the Moonie River has not run for the past four years. The problem may have arisen a couple of years earlier, but, fortunately, local storm rain topped up the weir.

Some years ago, when the river had not run, a proposal was put forward that the tail waters from the St George irrigation scheme be diverted from the Balonne system, after they had been used on the irrigation farms, to the Moonie River to help alleviate the situation. That proposal was fraught with many problems and was found to be not feasible.

The Balonne Shire Council has not stood idly by over the years that the Moonie River has not run. It has taken the opportunity to raise the height of the wall of the weir so that there will be a more than adequate supply when the river runs again. With the situation deteriorating, the council looked to other areas to augment the water supply. First, it piped water from a water-hole some miles downstream from the weir.

When the supply of water in that hole was exhausted, the council was able to obtain a supply from a private property nearby on which there was a very good weir. However, because of the prolonged drought, the council did not expect to be able to continue to draw water from there indefinitely because eventually the property would not have sufficient water for its own purposes.

The people of Thallon require water for the same purposes as people in other towns. Gardens are not being cared for at present, and water is needed urgently for septic systems. The council has been compelled to cart water from about 40 km away, making a round trip of about 80 km. It has investigated the possibility of boring into a shallow aquifer that is known to exist under the town. It expects to put down two bores, each of which will cost about \$11,000 by the time it is equipped, and a third bore will be put down if the first two are successful. Unfortunately, two wells in the town that draw water from that aquifer are polluted.

Although there are only 210 people in the township of Thallon, the Balonne Shire Council views the situation with such concern that it recently called a special meeting. At that meeting a resolution was put forward seeking to have the water crisis at Thallon declared a disaster and endeavouring to obtain some assistance from the State Government.

A couple of weeks ago I raised this matter with the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police. I understand that he approached the Treasury and that a meeting was held this afternoon about it. The problem is not confined to the township of Thallon. It affects other towns in the drought-stricken areas of the State that are suffering in the same way. I understand the augmentation of a water supply attracts a subsidy of about 33½ per cent. The only other permanent water that the council can get is by drilling for it at a great depth. I understand that the cost of providing such a water supply would be about \$100,000. Of course it is not feasible to load the ratepayers of the small town of Thallon with the sort of rates that would be required to cover the expenditure of such a large sum of money.

(Time expired.)

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (10.26 p.m.): How much longer will this State Government and the Federal Government continue to destroy the lives of young people who cannot find work? How much longer will they continue to turn a blind eye to their problems? How much longer will they refuse to understand, or even try to understand the problems created in the community by their lack of action? Maybe the Chinese during their cultural revolution had an idea that we should emulate when they sent their

technocrats and bureaucrats out into the paddocks to see how the real people lived and gain a knowledge of the hardships that they had to put up with. We are fast reaching the situation where we must consider doing something similar to drive home to the administrators and the people in Government in this country the disastrous situation facing our young people.

Only this morning I had in my office a lad of almost 18 years of age who left school at 15 years of age, was unemployed for some time, was employed under the SYEPT scheme for six months and was then put off by the employer. Since then he has worked for four periods of two weeks. He is headed in only one way, and that is nowhere.

I am sick and tired of reading newspaper propaganda disseminated by both Governments to camouflage and lie to the community about the real situation in our society. I have in mind headlines such as, "State leads way in jobs, claims Joh." Another headline reads, "State's 10,000 extra jobs." But that article is based on a 10-year period, and then it is only on a maybe basis. Southern take-overs occurring in Queensland are described in this headline, "Another 20 jobs lost after south takeover." In another article, the Federated Storemen and Packers Union State Secretary, Mr Fred Nicol, said that similar take-overs had cost his union 2,500 members over the last 18 months. At the time he was talking about the take-over of Red Comb Stock Feeds Co-operative Ltd.

When people talk about dole bludgers and so on they ignore the real situation affecting these young people. The jobless syndrome is not one that develops after six or 12 months unemployment. It starts to develop after about two or three weeks, when the young, keen energetic people traipse from one business house to another only to be told lies and to be fobbed off by employers about the employment they are seeking.

The Roman Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice made a statement on unemployment in which it quoted the Premier of Queensland as saying—

"I believe if you really want to find work and are sincere about it, you will."

Nothing could be further from the truth in places such as Ipswich where unemployment is chronic. In some areas of Queensland apprenticeship indentures have increased, but in Ipswich they have continued to decrease. Unemployment is increasing in some places in Queensland while in others it tends to level out at certain times of the year. In fact, Mr O'Halloran of the Roman Catholic Commission on Justice and Peace said—

"Politicians cannot go on denying the problem. They have to realise the gravity of the whole unemployment situation.

"They have to change with the rest of society from the grass roots level up and look at work in a different light."

In talking about changing the community's attitude, reference is made to the fact that no longer can the 9 per cent of the community who are unemployed be exploited while the top 10 per cent of the income earners in the nation revel in the country's wealth.

We often see headlines in these terms, "Jobless create a 'tropical NQ hell'". That was a heading to an article attributed to Brigadier Beasy of the Salvation Army in Cairns. It said that the movement north is a natural route for young people from southern States and Southern Queensland who are on the unemployment trail looking for work. There is another article about employers exploiting the unemployed.

In Ipswich, nearly half of the unemployed are young people. They are classified as juniors. Between 1975 and 1979 there was a continuing decrease in the number of apprenticeships in the State Advisory Committee area. In the past 12 months there has been an increase in the State level.

The metal trade should be booming, but it cannot find enough people. Over the past five years that trade has decreased in the Ipswich area. The electrical trade is in a similar position. Apprenticeships in that trade have decreased. A dramatic cut-back has occurred in the employment prospects for apprentices in the building trade. What has happened to all the jobs for the unskilled people? Zero growth in the railways is creating tremendous unemployment in the Ipswich area.

(Time expired.)

BROOKVALE PARK FOUNDATION LIMITED

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (10.31 p.m.): The matter that I wish to bring to the attention of the House concerns the setting up of the Brookvale Park Foundation. As the State member in whose electorate Brookvale Park is situated, I have consistently made representations and have supported the concept of having Brookvale Park gifted to the people, to be held in trust, so as to ensure its full potential is realised and not lost with the death of those currently in control of it.

All of us should realise what a significant asset it is. It is situated very close to a large population on the east coast of Queensland. It takes less than a day for the people of Brisbane, the Gold Coast or anywhere else in that area to come up and look at this magnificent asset.

It would be an absolute tragedy if we were to allow this asset to be lost. That is what is staring us in the face. The first suggestion was to give this asset to the people of the State via legislation. Regrettably, the proposed Brookvale Park Trust Act has been rejected by Cabinet, despite all the work that has been done by numerous people at Government level. I go on record tonight as saying that a tremendous number of people have

supported this concept. The honourable member for Condamine has been one of the people who have supported us right down the line. We are very thankful for that.

Because of the legislation which imposes stamp duty, we are now in a more difficult and, in my opinion, ludicrous situation. The Brookvale Park Foundation Limited has a board comprising people of tremendous reputation. Everybody would have to agree that they are reputable, well-meaning people who believe this asset to be worth preservation, and they are prepared to work towards that aim. It is unfortunate that the Treasury has decided to charge stamp duty of approximately \$9,500 on the transfer of this asset.

I make a plea here tonight to all those people who have some influence in such matters to look at this situation. If there is no way of avoiding the payment of stamp duty on the transfer, then we should look at some other way of getting round this problem. It is possible that if we did set a precedent in this case it would open up loopholes for unscrupulous people to take advantage of. If that is the case, I implore Cabinet to re-assess the situation and come up with some other acceptable alternative.

I suggest that this could perhaps be done through the Tourist and Travel Corporation or some such body, because to my mind the important thing is that when someone goes to so much trouble over the years to develop an asset and now wants to give it to the people, he should not be thwarted.

(Time expired.)

RESTORATION OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (10.36 pm): Recently I asked a question of the Minister for Works and Housing concerning the estimated cost of the restoration of Parliament House. The answer was that there had been a staggering \$7.6m spent since December 1969, and that does not even include external stonework repairs, landscaping and furniture.

Mr Wharton: You've got your facts wrong.

Mr DAVIS: What does the Minister mean when he says my facts are wrong? They are the figures he gave me. One could reasonably expect that amount to escalate in the future. Perhaps that figure we were given has highlighted how impotent this Parliament is when it comes to trying to exercise some restraint on Government spending.

On the same day I asked the Minister why his department had sacked 61 tradesmen, and his words were that they were employed on a temporary basis only and that they knew they would be employed for only a short time. Yet as we all know, the Works Department is always crying out for money. So is it any wonder that these tradesmen and the general public take a very cynical view of politicians

when they see them spending these huge amounts on themselves? The comment was made last week-end——

Mr Wharton: Aren't you a politician?

Mr DAVIS: Yes, I am a politician, but at the same time I want to impose a bit of restraint on the crowd opposite. As I said, the Minister for Works and Housing claimed that it would cost only \$1m. I remember back in 1974 asking a question of the then Works Minister, Mr Hodges, about the old Bellevue——

Mr Austin: How much were you going to spend on the Bellevue?

Mr DAVIS: \$1m to keep it going, but we were told it was too much. Yet when it comes to spending money on themselves, the sky is the limit for this Government.

Mr Austin: Why don't you get them all together and refuse to go into the old building?

Mr DAVIS: I am sure that there are plenty of members in this Chamber, even some of the whinging Liberals, who would complain that they do not get enough money for their schools or police stations. They are always asking for extensions, painting and repairs, but it is always the same excuse——there is no money. But even in the last Budget it was shown that there was an unexpended item of \$1.5m of the sum that was allocated to the Works Department for Parliament House. I am told that even the copper roof is costing something of the order of \$900,000. Since the Liberals in this House showed how spineless they are in refusing to support the ALP motion for a public accounts committee the other day, I am going to request the Minister to table all the details of how money is to be spent on Parliament House. I am positive that no member will want to see this project escalate into something like the Sydney Opera House.

Mr Austin: Wind it up.

Mr DAVIS: While we are on the subject of Government spending, I am sure that even Mr Loudmouth over there will be interested in this subject. I am amazed at the number of functions held in this building under the auspices of the Mrs Bjelke-Petersen Welfare Committee, or, should I say, the committee of the National Party Senate candidate No. 1.

I am certainly not one who knocks a committee that helps charity, but as the Opposition spokesman on works and housing matters I am concerned at the way in which Works Department employees are used to transport and set up tables, chairs and so on at functions in this complex.

I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: Who pays for the hiring of the staff of the Works Department? Who pays for the attendants to act as message boys and drink waiters when functions are held in this place? Who pays for the catering? We would

like to know those answers. I do not see any accounting in this place when parliamentary staff are used at these functions. I think it is fair that we should know the answers to these questions, particularly when staff of the Works Department is used.

This Parliament should know how much money is spent on this committee. I am told that it donates about \$40,000 to charity. That is fair enough, and I am all for it. But it is a bit rough when we are paying \$60,000 in order to earn \$40,000. We on this side of the House would like to see a public accounts committee vet what is going on on the other side of the House, including those functions that are held here. The forthcoming Labour Government will appoint a public accounts committee. If there was such a committee now, it would vet the Ministers' activities, because the Ministers are the greatest spenders in this place.

(Time expired.)

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.41 p.m.