

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 10 MARCH 1981

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

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Cairns Harbour Board, for the year 1979-80.

Townsville Harbour Board, for the year 1979-80.

Gladstone Harbour Board, for the year 1979-80.

Gold Coast Waterways Authority, for the year 1979-80.

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, for the year ended 30 June 1980.

Rural Reconstruction Board, for the year ended 30 June 1980.

Commission of Inquiry into the Efficiency and Administration of Hospitals—Volumes 1, 2 and 3.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamations under—

- Harbours Act 1955–1980.
- Radioactive Substances Act Amendment Act 1978.
- Motor Vehicles Safety Act 1980.
- Pastoral Workers' Accommodation Act 1980.
- Workers' Accommodation Act Amendment Act 1980.
- Brands Act Amendment Act 1979.
- Wheat Delivery Quotas Act 1970–1974.

Orders in Council under—

- Factories and Shops Act 1960–1975.
- Inspection of Machinery Act 1951–1979.
- Motor Vehicles Safety Act 1980.
- Queensland Government Industrial Gazette Act of 1961.
- Workers' Compensation Act 1960–1980.
- Industrial Development Act 1963–1979.
- Explosives Act 1952–1980.
- Mines Regulation Act 1964–1979.
- Gas Act 1965–1976.
- Electricity Act 1976–1980.
- Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act 1959–1980.
- Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act 1959–1980 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979.
- City of Brisbane Market Act 1960–1978 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979.
- Dairy Produce Act 1978–1979.
- Dairy Products Stabilisation Acts, 1933 to 1957.
- Meat Industry Act 1965–1977.
- Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act 1923–1979.
- Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926–1979.
- Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926–1979 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979.
- Stock Act 1915–1979.
- Wheat Marketing Act 1979–1980.
- Wheat Pool Act 1920–1979 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979.
- Wine Industry Act 1974–1978.
- The Criminal Code.
- Health Act 1937–1980.
- Medical Act 1939–1980.
- Physiotherapists Act 1964–1976.
- Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act 1958–1979.
- Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923–1979.
- Water Act 1926–1979.
- Water Resources Administration Act 1978.
- Irrigation Act 1922–1979.
- River Improvement Trust Act 1940–1977.

- Harbours Act 1955–1980.
- Beach Protection Act 1968–1974.
- Queensland Marine Act 1958–1979.

Regulations under—

- Miners' Homestead Leases Act 1913–1979.
 - Mining Act 1968–1980.
 - Explosives Act 1952–1980.
 - Gas Act 1965–1976.
 - Electricity Act 1976–1980.
 - Canals Act 1958–1979.
 - Harbours Act 1955–1980.
 - Pollution of Waters by Oil Act 1973.
 - Queensland Marine Act 1958–1979.
 - Inspection of Machinery Act 1951–1979.
 - Motor Vehicles Safety Act 1980.
 - Pastoral Workers' Accommodation Act 1980.
 - Workers' Accommodation Act 1952–1980.
 - Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act 1959–1980.
 - Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966–1978.
 - Agricultural Standards Act 1952–1972.
 - Banana Industry Protection Acts, 1929 to 1937.
 - Bread Industry Committee Act 1979.
 - Fish Supply Management Act 1972–1976.
 - Fruit and Vegetables Act 1947–1972.
 - Hen Quotas Act 1973–1978.
 - Milk Supply Act 1977–1978.
 - Meat Industry Act 1965–1977.
 - Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926–1979.
 - Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act 1962–1972.
 - Poultry Industry Act 1946–1979.
 - Stock Act 1915–1979.
 - Surveyors Act 1977–1980.
 - Ambulance Services Act 1967–1975.
 - Chiropodists Act 1969–1975.
 - Cremation Act 1913–1978.
 - Health Act 1937–1980.
 - Mental Health Act 1974–1978.
 - Physiotherapists Act 1964–1976.
 - Queensland Institute of Medical Research Act 1954–1980.
 - Radioactive Substances Act 1958–1978.
- By-laws under—
- Harbours Act 1955–1980.
 - Dental Act 1971–1973.
 - Medical Act 1939–1980.
 - Optometrists Act 1974.
 - Pharmacy Act 1976–1978.
 - Psychologists Act 1977.
- Rules under the Coal Mining Act 1925–1979.
- Amendments to the Fire Brigades (Financial Arrangements) Regulations of 1970 dated 16 October 1980.

- Papers under the Electricity Act 1976–1980.
- Annual Report by the Grain Research Foundation for the year ended 30 June 1979.
- Fifty-seventh Annual Report of the State Stores Board for the period 1 July 1979 to 30 June 1980.
- The Eightieth Annual Report of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations for the year ended 30 June 1980.
- Special Report to Parliament under section 261 of the Queensland Marine Act 1958–1979.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

CHARGES FOR TREATMENT IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Wavell—Minister for Health) (11.11 a.m.): After tabling the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Efficiency and Administration of Hospitals this morning, I desire to draw the attention of the House to certain recommendations contained therein, particularly to recommendations 13 (b) and (c), which appear to be directed to the raising of charges for patients in public wards, and also to recommendation 33, which specifies that a charge be raised for non-urgent out-patient attendances, except for eligible veterans and holders of pensioner medical benefits cards.

Irrespective of what funding arrangements are determined by the Commonwealth following upon its consideration of the report of the commission of inquiry, this State will under no circumstances depart from its determined policy of providing free treatment for in-patients in public wards and of free out-patient treatment to any resident of the State who seeks such services.

Under the existing cost-sharing arrangements whereby the Commonwealth meets 50 per cent of the net operating cost of hospitals, Queensland has been greatly disadvantaged. This State has for a considerable period of time had the lowest daily average cost per in-patient of any State in the Commonwealth. In the year in which the cost sharing arrangements commenced, the total cost of the State hospital system was used by the Commonwealth as a baseline figure for further budgetary considerations. Other States were similarly treated, with the result that those States that had expended amounts considerably in excess of the Queensland daily average cost have received proportionally greater sums of money than Queensland.

The Department of Health, in its submission to the commission of inquiry, highlighted this aspect and recommended that a new method of funding based on a subsidy per head of population, provided the initial

base rate was equitable and acceptable to States and the Commonwealth and adjusted annually to reflect figures for inflation and CPI indices, would be a more acceptable method of funding. It would overcome the situation whereby there is no uniformity in the distribution or allocation of funds to States and the heavy spenders continue to be the heaviest endowed. The baseline of such proposed formula, in order to overcome the present inequitable distribution of funds between States, would be on the Australian average per capita expenditure under the present cost sharing arrangements.

The provision of health services of any and every kind is undoubtedly the responsibility of the States and indeed Queensland has and will resist any suggestion that the Commonwealth should dictate to this State the manner in which such should be provided. Unfortunately—and let me stress more specifically that I do not believe it was the intent of the original agreement—the Commonwealth, under the existing cost sharing arrangements, has, by financial restrictions, imposed many restraints on the manner in which the State provides these services. The Commonwealth, of course, will argue that how the States provide these services is and will always be the prerogative of the States and that it does not dictate in this area. But, when the Commonwealth makes an arbitrary decision that it will not cost share any additional hospital beds unless there is a corresponding reduction in existing beds, this undoubtedly influences the manner in which health care is provided.

I am very concerned at the implications if recommendations 22 and 30 are implemented. These state respectively that payment of medical benefits should be limited to the insured and that registered funds cease offering cover at 100 per cent of schedule for medical benefits. If implemented, this could have the effect of inducing people to opt out of insuring for medical benefits and could result in increases in the number of persons attending at public hospitals for out-patient services, thereby adding an additional strain on such hospitals and undoubtedly involving additional expenditure by the State.

Recommendation 29 is that health insurance premiums be structured so as to allow a discount for those who take both forms of cover, that is hospital and medical, with the objective eventually of phasing out the separate single cover arrangements. This again could force persons who are insured for only one cover to closely examine their financial situation and opt out of insurance. This, in the case of medical cover, could result in increased attendance at out-patients and, in the case of hospital cover, a demand for more public ward accommodation. It could also result in a marked reduction in the occupancy of private hospitals.

This State has always supported the principle that the two systems of hospitalisation, both the public and private sectors, should complement one another, and I express my complete opposition to any recommendations which could adversely affect the private hospital sector and the private medical sector.

Under the present cost-sharing arrangements, this State is being penalised for running an efficient, cost-effective hospital system which has stood the test of time. Far too many arbitrary decisions have been made by the Commonwealth which, I reiterate, were in my opinion outside the spirit and intent of the original cost-sharing agreement. The most satisfactory one would be that recommended by the State Department of Health. It should remove the present most unsatisfactory situation of unnecessary intervention by the Commonwealth in this State's spending on hospitals and remove a very heavy strain on the administration in providing greatly detailed data in respect of both financial and statistical matters. The State would, of course, co-operate with the Commonwealth in providing reasonable financial and statistical data which might be considered necessary.

I have indicated my main areas of concern in the recommendations from the commission of inquiry. There are a number of other areas, however, that are of concern which if implemented would pass on to the States what are presently Commonwealth responsibilities both in administration and financial areas. These will be strongly opposed by the State Government.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

SESSIONAL ORDER

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—

“That during this session, unless otherwise ordered, and notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order No. 17, on each sitting Wednesday a period shall be allotted until 1 o'clock p.m. for discussion of matters of public interest on which any member may address the House for ten minutes. If the discussion is still proceeding at 1 o'clock p.m., it shall be terminated by Mr Speaker.”

Motion agreed to.

ELECTION POLLING DETAILS

ORDER FOR RETURN

Mr JONES (Cairns): I move—

“That a return in the usual form showing the details of polling at the State general election held on 29 November 1980, together with details of voting at

by-elections held since the general election on 12 November 1977, be laid upon the table of the House and ordered to be printed.”

Motion agreed to.

EXOTIC DISEASES IN ANIMALS BILL

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries): I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to provide for the control, eradication and prevention of exotic diseases in animals, the compensation of owners for loss or destruction of animals and property during outbreaks of exotic diseases, the establishment of an Exotic Diseases Expenses and Compensation Fund and for related purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

TRANSPORT CONCESSIONS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

From Mr Fouras (703 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will establish and fund a transport concession system to all unemployed people and their dependents.

REFUSAL OF EXPORT PERMITS FOR MORETON ISLAND MINERAL SAND PRODUCTS

From Mr Burns (19 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will request the Government to refuse requests for export permits covering the mineral sand products of Moreton Island.

AIR POLLUTION, CANNON HILL/MURARRIE AREA

From Mr Burns (56 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that the quality of life in the Cannon Hill/Murarrie area is not adversely affected as a result of the failure to implement the penal provisions of the Clean Air Act.

MARKINGS ON EGG CARTONS

From Mr Burns (450 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will legislate to distinguish markings on egg cartons to indicate whether the eggs originate from “intensive” or “semi-intensive” farms.

Petitions read and received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Questions submitted on notice by members were answered as follows:—

1. PARTICIPATION OF QUEENSLAND ARCHERS IN WORLD TITLES

Mr Casey asked the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts—

(1) Is he aware that two Queensland archers recently chosen for an Australian archery team to participate in World Titles have been advised by the Archery Association of Australia that they must meet all their own costs, as insufficient moneys have been received from the Commonwealth Government to meet the expenses of the whole team?

(2) Is he also aware that if the Queensland archers do not go to the World Titles in Italy this year, Australia will not be able to participate in the team events, and thus have an experienced team against World-wide competition to participate in the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane?

(3) In view of the shabby way in which this Queensland sportsman and sports-woman have been treated, will his department provide a substantial contribution towards meeting their cost to participate in the 1981 World Titles?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The question of the measure of Government financial assistance for all teams representing Australia in overseas sporting competition is a matter for the Commonwealth Government of the day.

With regard to the sport of archery, I am advised that the Commonwealth has made a contribution of \$10,000 in the current financial year to the national body, the Archery Association of Australia, for this purpose. It is a matter for that body, controlling the sport, to determine the manner in which those funds are utilised.

I understand that the Australian archery team selected to compete at the coming world titles in Italy consists of eight archers, of whom four are from Queensland, two from South Australia and two from Victoria. The controlling body, the Archery Association of Australia, has determined the measure of financial support it will give to each selected team member.

It is not part of the Queensland Government's Assistance to Sport Scheme to fund the overseas expenses of Queenslanders selected to represent Australia in national teams, other than in the occasional instance when the Commonwealth Government makes no contribution whatsoever to the sport for a particular team.

I remind the honourable member that during the current financial year the Queensland Government will spend some \$3.2 m on sport and sportspeople in Queensland, which is a higher per capita figure than that of any other State or the Commonwealth.

2. SHOOTING EVENTS, COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Mr Kaus asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) With reference to the Commonwealth Games to be held in 1982, and the mini games to be conducted in October this year, will he inform the House how the sport of shooting can be a real test of Commonwealth Games bearing in mind that we will not be in the "Ready" condition as all other venues are because of funds denied us but given to the other sports?

(2) Will we be in a position to guarantee Australia and the Commonwealth of Nations that in 1982 we will not have to apologize to the taxpayer of this country for a venue that is below the acceptable standard of the Games requirement in 1981, i.e. The Mini Games, and can we be assured that the co-ordinators, The Brisbane City Council, will at least be responsible as Co-ordinators and stop shelving responsibilities to the Commonwealth Games Foundation?

(3) If the Brisbane City Council have difficulty in co-ordinating this simple exercise, will he consider that the shooting venue be removed from any BCC involvement and handed to a responsible organ of the Government such as the State Department of Works to ensure this State, Country and ultimately the Commonwealth of Nations is not embarrassed in any way?

(4) Is he aware that shooting will attract the largest number of individual competitors at the Games, yet is the only sport without official financial assistance?

(5) Is he aware that the largest number of gold medals—20—is allotted to shooting?

(6) Because shooting does not return revenue to the BCC as it is on Commonwealth property, is the BCC stooping to the lowest depths in refusing to give any assistance whatsoever—even to the extent of forcing QRA to pay water charges when all the association is trying to do is beautify the surroundings for Games spectators?

Answers:—

(1 to 6) Negotiations on the financial and administrative considerations relating to the staging of shooting events at the 1982 Commonwealth Games are in progress and if the degree of co-operation being sought is forthcoming from the parties

involved over the next few days, the concern of the honourable member will, I am sure, be alleviated. Meanwhile, I would not wish to see any action that would disturb these negotiations, which are at a rather delicate stage.

As soon as arrangements are finalised, I will write to the honourable member and give him the details. I place on record my appreciation of the contribution made by the honourable member during the protracted negotiations, and I hope that he will be rewarded by recognition being given to him when the matter is settled.

3. TRAFFIC LIGHTS, MITCHELTON SHOPPING CENTRE

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

(1) Is he aware of the serious traffic problems in the Mitchelton shopping centre, particularly at the junction of Blackwood and Samford Roads, and the consequent danger to the many pedestrians who cross Samford Road near this junction?

(2) When will traffic lights be installed at this junction to overcome this danger to pedestrians and improve the safe flow of traffic in the Mitchelton shopping centre?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I am pleased to inform the honourable member that traffic signals will be installed by the Main Roads Department early in 1981-82 financial year.

4. CONTRACTS FOR TEACHER ACCOMMODATION

Mr Prest asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) How many contracts for teacher accommodation have been let in the three years 1978-79, 1979-80 and 1980-81 to date?

(2) How many of these contracts have been completed within the time specified on the original contract?

(3) What has been the average delay between the specified completion date as per the original contract and the acceptance of the building by the Works Department?

(4) On what conditions have extensions to successful tenderers been granted?

(5) How many such extensions have been granted?

(6) On how many occasions have penalties been imposed and what has been the average penalty?

(7) What is the average cost of (a) a three bedroom house and (b) a twin dwelling unit?

(8) How many times have contracts been awarded to companies which (a) have had a history of being unable to complete contracts within the specified time and (b) have gone into liquidation without having completed their contracts?

(9) Does he believe his department is getting value for money for the taxpayers' dollar?

Answer:—

(1) 94, over 90 per cent of which were in the far-northern and western areas of the State.

(2) 54 were completed by the adjusted contract date after allowing for legitimate extensions as per contract documents.

(3) 8.1 weeks, including legitimate extensions.

(4) (a) 63 per cent due to factors beyond the contractors' control such as delay in supply of materials, accidents, difficulties with the site; (b) 22 per cent due to wet weather; (c) 15 per cent associated with variations.

(5) An average of 4.2 weeks per job.

(6) 40, with an average damages period of 9 weeks and with average total liquidated damages of \$1,320 for each of these.

(7) (a) three-bedroom house—\$51,378 at December 1980 prices; (b) twin-dwelling unit—\$65,000 at December 1980 prices.

Due consideration must be given to location allowances which add considerably to the cost in some areas.

(8) (a) My Department of Works maintains a strict review of tenders received and it is obvious that the department would not enter into contracts with builders who could not be expected to perform at the time of acceptance; (b) As a result, only three contractors have gone into liquidation without having completed their contracts in the category in question.

(9) Yes. Under the system of competitive tendering, my department endeavours to get the best result in sometimes very difficult circumstances, particularly in remote areas and high-building-cost zones like Gladstone and other rapid growth centres.

5. TRANSPORT SUBSIDIES FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Mr Prest asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to school transport subsidies for non-Government schools and as the 1980-81 budget reports stated that the Government was anxious to ensure that no

disadvantage accrues to the non-Government school sector as a result of existing policies and practices—

(1) Has any further consideration been given in relation to the existing disadvantaged non-government school children?

(2) When will that promised appropriate announcement be made?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) My department has had an ongoing examination of the school transport system in operation for some time, and while it has discovered some defects in the system, none of them would be of such magnitude as to cause serious disadvantage to any group of children.

I repeat that the review is an ongoing one and should it detect any serious disadvantage to non-State school pupils resulting from existing school transport policies, corrective action will be taken.

I would point out to the honourable member, that late in 1977, Cabinet approved that school transport services could be extended in larger centres to convey pupils to non-State schools under certain conditions. Extension of this approval to cover non-State school pupils generally would increase costs beyond my department's present resources.

6. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR GLADSTONE

Mr Prest asked the Premier—

(1) As many Ministers, both State and Federal, have recognised the need for and promised financial assistance for Gladstone and as a deputation put their case to him for assistance after all had promised support, will he advise when these grants may be made available and what will the value of these grants be?

(2) If no decision has been made, will he ensure a decision is made immediately so that infrastructure to meet the needs of the development can be provided?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) In response to an urgent approach to the Commonwealth Government for assistance towards the development of an adequate level of infrastructure for the natural growth area of Gladstone, the Prime Minister has indicated the Commonwealth does not accept that special assistance should be provided in the present circumstances. I, like the honourable member, cannot work out why.

However, the matter has been listed for discussion at the forthcoming Premiers Conference and a further detailed case will be put to the Commonwealth at that time.

7. PARTHENIUM WEED

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

(1) How successful has the beetle imported from Mexico to fight the spread of parthenium weed in this State been?

(2) Will further releases of the beetle be made in the Central Highlands as soon as possible and, if so, when will the releases be made?

Answer:—

(1) The releases to date of both the variegated parthenium beetle, *Zygogramma*, and the parthenium seed weevil, *Smicronyx*, both from Mexico, on to parthenium weed in the Central Highlands have been an extension of investigations being made into biological control of this weed funded through the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board. Although inspections of release sites indicate reasonable promise of insect survival, it cannot yet be asserted that the insects constitute a technique for certain control of parthenium weed.

(2) Further releases of these insects will continue but it is not possible to give definite dates for releases as these will depend on the insect-rearing program at the Alan Fletcher Research Station and on the suitability of release sites at the relevant time.

8. CONDITION OF ROADS, CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AREA

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

(1) Is he aware that recent rains have left many Central Highlands' roads in a deplorable, and in some cases, dangerous state?

(2) Is he aware that with the proposed start of new coalmines in the Central Highlands area, heavy trucks are destroying what is left of the roads?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I have received reports of traffic disabilities in the Central Highlands due to recent rains.

The increasing number of heavy vehicles in the Central Highlands due to coal-mining activities is placing a considerable strain on the road system, and is a cause of concern.

It is situations such as this which emphasise the pressing need for increased funds for road construction and maintenance. The honourable member would be aware that I am doing everything in my power to draw attention to this need, and will continue to do so until a positive result is achieved.

For the present, I can only indicate that the roads in question will be maintained to the best possible standard from the strictly limited funds which are currently available.

9. NEW LIBRARY, MORANBAH STATE SCHOOL

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

Will urgent action be taken to provide a new school library at Moranbah State School?

Answer:—

The provision of a library block at the Moranbah State School would be subject to the availability of funds for this type of work and the existing facilities provided.

The honourable member can be assured that this project will receive every consideration when future programs are being formulated.

10. SUBSIDY, MOGGILL FERRY SERVICE

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

What is the amount of subsidy paid to the operator of the Moggill Ferry (a) yearly and (b) since the commencement of the service?

Answer:—

In 1979–80, the subsidy to the operator of the Moggill Ferry, which represents the shortfall between fees collected and the contracted operating cost, was \$105,029.54.

For the period from the start of operation in mid-1979 to 16 February, the total subsidy was \$167,380.02.

11. EFFECT OF LAND REVALUATIONS ON MINING REVENUE

Mr Katter asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) Is he aware that the recent disastrous revaluations in the Charters Towers and Dalrymple local authority areas will result in average increases in Government mining revenues of over 1 000 per cent, this being particularly so in the Dalrymple Shire?

(2) Does he think that an increase in a Government charge of over \$1,000 with no concomitant increase in service can be justified?

(3) Will he immediately move for the levying of an annual rental charge which will be fully independent of decisions by the Valuer-General's Department?

(4) Is he aware that if this action is not taken the Miners' Homestead Perpetual Leases rental will become a sectional tax on people unfortunate enough to reside upon a mining field?

Answer:—

(1) The last redetermination of the capital values of Miners' Homestead Perpetual Leases in the Charters Towers Mining District was carried out in October 1980. The average increase was 139 per cent and the average capital value after redetermination was \$420.

(2) Annual rental at the rate of 3 per cent of such average capital value is considered more than reasonable. The provision of services is, of course, a matter for the relevant local authority.

(3) There is no provision in the Miners' Homestead Leases Act to require wardens, who fix capital values apart from auctions, to have regard to decisions by the Valuer-General's Department, but wardens have regard to such decisions among other factors.

(4) This rental is not a tax but constitutes a reasonable return to the State for the continuing use of the land by the lessee.

12. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, CHARTERS TOWERS CITY COUNCIL

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

Will he financially assist the Charters Towers City Council whose water supply was damaged by recent record flooding and needs extensive refurbishing quite apart from the cost of emergency measures carried out during the recent wet season?

Answer:—

As responsibility for matters concerning town water supply schemes was recently transferred to the Honourable the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs, I would suggest that the honourable member redirect his question to that Minister.

13. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY, NORTH QUEENSLAND

Mr Katter asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) Will he provide details of how and from where the present electricity levels in North Queensland are provided?

(2) How many lines, of what megawatt capacity, come from Gladstone?

(3) How much electricity capacity is required to fully supply an aluminium

smelter similar to that proposed for Bundaberg and is there sufficient capacity on the Northern grid system to provide for such a smelter in North Queensland?

Answer:—

(1) The present demand for electricity in North Queensland (which is expected to reach a maximum of 380 MW in 1981) is supplied from power-stations at Barron Gorge (60 MW), Kareeya (72 MW), Collinsville (180 MW) and Mackay (34 MW).

In addition, power is transmitted from Central Queensland by two 275 kV transmission lines between Gladstone and Nebo and three 132 kV transmission lines north of Nebo. In its present state of development, this transmission system has a capacity of more than 200 MW.

(2) See (1).

(3) Depending on the ultimate size of the smelter, power requirements could vary between 400 and 600 MW. With suitable notice, which is required in all such cases, there would be sufficient capacity provided on the interconnected grid to cater for a smelter in North Queensland.

14. DENTAL TECHNICIANS, TOOWOOMBA HOSPITAL

Mr Warner asked the Minister for Health—

Will he urgently consider appointing extra permanent or temporary dental technicians to the Toowoomba General Hospital to overcome a most unsatisfactory position now existing namely a waiting list of up to 13 months to obtain dental plates for pensioners and the public?

Answer:—

It is acknowledged that the waiting list for dentures at the Toowoomba Dental Clinic is longer than would be desired. It is pointed out, however, that every patient whose name is to be added to this list is first examined by a dentist to ensure that no serious problem exists and, in many instances, to enable adjustments to be made to existing dentures so that these will be more acceptable to patients during the waiting period. In a further effort to reduce genuine hardship, special arrangements are made for patients who have recently had their teeth extracted.

The physical limitations of the present laboratory facilities at the Toowoomba Dental Clinic preclude the employment of additional dental technical staff under acceptable conditions. However, my department is presently considering the provision of a new and enlarged dental clinic in association with the future development of the Toowoomba General Hospital.

When these new facilities become available, consideration will be given to enlarging the dental technician staff establishment at the Toowoomba Dental Clinic.

15. WILSON ISLAND

Mr Hartwig asked the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts—

With reference to Wilson Island, a very small island within the Capricorn Group, which includes such islands as Masthead, Erskine, Wilson and Tyron Islands National Parks within the Barrier Reef concept—has P & O been granted permission to establish a low cost tourist resort on that island?

Answer:—

The question of the granting of a special lease of the nature referred to on Wilson Island is a matter for my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Lands and Forestry. However, I will refer the honourable member's inquiry to the Minister with the request that he advise him of the relevant details.

16. RAINBOW RANGE SECTION, GLADSTONE-BILOELA ROAD

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

With reference to the Rainbow Range section of road some 16 kilometres in length, presently under construction between Biloela and Gladstone on the Banana Shire section of the Biloela-Gladstone Road, when will this section be bitumen sealed?

Answer:—

Tenders will be called in the near future for the supply of paving material for the 12.4 km unsealed section over Rainbow Range. When this material is available, the funding situation will be reviewed with the objective of completing the project in about 12 months' time.

17. HOUSING SHORTAGE, BILOELA

Mr Hartwig asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) With reference to the very acute housing shortage at Biloela, is it the intention of the QEGB to build houses for employees in Biloela or will this be the responsibility of the Minister for Works and Housing?

(2) When will the construction of the new power-station at Biloela commence which will aggravate the housing situation?

Answer:—

(1) The Queensland Electricity Generating Board will provide accommodation for the construction work-force for the

Callide "B" Power Station. The provision of housing for eventual use by operating staff will also commence at an early stage.

(2) Construction on the new power-station will commence by mid 1981 and accommodation for the construction workforce will be available by this time.

18. IMPORT OF PINEAPPLE PRODUCTS

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

As the returns to pineapple growers are poor, and below the cost of production, thus causing great hardship, will he request his Federal counterpart to ban all imports of pineapples and pineapple products until the Industries Assistance Commission can show that imports will not adversely affect the viability of the industry?

Answer:—

As far as I am aware there are no imports of fresh pineapples into Australia and imports of pineapple products are relatively insignificant. A complete ban on the importation of pineapple products would present problems with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in which Australia participates.

The Industries Assistance Commission has already received submissions on the import of pineapple products from both my department and the industry as part of the commission's inquiry into fruit and fruit products which was conducted last year. A draft report on the commission's findings is expected to be released in the near future.

19. IMPORT DUTY ON PHOTOELECTRIC CELLS AND ELECTRIC CAR CONVERSION KITS

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) In view of the need to conserve our liquid fossil fuels will he raise with the Commonwealth Government the question of high import duty of 53 per cent on photoelectric cells and electric car conversion kits having a discouraging effect on development of alternative energy sources?

(2) Will he press for the reduction or elimination of this tax?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Yes. I shall raise this matter with the relevant Commonwealth Minister and seek a reduction or elimination of the import duty and sales tax payable on these items where they are to be used in the development of alternative energy sources. I should point out that the Queensland Government already assists by offering reduced registration charges for electric vehicles.

20. DISTRIBUTION OF UNORDERED GOODS

Mr Yewdale asked the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations—

With reference to the Unordered Goods and Services Act and in view of a continuing problem of citizens receiving unordered goods from the publishers of "Readers Digest", has his department received complaints regarding this type of unordered goods and, if so, what has been done to eliminate this nuisance?

Answer:—

The matter the honourable member has raised does not appear to be a problem in that all instances where a complaint of this nature has been referred to the Consumer Affairs Bureau, the company has advised that it has resulted from an initial contact such as an introductory offer, and that the consumer has not cancelled the offer within the requisite time.

Furthermore, in cases which have been referred to the Consumer Affairs Bureau, the "Readers Digest" has agreed to waive charges in respect of such complaints.

21. WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Mr Yewdale asked the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations—

With reference to the Workers' Compensation Board of Queensland—

(1) How many board offices are operating in Queensland and where are they sited?

(2) Of these offices what are the staff numbers in each individual office and their specific categories?

(3) Since the inception of the board what has been the rate of increases in claims?

(4) Since the inception of the board what increases have been made in staff numbers?

(5) What volume of business is performed by staff in relation to employer premiums?

(6) What number of rehabilitation officers are currently engaged throughout the State?

Answer:—

(1) (a) Head office and 17 branch offices with State Government Insurance Office (Q) acting as agents in three centres.

(b) Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Warwick, Roma, Southport, Redcliffe, Nambour, Gympie, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Mackay, Townsville, Ingham, Mount Isa, Cairns and agencies at Dalby, Kingaroy and Ayr.

(2)

Clerks	Clerk-Typists and Stenographers	Clerical and General Assistants	Medical	Rehabilitation Counsellors	Total
Head Office .. 123	52	47	9	2	233
Ipswich 11	4	3	..	..	18
Toowoomba .. 7	4	1	..	..	12
Warwick 3	1	..	..	..	4
Roma 2	2	..	..	..	4
Southport .. 3	2	..	..	..	5
Redcliffe .. . 1	2	..	..	..	3
Nambour .. . 1	2	..	..	..	3
Gympie 1	2	..	..	..	3
Maryborough .. 9	3	..	..	..	12
Bundaberg .. . 3	1	..	..	..	4
Rockhampton .. 14	6	1	..	..	21
Gladstone .. . 3	2	..	..	..	5
Mackay 3	2	..	..	..	5
Townsville .. 12	4	1	..	..	17
Ingham 1	1	..	..	..	2
Mount Isa .. . 1	2	..	..	..	3
Cairns 8	4	2	..	..	14

(3) New claims intimated—

1-7-77 to 30-6-78	79 317	
1-7-78 to 30-6-79	81 630	3 per cent increase
1-7-79 to 30-6-80	86 398	6 per cent increase
1-7-79 to 31-1-80	50 861	
1-7-80 to 31-1-81	53 187	5 per cent increase

(4) The board staff at head office has been increased by 18.

The staff at branch offices by 16 including seven temporary staff pending the finalisation of survey of staff numbers at all branches. The report on this survey is soon to be completed.

(5) There are 92 601 workers' compensation policies for the whole of Queensland.

(6) The rehabilitation section is established at head office with development in this area being made in a gradual manner. The section is responsible for rehabilitation for the whole of Queensland.

The staff of this section is:—

- (i) Rehabilitation and welfare officer.
- (ii) Assistant rehabilitation and welfare officer.
- (iii) One clerical officer.
- (iv) Two clerk typists.
- (v) One medical officer.
- (vi) Two rehabilitation counsellors.

22. SPINAL SECTION, PRINCESS ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL

Mr Stephan asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Because of the age and present condition of the spinal section of Princess Alexandra Hospital and the fact that approval has been given for its rebuilding, have any plans been finalised for the reconstruction of this section?

(2) When is it envisaged that work will be able to commence?

Answer:—

(1) The South Brisbane Hospitals Board has been given approval for the preparation of sketch plans and an estimate of cost for extensions to existing buildings to incorporate a new Spinal Injuries Unit.

The board's architects have prepared sketch plans, but the board has requested certain amendments to these plans, and at the present time the board is awaiting the submission of amended plans from the architects.

(2) The commencement of work on this project is dependent on the satisfactory completion of the various stages of planning and the availability of finance.

23. PULP MILL, SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND

Mr Stephan asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

(1) With reference to statements made recently that negotiations for the establishment of a pulp mill in South-East Queensland will be finalised at an early date,

is he aware that the Gympie area and shire and city councils concerned, fully support the establishment of the pulp mill in that area?

(2) Is he aware of previous agreements reached concerning the usage of plantation pine and operation of existing and future mills for this area?

(3) Will these aspects be taken into consideration before any final decision is made?

Answer:—

(1) Yes, I am certainly aware that the Gympie area and shire and city councils concerned fully support the establishment of a pulp mill in the Gympie area, and I understand that they have also made these views known to the firms carrying out the feasibility study for this project as they have to me and to my Cabinet colleagues.

(2) I am aware of an existing agreement between the Conservator of Forests and Woodland Limited concerning the usage of certain plantation pine in the Gympie/Maryborough area.

There has, of course, been a subsequent arrangement which was supported by Woodlands and which has led to the feasibility study presently being undertaken into the possible establishment of a larger-scale pulp mill. This mill would draw on the combined plantation timber resources of a number of areas in South-east Queensland in addition to the Gympie/Maryborough area.

(3) The honourable member may be assured that when final decision is being taken in this matter all of the aspects he has raised will be fully considered.

24. FRASER ISLAND NATIONAL PARK

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts—

(1) How many men are employed at the Fraser Island National Park?

(2) Do people camping within the Fraser Island National Park have to obtain a permit from these officers before camping?

(3) If so, how are the officers to be contacted when they are quite properly patrolling the park?

Answer:—

(1) Two men.

(2) Not necessarily:

(a) If bush camping (in those areas over 1 km from any road, picnic area or walking track), an annual permit may be obtained from any National Parks and Wildlife Service office throughout the State, or from the Lands Department, the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation or the Forestry Department.

(b) A special permit is required if camping in the main "A" Road camping area. These permits are also readily available from the regional office at Maryborough.

(3) As can be seen from (2), adequate provision exists for obtaining permits from either local staff or other centres. This arrangement works satisfactorily for most campers. I feel sure that the House is well aware of the honourable member's very keen interest in the situation on Fraser Island, and I look forward to visiting the island with the honourable member at a later date.

25. SQUATTING ON MINING LEASES

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

What control does the Mines Department have over illegal squatting on mining leases?

Answer:—

Any officer of the Department of Mines, or any other person authorised by the Minister, may take action pursuant to subsection (2) of section 99 of the Mining Act 1968-1980 to have persons, who he reasonably believes to be in occupation of a mining lease without lawful authority, removed from such lease.

26. ALUMINIUM SMELTER, GOODWOOD AREA

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

What controls will he place on the proposed aluminium smelter to be situated in the Goodwood area to protect the already large sugar cane growing industry in that district?

Answer:—

As the question relates to a matter outside my ministerial control, I suggest that the honourable member refer his query to the Honourable the Premier as the responsible authority.

27. REGISTRATION OF PRIVATE PLEASURE CRAFT AND HIRE CRAFT

Mr Hansen asked the Minister for Northern Development and Maritime Services—

(1) What is the extent of increases this year in the registration fees of private pleasure craft and hire craft?

(2) How many such vessels have been registered during the past year in the Maryborough district and what is the total revenue collected in each instance?

Answer:—

(1) The registration fee for private motor boats increased by \$1 for those up to 4.5 m and \$2 for those over 4.5 m to

\$16 and \$27 respectively. The charge for registration and survey fee on hire craft increased by \$1 to \$9.

In addition a facility fee of \$5 was added to the private motor boat registration. This latter fee is to be applied towards the amortisation cost of loans raised by the Harbours Corporation of Queensland to provide facilities for the boating public.

(2) At the end of February 1981 there were 2 571 private motor boats registered in the Maryborough/Hervey Bay district. This is an increase of 385 registrations compared to 1980. At the end of February 1981 there were 24 hire boats registered and surveyed in the Maryborough area. This is a reduction of four on the 1980 number.

The estimated revenue from the registrations of these private boats increased from \$47,000 in 1980 to \$50,400 in 1981. In addition the facility fee should provide approximately \$12,800 in 1981. Owners of hire boats may elect to pay on a 5-year basis, and for this reason there has not been any revenue collected in respect of the Maryborough vessels in the last 12 months.

28. SCHOOL TRANSPORT IN COUNTRY AREAS

Mr Hansen asked the Minister for Education—

Is he aware of the problems faced by parents of young children in country areas where school buses converge onto transport franchise areas and the children are required to transfer to suburban buses?

Answer:—

I am not aware of any major problems. If they exist I would expect that they would have been brought to my attention. If the honourable member has evidence of any such problems, I would be happy to have them examined.

29. GYMPIE ROAD/SAMSONVALE ROAD INTERSECTION, STRATHPINE

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to a recent fatal accident at the intersection of Gympie Road and Samsonvale Road, Strathpine in which a young woman from Kallangur was killed?

(2) Has the Main Roads Department received many requests from the Pine Rivers Shire Council, Strathpine branch of the Liberal Party, local residents and myself for action that would have greatly reduced the chances of that accident occurring?

(3) Will he now take urgent action to have this intersection made safer?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Prior to the accident a total of six letters were received by the Main Roads Department or me. They requested provision of a right-turn arrow for traffic turning from the southbound lanes of Gympie Road across the northbound lanes into Samsonvale Road. Three of the letters were from Pine Rivers Shire Council, one from the honourable member for Murumba, one from the Strathpine branch of the Liberal Party, and one from a private citizen.

Essentially, all correspondents were advised that the incorporation of the right-turn arrow for the relatively minor movement would limit the capacity of the intersection to carry the heavy volume of through traffic on Gympie Road. Since the date of the accident, I have received two letters from the honourable member concerning this intersection—one demanding that action be taken and another requesting that U-turns be permitted.

(3) As the situation stands, it is incumbent on turning traffic to abide by the Traffic Regulations, that is to proceed only when there is sufficient clearway for them to turn safely. Alternatively, motorists may turn off at Buckby Road and approach Gympie Road from Bell's Pocket Road, making a direct crossing of Gympie Road into Samsonvale Road under signal control. Pine Rivers Shire Council noted in one of its letters that a number of motorists do this.

With regard to the request for U-turns, it is the opinion of departmental officers that permitting U-turns will not make the intersection safer. They believe it would have the opposite effect. However, I have asked the Commissioner of Main Roads to further investigate this matter to see if there is an acceptable means of protecting motorists who abide by the Traffic Regulations from those who do not.

30. ALBANY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

Mr Akers asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

What is the planning and construction timetable for the proposed Albany Creek High School?

Answer:—

Tenders for this new high school were advertised on Saturday, 7 March 1981 and will close on 31 March 1981. Construction time allowed is 34 weeks from the date of acceptance.

Subject to the receipt of a satisfactory tender, it is anticipated that the new school will be available for the opening of the 1982 school year.

31. POLICE STATION, NORTHERN BEACHES AREA

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

When will the police station be constructed on land presently under consideration at the Northern Beaches area, north of Cairns?

Answer:—

The Department of Works is investigating a site proposal in the Smithfield area. Plans for a police station cannot be completed until this aspect is finalised and the proposal is dependent upon finance being available for the purpose. Consequently no indication can be given at this stage as to when the station will be constructed.

32. LOCAL OWNERSHIP OF AIRPORTS

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

When will the committee appointed to look into local ownership of airports in Queensland make their report available?

Answer:—

The inter-departmental committee is looking primarily at the Cairns Airport, but as the honourable member is obviously aware, the Cairns case sets a precedent for other jet airports.

Very recently further information has been obtained from the Commonwealth on its current policy for local ownership, and the implications of this information and other matters have been discussed with representatives of the Cairns City Council. Further information from that council is awaited.

It should be possible for the report to be finalised for submission to Cabinet soon after that information is received.

33. DETECTION OF DRUG-GROWING, NORTH QUEENSLAND

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

Will he consider making sufficient finance available for the purchase of a four-wheel-drive vehicle, two trail bikes and one dog for the Cairns Police to allow them to perform their duties in catching drug growers in the scrub country of Far North Queensland?

Answer:—

A report by the Regional Superintendent at Cairns regarding equipment etc, including vehicles and a dog, for drug investigations in North Queensland is under consideration at present. No specific provision was made on the estimates for the current year for the expenditure involved. Implementation of a decision to provide some or all of the items requested, if this course is decided upon, will depend upon the availability of funds at that time.

34. SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS

Mr Shaw asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Do shortages of teachers exist in specific subject areas or age/grade levels in public schools in this State, and, if so, how many additional teachers will be required to fill these vacancies as at 28 February?

(2) To the extent that shortages may exist in particular regions, will he indicate the regions affected and the extent of shortages in each of these regions?

Answer:

(1 & 2) There is no shortage of teachers in any specific subject area in State schools in Queensland.

35. WORK TRANSITION EDUCATION

Mr Shaw asked the Minister for Education—

(1) What funds have been allocated to Queensland by the Federal Government for work transition education?

(2) How much of this allocation has been received to date and what amount is expected to be allocated to this State in the near future?

(3) What amount did the Queensland government originally request for this purpose, how many subsequent submissions have been made and for what amounts and on what dates were submissions lodged with the Federal body seeking funds for this purpose?

(4) Has the Work Transition Education program promised by the Prime Minister been put into operation and, if so, from what date does the five-year program begin?

(5) How many Queensland students are currently enrolled in work transition courses?

(6) What are the subjects involved and what educational institutions are offering the courses?

(7) In which towns or suburbs are the courses presently available?

Answer:—

(1) Queensland received \$3.55m for the transition education program from the Commonwealth Government in 1980, and will receive a further \$3.9m in 1981.

(2) All funds allocated for 1980 have been received. The first quarterly instalment of 1981 funds, an amount of \$1,028,499, has now been received from the Commonwealth Government.

(3) Funds for the transition education program are requested annually from the Commonwealth Government. By a submission of 21 December 1979, my department requested \$4.307m for 1980. Subsequently, on 22 January 1981, an amount of \$3.9m was requested for 1981.

(4) The Commonwealth funded transition education program commenced at the beginning of 1980, and is anticipated to continue until the end of 1984.

(5) In 1980, some 5 700 students in State secondary and special schools and some 1 000 students in colleges of technical and further education participated in courses offered under the Commonwealth funded transition education program. Enrolments in the courses being offered in 1981 have not yet been finalised, but will be significantly greater than those in 1980.

(6) Courses in the transition education program are offered through State secondary schools and departments, special schools, and colleges of technical and further education. For listings of subjects, I refer the honourable member to schedule 1, which I table.

(7) I refer the honourable member to schedule 2, which I table. I should also point out that in addition to the transition education courses provided with Commonwealth funds, the State Government has for a number of years mounted, from its own resources, a very substantial number of transition type courses in secondary and special schools and colleges of technical and further education. Queensland's initiatives in transition education were taken well before the Commonwealth expressed an interest in the area.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the documents on the table.

36. GLUE-SNIFFING

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

Were some residents who contacted a suburban police station with information concerning primary school children sniffing glue told by the police officer that glue sniffing was not an offence and consequently not a police matter and, if so, will he take urgent action to correct the situation and, if not, will he ensure that all police officers are made aware of their responsibility to protect young children?

Answer:—

The sniffing of glue is not an offence. I am not aware of advice given at a particular police station. The prevalence of glue-sniffing is a matter of grave concern to the Police Department, and members of the Juvenile Aid Bureau are frequently counselling children found involved. A subcommittee of the inter-departmental committee to examine the report of the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs has been formed to examine matters surrounding the practice of glue-sniffing by juveniles. No doubt recommendations concerning amendments

to legislation will be made by that subcommittee to the parent body, and any such recommendations will be given due consideration at the appropriate time.

37. IMMUNISATION AGAINST RUBELLA AND WHOOPING COUGH

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Are epidemics of whooping cough and rubella likely because of the number of Queensland children who are not protected against these diseases?

(2) What action has been taken to encourage the immunisation of every child in Queensland against rubella, as well as tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough?

Answer:—

(1) A number of cases of proven whooping cough occurred early this year in Brisbane. Other childhood diseases resembling whooping cough have been present also. Non-immunised children are susceptible to whooping cough, but the cover is believed to be good, and an epidemic is a very remote possibility. However, all babies should have their immunisation commenced at two months of age. Rubella is considered a mild illness, and immunisation campaigns are directed at the target group of girls 10-14 years old, to prevent rubella during pregnancy. Epidemics of rubella are likely to occur.

(2) Publicity campaigns, largely involving the Division of Health Education and Information, have been a feature of the last few years. The need for immunisation is stressed by the staff of the Divisions of Maternal and Child Health, School Health Services and Community Medicine. Local authorities are also closely involved in this work, through well-advertised immunisation campaigns.

38. EMPLOYMENT OF TEACHERS

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Education—

(1) How many qualified teachers are presently seeking employment with his department?

(2) How many teacher graduates were there in the years 1978, 1979 and 1980 and for each of those years how many were employed firstly by the State and secondly by private schools?

(3) Has there been any reduction of enrolment for teacher qualifying courses either spontaneously or due to Government action?

Answer:—

(1) At present, my department has 1 830 applications for employment from qualified teachers, but the honourable member will appreciate that this is a total figure

and includes a very high proportion of teachers whose applications are severely restricted in placement terms geographically or who are second-income applicants.

(2) The numbers of newly graduated teachers, including mid-year graduates, who made application to the department for employment during 1978, 1979 and 1980 were 2 130, 2 025 and 1 768 respectively. When offered employment, a significant number of these applicants did not accept positions with the department. Factors which appeared to be operating in these cases ranged from being employed elsewhere as a teacher, or in other employment, to simply being no longer interested in a teaching position with the department. Consequently, included in these applicant totals were graduates who were also applicants for positions with other employing bodies, as well as numbers that had subsequently declined appointments offered to them. The numbers which were appointed were recorded as 1 705, 1 546 and 1 316. However, numbers appointed well into the year would not necessarily show up in these totals. No information is available to this department on the numbers employed by private schools.

(3) In the recent past, enrolments in certain courses of teacher education have declined, in some cases below the levels planned for by the relevant authorities. While the levels planned for took full account of demographic factors, I believe that the perceptions of students, and their parents, regarding employment prospects for teachers have contributed to the failure to meet the levels planned for in certain areas. Some of these perceptions have, I believe, been unduly pessimistic, possibly as a result of adverse publicity at the national level.

39. CABOOLTURE SHIRE COUNCIL
IMMUNISATION PROGRAM

Mr Frawley asked the Minister for Health—

Is immunisation of children being carried out by the Caboolture Shire Council free of charge and is vaccine supplied to all local authorities free of charge?

Answer:—

The Caboolture Shire Council has clinics at Caboolture and Deception Bay and has arrangements covering Bribie Island. Immunisation is available for whooping cough, diphtheria, tetanus, poliomyelitis, rubella and measles. Immunisation at council clinics is available free of charge.

At country centres, rubella and poliomyelitis vaccine are available from the local authorities to private medical practitioners free of charge. Triple antigen is available by private medical practitioners either direct from Commonwealth Serum

Laboratories or from pharmaceutical chemists. In both instances charges are made.

40. HOUSING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES,
CABOOLTURE ELECTORATE

Mr Frawley asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) What areas of land are held by the Housing Commission in Caboolture township, Deception Bay, Bribie Island, Burpengary, Narangba, Woodford and Beachmere?

(2) How many houses have been built in the Shire of Caboolture since 1972 and how many units have been built in the same period?

(3) How does the waiting time for a Housing Commission house or unit in the Caboolture Shire compare with the rest of the State?

Answer:—

(1) Caboolture—30 serviced sites, 22 unserviced sites, 1 site for 14 pensioner units; Deception Bay—129 serviced sites, 3 unit sites—subject to rezoning, small acreage for about 10 sites; Bribie Island—5 sites to accommodate 26 units, 1 part-site for 14 units; Burpengary—24 unsewered sites; Narangba—Nil; Woodford—2 serviced sites, 2 unserviced sites; Beachmere—Nil.

(2) Between 1 July 1972 and 29 January 1981 in the Shire of Caboolture the commission has supplied under all schemes:

668 houses
24 pensioner units

At present there are five houses under construction and 11 at tender.

(3) It is considered that wait-times in this area are shorter than the State average, but it is not possible to be precise without lengthy statistical analysis of wait-list movements in hundreds of centres. The high cost is difficult to justify.

41. CONSTRUCTION OF CABOOLTURE RIVER
ROAD

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

(1) Is the statement made by Cr B. Broomhall of the Caboolture Shire Council at a public meeting on 23 February correct, wherein he said that the delay in the further construction of the Caboolture River Road from Moorina Junction to Gregor's Creek has been caused by the Department of Main Roads?

(2) Is he aware that some time after the deputation which he received, the Caboolture Shire Council reviewed its priorities for this road and requested that the matching grant scheme be used on another section of the road?

(3) As the reconstruction of this road is to enable the Morayfield State School

bus to convey children in safety, will he give an assurance that the work will be carried out as originally proposed?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) Following some initial uncertainty in relation to the section of Caboolture River Road to be given priority, I made the decision last June to proceed with a matching-grant scheme for the section from Moorina Junction to Gregor's Creek. I also agreed to provide normal secondary-road funding for one other job on this road, to provide for widening of the bitumen from Beacon Street towards Dobson's Lane. The first of these jobs, from Moorina Junction to Gregor's Creek, should be released to council early in May, with the other following soon thereafter.

Any statement that the Main Roads Department has caused undue delay would be incorrect. The preparation of the schemes is a co-operative effort by the Main Roads Department and Caboolture Shire Council. The department carried out the survey and preparation of design data, and commissioned the council to prepare the design. The plans and estimates were recently submitted by the council in preliminary form for clarification of certain aspects and are now back with the council for completion. After completion, they will be resubmitted for final approval. The alleged delay is in fact the time normally required for pre-construction activities, from finalisation of a program through to release of a scheme.

42. LAND VALUATIONS, HAMILTON AREA

Mr Mackenroth asked the Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services—

(1) With reference to the recent revaluation of properties in the City of Brisbane, are properties on Crown Industrial Estates valued according to the value of the lease rather than the unimproved value of the block of land?

(2) If so, were freehold properties at Hamilton which adjoin leasehold land valued in line with the leasehold values rather than the unimproved value?

Answer:—

(1) No. Under the provisions of the Valuation of Land Act, all land, including leasehold land, must be valued at its unimproved value as if it were held in fee simple.

(2) The freehold and leasehold land referred to by the honourable member would be valued at its unimproved value.

43. HOUSING COMMISSION RENTAL HOUSES

Mr Mackenroth asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) How many tenants were evicted by the Queensland Housing Commission in 1979-80?

(2) In 1979-80 (a) how many tenants were evicted each month, and (b) what was the reason for each eviction?

(3) How many applications are held by the commission for rental accommodation?

(4) In 1979-80, how many applicants for rental accommodation were housed by the commission?

Answer:—

(1) One.

(2) (a) One in March 1980; (b) Rent arrears.

(3) At 31 December 1980, 1 008 pensioner applications and 4 507 family applications of which 1 417 are in priority categories as having some degree of under-housing.

(4) 3 420.

44. PREMIER'S ELIGIBILITY FOR AGE PENSION

Mr Mackenroth asked the Premier—

(1) As he is aware that people over the age of 70 years are entitled to a means-test-free pension of \$51.45 per week, will he inform this House if he is in receipt of this pension?

(2) If not, will he give an assurance that he will not apply for it while either himself or his wife are receiving salaries as members of Parliament?

Answer:—

(1) No.

(2) No.

45. USE OF STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

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

(1) What restrictions are placed on the use of State Emergency Service for the assistance of persons who are the victims of acts of God, for instance in restricted land slips following deluges of rain?

(2) In particular, is there an embargo on the use of the SES to save personal property, such as essential personal household effects?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) For other than major disaster situations, the State Emergency Service renders assistance to the community at the request of statutory services and authorities for local emergencies, local counter-disaster operations or as detailed in local authority and disaster district counter-disaster plans.

For rendering this type of assistance, the local members of the State Emergency Service may be activated where—

(a) the statutory service or authority concerned has insufficient manpower, resources, equipment or facilities;

(b) the statutory service or authority concerned cannot obtain support or service from other services;

(c) there is a non-availability of trained personnel or proper equipment;

(d) there is a requirement for the use of specialised State Emergency Service equipment, facilities or members; and

(e) action is required to relieve immediate danger to life and property.

In these circumstances, the service provides a support role and the statutory service or authority will continue with its primary role of co-ordination and provision or arrangement of items and materials that are not an integral part of the State Emergency Service resources.

46. WEARING OF SEAT-BELTS

Mr Gygar asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Do statistics show that 31 per cent of those killed in Queensland road accidents so far this year were not wearing seat-belts?

(2) If so, does this further demonstrate the fact that seat belts do save lives and does he intend to take any action to ensure that seat-belt laws are enforced?

Answer:—

(1) Thirty-one per cent of drivers and or passengers who have been killed in car accidents during January and February this year were not, on present information, wearing available seat-belts.

(2) Volume 8, number 3, of 1980 of the Journal of Traffic Medicine, the official organ of the International Association for Accident and Traffic Medicine, contained a report by Doctor Gordon W. Trinca, Chairman of the National Road Trauma Committee Royal Australasian College of Surgeons which had this to say—

“Seat belt restraint remains the single most effective measure in protecting vehicle occupants against death and serious injury in road crashes.

“It is estimated that serious and fatal injuries are reduced by 65 to 80 per cent and moderate injuries by 40 to 60 per cent by the wearing of seat belts.

“A restrained occupant has a ten times less chance of being ejected in a road crash than an unrestrained occupant.

“Total restraint removes the threat of strapped occupants being subjected to excessive loading from unrestrained occupants.”

One of the conclusions of the report is that the seat-belt by saving the occupant from more severe injury, particularly from head injuries and lethal ejection, greatly improves the prognosis for patient survival.

The matter of enforcement of compulsory wearing of seat-belts is one for my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police. However, the honourable member has no doubt read in the papers of the present campaign mounted by the Police Department for the wearing of seat-belts. I support it.

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

At 12 noon,

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

ADDRESS IN REPLY

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FIRST ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 71) on Dr Lockwood's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr CASEY (Mackay—Leader of the Opposition) (12.2 p.m.): In joining in this debate today, Mr Speaker, firstly I congratulate you on your re-election, although naturally we supported our own nominee. We also congratulate the new Chairman of Committees (Mr Miller). Both of you have an important role to play in the future government of this State. I also welcome to the House all of the new members of all political parties. I extend a special welcome to the member for Mulgrave (Mr Eaton), the member for Bulimba (Mr McLean) and the member for Townsville West (Mr Smith). Those three gentlemen are very fine members, well respected in their own areas, as was indicated by the vote they received. I know that they will make good contributions to this House and to politics generally in the State of Queensland.

Personally, I thank the people of Mackay for the support that they again extended to me in the November election. As both member for Mackay and Leader of the Opposition, I look forward to a Parliament in which there can be a new thrust for a better and more co-operative Parliament in the three years ahead.

As Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, I pledge through you, Mr Speaker, to His Excellency the Governor, our loyalty to the Queen of Australia and our promise to do everything within our power to uphold the democratic system that Queenslanders desire.

This debate officially begins a new Parliament, a new Parliament in which there is a clear and overwhelming mandate for change in the style of government—change, I believe, in the style of Parliament itself. Only four months ago both the Labor and the Liberal

Party campaigned throughout Queensland on the issue of style of government. The central question before the voters was whether or not they wanted a change from the extremist, intolerant style of National Party government that prevailed in Queensland.

It is noteworthy that 73 per cent of Queenslanders supported that campaign for change—that 73 per cent voted against the National Party's way of government. It does not matter how the Premier or other members of the National Party pretend otherwise, it does not matter how they try to contort a tiny 27 per cent vote into some mythical majority, the fact is that in Queensland, last November, 73 per cent of Queenslanders voted against the Premier and his National Party style of government.

The Premier, as expected, has ignored the message from the people for change. The tragedy is that the Liberal Party has joined him in that snub as it amalgamates itself pitifully with the National Party for the next three years.

Labor believes the Queensland voters last November clearly showed that the people of this State want a change away from a style of government that the Liberal Party agrees irresponsibly starts and extends industrial strikes; a style of government that the Liberal Party again agrees is intolerant to churches and minorities, domineering of Parliament and unaccountable to it.

We will not relax the struggle for parliamentary reform, with an answerable Cabinet Executive and committees such as a parliamentary accounts committee, just because the Liberal Party has abandoned its own policies and principles. That has become quite clear in this Parliament in recent days by the attempts to get a proper change in responsibility in relation to question-time.

Of course, Mr Speaker has promised an early meeting of the parliamentary Standing Orders Committee—the first since 1973. The Liberal Party is making use of that promise on every occasion. But the Parliament can make a decision to instruct the Standing Orders Committee at any time it so desires. It can decide to instruct Mr Speaker at any time it so desires. The Labor Party will take to any meeting of the Standing Orders Committee a full list of non-party recommendations for parliamentary upgrading. I hope that such recommendations will be looked at objectively and as a concensus opinion of this Parliament.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: I wouldn't hold my breath while I was waiting.

Mr CASEY: It might take a long time, but we assure Government members and the people of Queensland that we will continue to fight hard at every opportunity to bring the Standing Orders Committee together and that we will not bow submissively, as the Liberals have done.

The Labor Party also recognises that the 73 per cent which voted against the National

Party style of government are already disenchanted at the direction in which the Queensland Government has been moving since that time. They are already concerned at the failure of the Queensland Government to tackle those real problems of unemployment and economic hardship which face all sections of the Queensland community.

I therefore move by way of amendment in this debate—

“Add to the Address the following words—

‘However, it is the opinion of this Legislature that your advisers have failed to immediately initiate both the electoral and Government reform in this State as indicated by them during the election campaign and they have shown no real intent in their legislative program to properly overcome the problems of unemployment and economic hardship which face all sections of the Queensland community, despite the fact that the boundless mineral and rural wealth of this State has provided them with ample opportunity, and that they have therefore lost the confidence of this House.’ ”

The Opposition amendment emphasises the social disabilities that this Government supports within the community—but only prior to an election. We recognise that these problems exist, and the Government is doing absolutely nothing about them other than to pull the wool over the eyes of the people.

Since the election, unemployment, an issue in which concern was expressed so cynically in the weeks leading up to the State election, vanished from the moment the polling booths closed. Young school-leavers who set out the following Monday to seek their first job found the same situation existing as had been the case for the previous three years, and so many are finding that situation today.

This great State of Queensland continues to stagger on without any realistic directional leadership coming from its Government. If a declaration was needed that nothing has really changed in Queensland, it came in the Governor's Opening Speech to this Parliament last Wednesday, prepared by the Government as a draft of its proposals for the next three years.

The Brisbane rail electrification, which the Government in 1974 promised to finish by the end of 1977, is featured again already three years behind schedule. It is the same with the Gateway Bridge, promised in 1966 for completion by 1970 and repeated now 11 years later as an example of development in 1981. We are told surveys on the Petrie-Kippa-Ring line are nearing completion 19 months after the Government promised its construction during the Redcliffe by-election campaign. The same old names appear for the proposed new mining developments year after year in Government speeches, Government journals, and Government Press releases. They appear more often than the constant film reruns on our television screens.

If proof was needed of the Government's hypocritical approach to the Burdekin scheme, this latest policy speech supplied it. Federal and State Government support for the Burdekin project was conveniently announced just before the Federal and State elections last year, and now we are informed that tenders will be called—not this year or next year but in 1983, no doubt just before the next batch of elections.

The Government in this Parliament is no longer a National and Liberal Party Coalition Government. It is a National Party Government: A Government in which the only purpose served by the Liberal Party is to give the Nationals an artificial parliamentary majority that their tiny vote of 27 per cent does not deserve or represent.

The Liberal Party has less influence on the decisions of this Government—particularly those taken secretly in Cabinet—than the National Party's affiliate (the League of Rights) and the faceless donors to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. I can remember no more degrading sight than the spectacle just before Christmas of the Liberal Party worming its way dishonorably back into political imprisonment under a National Party that its own leader so recently had accused of, "... extremism; confrontation with churches; bitterness towards minority groups; lack of concern or accountability".

Forgotten in the convenience of this one-sided amalgamation was the Liberal pre-election promise to place people before politics: Forgotten was that wonderful offer of a new direction to all Queenslanders. Gone, of course, is the concern for style of government and parliamentary reform; the fear expressed by the Liberal leader that this Parliament does not operate as it should. Gone, need I say, is the thrust for electoral justice.

The Liberal members in this Parliament, from their leader down to the latest backbencher, are as much a part of the National Party in Queensland today as the Premier, Sir Robert Sparkes and the League of Rights. It amazes me that any Liberal Party member with a single ounce of pride or self-respect can accept such sickening humiliation.

I ask: How can the Liberal members be the rubber stamp in this Parliament to legalise the dictates of a Premier who only months ago their own leader said lacked integrity and was "... not the kind of leader Queensland needed"? This Premier, to whom the Liberals now swear blind allegiance, is the same man whom Dr Edwards accused of irresponsibly starting industrial disputes and providing the type of leadership that has made Queensland "... the butt of jokes all around Australia".

The Liberals in this Parliament, and presumably many outside of it, are now content to collaborate with this Premier, whom Dr Edwards, in Brisbane's King George Square on 19 November, charged with ratbaggy and association with extremist organisations. How can any Liberal of integrity accept a

diminished presence in a Government with such a Premier when their preferences have won his National Party nine of the seats he uses as his excuse to penalise them? Think for a moment, I ask the Liberal members, of the real situation that exists within this Government in which they are so effectively enslaved—or, should I say, absorbed.

The Premiership is with the National Party. So are the portfolios of Mining, Primary Industries, Tourism, Police, Main Roads, Education, Works and now control of racing—to name but a few. The left-overs go to the Liberals: The barest minimum of portfolios to give the Premier and National Party a workable majority in Parliament through misapplication of Cabinet solidarity—a principle, I might add, that every Liberal Party minister gives a written promise to observe.

Mr Scott: They should be ashamed of themselves.

Mr CASEY: That is so true. They are locked into that situation in this Parliament for evermore. With 35 members of the National Party, plus those seven enslaved Liberal Ministers, the Premier will always have a working majority in this House from now on, irrespective of what happens.

The Liberal Party Leader, as Treasurer and Deputy Premier, has lost racing, and holds little sway over the SGIO, which is virtually part of the financial arm of the Government. He is no more within this National Party Government than an elected civil servant, favored from time to time with an overseas trip to sign some agreement, and rapped across the knuckles, as in the case of the State Investment Corporation, whenever it suits his National Party masters. It could easily have been so different for the Liberal Party in those days of negotiation after the election, and the Treasurer knows it. There were Liberals with pride and belief in their ideals who I know would have wished it different.

There could have been principled co-operation with Labor for electoral justice rather than unprincipled amalgamation within the National Party but, unfortunately for this Parliament and Queensland, the weakies in the Liberal Party won the day.

How different it might have been. In that period after the election and prior to the Liberals' cave-in to the National Party at the request of several prominent Liberals an offer by the Australian Labor Party was made to the Liberals to bring about the type of government that more than 70 per cent of Queenslanders had sought at election-time.

It is my intention to publicly reveal for the first time the details of that offer. We indicated that we were prepared to enter into discussions with the Liberal Party with a view to forming a minority Government to be formed by either party. Such agreement would include the introduction of electoral legislation to bring down a redistribution based on a one vote-one value principle. If

would also include the election of a Speaker and a Chairman of Committees; the retention by whichever of the two parties supported the Government in office of all existing entitlements, with more just staff arrangements; and agreement on a legislative program and a firm commitment to regular consultation. The agreement would last only for such time as was necessary to bring down the redistribution and make all the necessary preparations for an election.

The whole intent of the offer was to restore parliamentary democracy in this State to bring about better government in the interests of all Queenslanders. The offer was made on 19 December 1980. But three days later the Liberals surrendered, and the man who led that surrender was Dr Edwards, and those principled Liberals who wanted to carry out the wishes of the people found themselves captive of the Premier and the National Party once more.

The thought of a few portfolios, mostly junior ones, with their lurks and expense accounts disappearing under the Premier's ultimatum meant more to Dr Edwards and the Liberal majority than the defence of Liberal Party policies and principles. When the responsibility of government was within reach and this so-called "new vision", of which the Treasurer spoke last November, could have been a reality, the greed of a few and fear of the National Party prevailed over the longer term well-being of all Queenslanders. The extent of their submission is evident already in this Parliament.

The minority Government proposal was self-explanatory. It shows what might have been if a few more Liberals had really believed in Liberalism.

I turn to another subject that is very important to the community these days—the myth widely held in Queensland that the Premier is a strong man who, once he makes up his mind, will not bend despite the pressure.

Far from being a strong man in this fashion, the Premier is, as his record shows, one of the most elastic politicians to grace the Queensland scene: a politician ready to twist principles and grease palms without conscience when his personal interests command it.

On Thursday, the implacable opponent of parliamentary superannuation in 1948 will ask this Parliament to send Mrs Bjelke-Petersen early to Canberra to allow her to collect at least \$150,100 superannuation after only six years and one election. The personal deep hatred of superannuation has suddenly disappeared when personal gain is involved. For the benefit of all members, I suggest that they should look back to a debate that took place in this Parliament in 1948 on a superannuation Bill. There they will see quite clearly the personal deep hatred of superannuation that the Premier had then. But, when personal gain looks through the window, that hatred suddenly disappears.

Dr Scott-Young: I don't think he understood it.

Mr CASEY: That is perhaps so. Perhaps it was like so many other things that he does not seem to understand. He is like so many Liberals who failed to understand the action that the honourable member for Townsville tried to take in this Parliament last week and would not support him. They are completely captive of the Premier's will and his whims.

Only weeks ago this avowed enemy of socialism in any form during the Whitlam years took the Government into the stock exchange to compete against the private enterprise he professes to adore. Could it have been because of the connections of some of the companies and the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. Hypocritically, only yesterday, together with his Cabinet, he agreed to place another coal-mining reserve in Queensland virtually in the hands of southern organisations and overseas consortiums.

It is all very well that Sir Leslie Thiess is making a come-back with the Winchester coal deposits—good luck to him. We have yet to find a man who has done more for the Queensland coal industry. However, he has only a 25 per cent shareholding. The Westfield shopping group, a Sydney-owned organisation, has conducted a raid on our coal-mining resources. Although there are some Australian shareholdings in British Petroleum, it is an overseas-owned corporation. So one sees a complete paradox between what the Government says on the one hand and what it clearly does on the other hand.

In the 1950s the Premier was such a critic of gambling that he wanted to outlaw the Golden Casket, and even chocolate wheels which are used by so many church and sporting groups. However, on the eve of the last State election, the Premier announced approval for the State's first casino to aid his National Party colleague, Mr Hinze, on the South Coast by giving him something on which to hang his hat to facilitate his re-election into this Parliament.

Before that it was the Soccer Pools and, according to reports, this so called anti-gambling Government now plans the introduction of lotto into Queensland. Has lotto been put forward by a Queensland company? No, it is a Melbourne-based organisation that will profit from the playing of that game in Queensland.

The proposal put forward by the Labor Party at the last election that the Queensland club industry should be the beneficiary of the legalisation of poker machines has been completely disregarded. The Labor Party proposed that sporting groups, welfare organisations, the RSL, workers' clubs and the ordinary people of this State should benefit from the legalisation of poker machines. But that was completely disregarded because the Premier and his National Party Government preferred the Tattersalls operation, which is based in Melbourne. Perhaps we should check to see if any person from that

organisation was on the guest list at that infamous luncheon held in Melbourne last year when the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation was discussed.

The Premier now wants to streamline the betting operations of the TAB, with his own National Party-selected board. This is the man who constantly opposed betting on horse races, and who went to the races only to have his photograph taken for publicity purposes. Now he insists on a restructuring of the board, and wants to make sure that it is a National Party-selected board so that his own organisation has control.

The Premier is anti-drink and he preaches the evils of alcohol in this Chamber. I do not object to that; any man can hold those views and opinions. However, back in 1970, after the National Party defeat in the Albert by-election, he did a complete reverse and introduced Sunday drinking in Brisbane, even though his Government had pledged itself against it less than nine months previously. Once again, that was for political advantages. He is indeed a very elastic Premier.

Mr Moore: I organised that legislation.

Mr CASEY: They tell me the honourable member has not been out of the pub on Sunday ever since. Is that true?

Far from the strong-man image he cultivates, the Premier is a pliable politician ready to sweep aside a principle or amend a policy to suit the occasion of his own personal pursuit of the moment. It is in such a man that the Liberal Party today, at its weakest point in this Parliament in the past 23 years, now places the next three years of its future.

This is a debate in which members customarily air matters of concern to their State, their electorate and, in many cases, to themselves. It is in this vein that I turn now to the subject of uranium-mining, an issue that affects the North and Queensland as a whole, and about which I personally feel deeply.

As man becomes more aware of the long-term changes occurring to his environment because of certain short-term developmental projects, which provide profitable gain for some people, it is as well for us to recall that the greatest danger to man's environment comes from the development of our uranium resources. Indeed, it is also as well to recall that the greatest danger to mankind itself stems from the same source.

Mr Ahern: Hog-wash.

Mr CASEY: The Minister for Primary Industries might say "hog-wash". If he believes that to be so I refer him to the recent comments made by His Holiness Pope John Paul as he stood at the site in Japan where an atomic bomb caused the destruction of thousands upon thousands of human lives. Let the Minister ascertain for himself that what I say is true: nuclear warfare and the misuse of nuclear fission is the greatest danger to mankind.

In a State the size of Queensland with already proven coal reserves in excess of 24 000 million tonnes there is no need to develop risk energy sources, sources that provide a great risk to man's health, well-being and the future safety of generations as yet unborn.

I want to spell out loudly and clearly today for those companies that are intent on the further exploitation of the small uranium deposits which we have in this state—and they are small—Labor policy on the future mining of uranium. Quite clearly we will not support any further development of uranium-mining and treatment in Queensland, and we will repudiate any commitment made by a non-Labor Government to the mining, processing or use of uranium from Queensland.

A Labor Government will never approve of the sale of uranium for the destructive purposes of war.

Mr Moore: You are digging your own grave.

Mr CASEY: Not quite as fast as some companies are trying to dig the honourable member's.

In fact any future Labor Government will not permit the mining, processing, export or use of uranium for any purpose until such time as proper procedures have been developed for the safe storage and disposal of radioactive wastes. We will continue to honour the commitment given in relation to the Mary Kathleen mine, which is almost reaching the extent of its life and which is to be allowed to complete contracts entered into before December 1972 for the export of uranium ore. But let me be specific and point out clearly to the Minetome organisation, which is seeking to develop a uranium mine at Ben Lomond west of Townsville, that a future Labor Government will cancel any arrangements entered into between it and the present National Party Government in Queensland—and nobody can say there is no precedent for it. The precedent was set by the Federal Liberal Government in relation to mining on Fraser Island.

However, I believe this represents a far greater need and priority for the people of Queensland, particularly as under most agreements covering the sale of uranium the companies have a buy-back clause—"send-back" clause is perhaps a better description—under which the wastes have to be sent back to the source of origin.

If the French, Japanese, English, Germans or anyone else wish to enjoy the benefits of uranium energy in their countries for electricity generation or any other purposes, they lay it down that the company that initially mines the products must suffer the disadvantages by accepting the responsibility for waste disposal. "Not for Queensland", says the Labor Party. Not for Queensland under any circumstances!

The people of Queensland should know that Minetome, a totally owned French company, of which the French Government itself owns 20 per cent, is supporting through its owners the development of the neutron bomb. The first tests on this bomb have been carried out by France, and it is understood that a decision on further production will be made during the 1982-83 year—the year in which it is thought that Ben Lomond will come into full production.

The neutron bomb, of course, is the most ghastly weapon ever designed by man for war purposes. Its main attribute is that it kills people but doesn't destroy property. This means that future warfare, using the neutron bomb, will be clearly beneficial to those major powers with the backing of great resources but of not much help to the ordinary people of the community who down the centuries have been the cannon-fodder of all warfare.

The French Government already has a shocking record in its use of nuclear bombs. After its testing in the Pacific area, extremely high levels of radiation were discovered in milk and water in Queensland as a direct result of fall-out from this nuclear testing. The Australian Government took this matter to the International Court of Justice, which found that France had contravened all principles of international justice in the way in which it had carried out its nuclear testing. France just can't be trusted.

If we want further evidence of France's record, we have only to look at the way in which Australia's primary industry exports to Europe have been crushed by the attitude of the French Government to the agricultural policies carried out by that nation to the detriment of so many other nations right around the world, including Australia. It would be as well for the Minister for Primary Industries to recall that it is this further selfish attitude of France that is the driving force behind the Ben Lomond mining venture.

The National Party of Queensland has already granted one lease to Minetome and is now going through the motions of providing another because the first was considered by the company to be insufficient for it to economically develop the mine. The Ben Lomond mine is one that we do not need, and the Labor Party will continue to fight against such projects until proper environmental safety and health standards have been developed, both for the present generation and for future generations.

Let me turn now to the sugar industry. Increasingly, there has been a great amount of publicity surrounding an advertising campaign by the Queensland Sugar Board regarding the qualities of pure sugar. This has been the result of a similar type of campaign by some food manufacturers in Australia stressing the saleability of their products because of the fact that they have no added sugars.

Whilst this controversy has mainly surrounded the actions of Australian manufacturers, there is a very real threat to the sugar industry's export earnings from the development of artificial sweeteners in some of the countries which are the major customers for Australian sugar.

The best-known of these artificial sweeteners are the high-fructose syrups, which can be developed from any starch-producing product. In particular, these are the major grains of the world such as maize, wheat, and rice, but they also can come from cassava, potatoes, and a number of other root crops. However, maize has become the major primary source of high-fructose syrups. This has been because of the technology that has been developed in the United States of America and also the fact that it is a by-product of a major protein industry in that country using maize for animal stockfood.

High-fructose syrups have made huge market inroads in the United States, in Canada, and also in Japan. These three countries are among the major customers for our Australian sugar. The highest use of these artificial sweeteners is in the confectionery, baking, cordial, brewing, canning and dairying industries. In all, they would account for some 35 per cent of sweeteners being used in those countries.

It is as well for us to recall that only 10 per cent of the world's sugar production is traded on the free world market and perhaps 25 per cent, at the most, on the world export scene, the difference of 15 per cent being accounted for mainly by fixed contractual arrangements that are entered into between Australia and its traditional trading partners, Cuba and the USSR, and the EEC and various countries that have agreements with that trading bloc. However, the United States of America and Japan are amongst the world's biggest purchasers of raw sugar.

Now, one does not need to be a mathematician to work out that within a few years artificial sweeteners are going to become real trouble for the sugar industry in Australia. Any simpleton—even members of the National Party—can work that out. Australia is the world's third-ranking sugar exporter and needs long-term agreements in order to ensure the continuing productivity and expansion of its crop.

It is as well at this stage to warn the sugar industry that the \$100,000 campaign that it has currently undertaken may be merely a drop in the bucket compared to the amount of money that it will have to spend in future years to promote Australian sugar on the world export scene. It is as well to add, too, that the pressure from high-fructose syrups on the world market will also tend to reduce export prices. This is because the necessary technology has now been developed and the high-fructose syrups are comparative in price, for manufacturing purposes, with refined sugar.

The sugar industry must recognise the situation that developed in Australia's wool

and cotton industries. They turned their backs on artificial fibres when they were first being developed and enjoyed the rewards of world record wool prices back in the early 1950s. However, if honourable members look around the various retail stores in Brisbane and in every other city throughout the State today, they will find very few pure woollen suits or woollen female garments, and, indeed, pure cotton shirts have become almost a museum piece. Consequently, wool growers and cotton producers have had to increase their productivity considerably and work far harder in order to obtain a living from these crops.

I believe that in future years the Queensland sugar industry will have to be far more vigorous in its marketing techniques, not only in Australia but also in those countries in which it has contractual arrangements for the supply of raw sugar. In addition, Governments, both State and Federal, will have to look towards giving added assistance to the developing countries, because they are the countries in which the per capita consumption of sugar is rising and will continue to rise. In those countries, the preference is to use sugar because of its beneficial qualities. The future growth of the sugar industry is dependent upon those countries. Therefore, Governments must provide them with additional assistance and encourage them to become consumers of the products of the Queensland sugar industry.

I turn now to a subject which has been debated not only in North Queensland but throughout the State over a long period of time. It freshened up again quite recently, and mostly the same people are involved. It concerns the issue of a new State for the North.

At the outset, let me say that I am getting sick and tired of the hypocritical attitude of northern National Party representatives in this Parliament and, generally speaking, members of the National Party throughout the North. They spend the period prior to an election praising their own National Party Government and defending all of its wrongs and the way it has mistreated North Queensland, but as soon as the election is over and they, as parliamentarians, are safely returned in their National Party seats, they spend a great deal of time finding everything wrong with the Government's attitude to the North, and they whinge and whine about their own Government, their own Ministers and the share of ministerial representation allotted to the North. Their attitude is proof positive that the northern members representing the National Party have not got the ability to be Ministers. That is why they were not chosen; they do not have the ability. The people are not fools; they are awake to the way that they carry on in their electorates between elections and what happens at the time of an election. Generally speaking they blame all

of the problems of the North onto their own Government once they are safely away from the election period.

The problems of the North are caused more by ineffectual and weak representation by National Party parliamentarians than anything else. They put up with the situation; they accept it and they, in actual fact, are a part of it. The only worthwhile deal for the North is the return of a Labor Government, and the people of the North are realising this.

Labor made substantial gains in the North in the last election, and we will continue to make gains in the years ahead. Indeed, six additional seats in the North have become marginal seats.

North Queenslanders will no longer continue to put up with the worst roads in Australia; they will no longer put up with the worst and dearest—on a comparative mileage basis—air services; they will no longer put up with the higher freight rates, and consequently the highest cost of living in Australia. That is why there is such a move among the ordinary people in the North. They are seething about this Government's attitude. They will no longer allow the withdrawal of manufacturing enterprises, which has happened so often, by southern organisations. No caring Government has taken action in the North to prevent take-overs. The people of the North are no longer prepared to witness the failure of the Government to promote the secondary processing of products in the area. They are not prepared to let trains take northern products to Brisbane, southern capitals and for export overseas for processing, which virtually allows northern jobs to be exported. Those are some of the things that Northerners will no longer countenance. They indicated their feelings clearly in the last election. It is noteworthy that North Queensland suffers the highest unemployment rate in Australia.

North Queenslanders ask for nothing extra. They ask only for a fair share, a fair return for what they contribute in taxation and in every other way to this nation's productivity. Because of the way in which this Government has behaved, Brisbane, to Northerners, is as Canberra is to Queenslanders. When all is boiled down, Northerners are copping the prickly end of the stick in every way from both State and Federal Governments. They have only to consider the road funding system or the Burdekin scheme to which I referred earlier.

Decisions by State and Federal Governments do not seem to be beneficial to North Queenslanders. But the answer does not lie in a new State. Because of the complexities of the Australian Constitution, and particularly current Commonwealth-State finances, a new State in North Queensland is virtually an impossibility. To all the disgruntled, disenchanted National Party supporters who want a new State for North Queensland, and whose probable motive is that they want to be kings in their own

areas, I say, "Forget about it." I say to all North Queenslanders who want a better deal for their part of Australia, "Get behind the Labor Party and that's what Labor will do—give you a better deal." For that to happen a new State is not required, but rather proper decisions of Government. Labor is prepared to give—and will give—help, support and assistance to North Queensland. Labor will not give Northerners special advantages over other people in the State. It will simply return to Northerners the justice and fairness they seek, and give them a proper return for their efforts that provide a far greater share of the nation's wealth per capita than any other part of Australia.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (12.42 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to second the amendment to the Address which has been moved by the Leader of the Opposition. In doing so, let me point out that we in the Opposition are concerned about the contents of the Governor's Opening Speech which, of course, was written by the Government and contains no hope for the great mass of Queenslanders. In effect, it is a rehash of the propaganda that has been trotted out month after month by the Government to try to deceive the electorate into thinking that they are new initiatives.

Before proceeding to the main crunch of my speech today I wish to congratulate Mr Speaker on his election and you, Mr Deputy Speaker, on your appointment as Chairman of Committees. I join with the Leader of the Opposition in congratulating the new members on both sides of the House. We hope that their time in Parliament is fruitful. I hope that the new Government members last only three years and that the new Opposition members last a long time.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr DAVIS: Hope springs eternal, so do not worry about it.

The legislation outlined in the Governor's Opening Speech leaves a lot to be desired. Following the election, a person would think that this Government, which we are led to believe is so magnificent, would have some new initiatives and that the Liberal leader would have been busy during the past three months in helping to formulate policy so that we would see a new and better legislative program for this Parliament.

It is well worth remembering what the Government has done during the past three months in regard to some of these great new plans, particularly now that Cabinet has a reorganised brains trust. It is worth noting some of the Bills outlined in the Opening Speech. They are: A Bill to amend the State Development and Public Works Organization Act; a Bill to consolidate and amend the law of succession; a Bill to amend the Queensland Marine Act in certain particulars; a Bill to provide for the control, eradication and prevention of exotic diseases in animals and the compensation of owners for loss or

destruction of animals; and a Bill to amend the Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act. They are five of the seven main Bills proposed for the current legislative program.

I think that is a shocking indictment of this Government and shows what we can expect from the new brains trust in the Cabinet, including the Minister for Health. On hearing that list being read by the Governor, I am sure that many of my colleagues were built up to such a fever pitch of excitement that they could hardly concentrate on the tea and scones that were served later.

I now want to direct some remarks to the Liberal Party. No doubt, Mr Deputy Speaker, you would remember some of the items put forward in the Liberal Party policy speech. I hope that we will not see the same pathetic performance by the Liberal Party and its leader this session as we experienced in the last session. What did the Leader of the Liberal Party (Dr Edwards) say during the election campaign? He said, "Give us the numbers." His theme was, "If only we had the numbers, think what we could do for this State!" Of course, the electors of Queensland saw through this fake and voted accordingly, but obviously his grandstanding is going to continue.

Only last week we saw an outburst which shows just what the Liberal Party intends to do in the future. I refer to the proposed demolition of the Hoffnung building in Charlotte Street. To me, that outburst was typical of the Liberal posturing that goes on in this House. As usual, they are having \$2 each way. On the occasion of the demolition of the Bellevue, I recall at about 2 o'clock in the morning the honourable member for Pine Rivers parading in front of a stack of microphones and television cameras crying and saying, "I am going to resign from the Liberal Party. As soon as I get the opportunity, I am going to resign. I am getting out; I am finished." But, of course, when the light of dawn appeared he realised what he had said in front of the television cameras and reneged on his promise.

The would-be conservationists in the Liberal Party annoy me. In the 18 months since the demolition of the Bellevue, these Liberal members have had the chance to introduce legislation to protect some of the historic buildings in this city. Why can we not have legislation similar to that in New South Wales, Victoria and other States to ensure that our historic buildings are preserved?

I want to ask all the Liberal back-benchers, Ministers and former Ministers a question that a lot of people in Queensland have asked me. It is this: even though the Liberals lost only two seats and their numbers are essential for the continuation of the coalition Government, would you say that copping the loss of a Cabinet position shows strength and courage? Can Liberal members answer that question? They lost only two seats, yet they lost a Cabinet position. That is the type of question people are asking about these great Liberals.

During the 1970s the Wilbur Smith report on transportation was released with a great fanfare of trumpets by the then Minister for Transport, Sir William Knox. One section of that report related to railway electrification. It seems to have been pigeon-holed, yet it is the one section of the report that I think should have been acted upon. I refer to the section of the report dealing with the underground loop. It was estimated at that time that with a loop line another 40 000 people would use the railway network. Like electrification, this matter has gone on for years and nothing has been done about it. When a loop line is constructed we will finish up paying through the nose for it.

We in the Opposition believe that an investigation into an underground rail scheme should be commenced immediately. I see that the Minister for Health, who would have liked to have been the Transport Minister, is nodding his head in approval.

One of the greatest drawbacks with the present railway network is that a large area of the city is not within reach of the railways for many public servants. For instance, staff working at Parliament House would have a big hike each day from and to Roma Street Station or Central Station.

Mr Milliner: Mr Austin would not need the train as he has a nice flash car.

Mr DAVIS: He is driving around in an LTD. When I referred before to the Labor Party's being in office, somebody interjected and said "Hope!". Who would have thought three years ago that the member for Wavell would have ever made the ministry? There has to be some sort of chance for everybody.

Mr Austin: You can be sure of one thing: you'll never make it.

Mr DAVIS: I shall make the Minister my inspiration. If he can make the ministry, anybody in this House can.

Mr Austin: Jealousy is a curse.

Mr DAVIS: It is not so much a matter of jealousy. The Minister for Health had a hairy chest a couple of months ago, but it is gone now.

To get people out of their motor vehicles and onto the railway system, the Metropolitan Transit Authority should consider providing a free bus service in the Brisbane city area. It was suggested to me that such buses should be of a distinctive colour. One bus could leave from Roma Street Station and one from Central Station and travel in a circular route, linking up with the ferries at Edward Street and Creek Street.

Mr Austin: That would be very good if you are not colour blind.

Mr DAVIS: I suppose the Minister should know; after all, he is Minister for Health.

The big problem with ferries is that they terminate away from the heart of the city. A number of potential users are lost because of the points at which the ferries terminate.

Together with the free bus service in the city area there should be a one-ticket fare. Such a fare could be introduced if there was co-ordination between the various transport bodies—and that is exactly what the Metropolitan Transit Authority is supposed to be all about.

I turn now to a transport matter affecting Burpengary and Narangba. Honourable members may recall that last Thursday I asked the new Transport Minister (Mr Lane) a question about the fare structure on the suburban railway network. The Minister gave the House the impression that he had such knowledge of his portfolio that he could answer the question without notice, and he proceeded to pour water on the suggestion that railway passengers from Burpengary and Narangba have been discriminated against by the Railway Department in comparison with other users of the railways.

I shall give an example. Narangba and Beenleigh are an equivalent distance from the city, yet there is a fare difference of 20c. Burpengary and Ipswich are an equivalent distance from the city, yet there is a fare difference of 25c. The Minister gave the answer, rather facetiously, that these areas are treated as non-suburban. I suggest that Beenleigh is not exactly a suburb of Brisbane and Ipswich is definitely not a Brisbane suburb, but people from those areas get benefits on railway travel.

On that occasion the Minister for Transport said that he would take questions without notice. To get the record straight—I certainly would not ask any Government member a Dorothy Dix question. I have not fallen that far in the political field. I had a number of newspapers report that I would be asking such a question on behalf of the people of Narangba and Burpengary.

Mr Austin: It was in the "Telegraph".

Mr DAVIS: It does not matter which newspaper it was in, as long as the people get the reduced fare. Obviously they are not going to get a reduction. Like previous Ministers for Transport, when it comes to giving benefits to the travelling public the present Minister for Transport is very Scrooge-like.

Now that we have a genius of a Transport Minister in our midst, I hope that he will be able to answer a question that I will pose to him about the Brunswick Street Station, which is on the border of the electorates of Merthyr and Brisbane Central.

Mr Wharton: Are you speaking to the amendment?

Mr DAVIS: Isn't the Minister listening? As Minister for Works and Housing, I know he is involved in a lot of woodwork, but I thought he would be able to absorb things a little better.

Both the Minister and I are responsible for the Brunswick Street Station. I am sure that even the illustrious Leader of the House would be aware that I pushed, argued

and requested that the Government should honour a promise originally made by a former Minister for Transport (Sir Gordon Chalk) in the 1969-1970 era that when a new complex was constructed at the Brunswick Street Railway Station escalators would be provided. When the project was completed, I asked him, "Where are the escalators?", and he started to huff and puff and say that the cost of them was too high. He went on further to say that when there were more passengers, or perhaps when electrification was introduced, the escalators may be constructed.

Since then I have made the same request of the late Keith Hooper, Sir William Knox and Mr Ken Tomkins, all of whom have been Ministers for Transport. All of those Ministers reneged on that promise. All the requests have been denied. As the Brunswick Street Station is in the electorate of the present Minister for Transport, I hope that he will visit the station and go down the Katmandu-like steps that are there. I also hope that I will be able to report back to the Valley Business Council that my co-member for the area will be able to make a promise that has been reneged on by former Ministers for Transport.

The subject of priority roads has been raised, particularly with the recent amendment of regulations in regard to T-junctions. I have no objection to that amendment.

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

Mr DAVIS: Before the luncheon adjournment I was discussing priority roads, the standardisation of signs and the new T-junction traffic regulation which came into force a little over a week ago. All those measures should help to avoid accidents. However, whilst these measures have assisted motorists using main roads, unfortunately residents in sections of many suburbs are experiencing a great deal of difficulty getting out of their own streets or localities. I instance Davidson Street, Newmarket, which carries a reasonable amount of traffic. Situated in a residential area, in it is a deaf school and institution and a large trucking firm, and there is a church on the corner of Davidson Street and Enoggera Road. The area to which the street gives access is more or less a peninsula, being bounded on three sides by Enoggera Creek, leaving only one way out for traffic—Enoggera Road. The result of the new regulation is that residents wanting to leave the area in busy times have to depend on courteous motorists to allow them to enter Enoggera Road.

Whilst talking about T-junctions, I will mention my own street, Earle Street, Windsor, which I suppose is even worse than Davidson Street. In the morning when one tries to enter Lutwyche Road, one more or less has to be invited into the traffic; otherwise it is a case of risking life, limb and motor vehicle in an attempt to cross six lanes of traffic. Whilst it is a good idea to introduce priority roads and T-junctions, the cold, simple fact is that more planning should

be done so that the rights of those who are affected are protected. Recently the Press carried a story about a number of Kenmore residents who are suffering from the same problem.

Mr Kruger: What you are saying is that it was an ad hoc decision.

Mr DAVIS: That is right. It has not been planned right through. Someone has said, "Righto, we'll get rid of the right-of-way rule", which in many cases was a problem. Whilst these new measures have been adopted throughout the country—and we all support that—I believe that, before such decisions are rushed into, more thought should be given to protecting all sections of the motoring public.

When I was doing some research the other day I came across an old "Hansard" dated December 1896.

Mr Kruger: That was before your time.

Mr DAVIS: Yes, well before my time. It was more in the honourable member's time.

It reported the opening of Parliament.

Mr Akers interjected.

Mr DAVIS: I spoke about the member for Pine Rivers earlier. I am glad he has come in. I mentioned how he was when the Bellevue building was demolished. There he was in front of all the microphones, crying and whinging. There were so many microphones that we couldn't see his face. He was crying and wailing, "Look, I'm going to resign from the Liberal Party first thing in the morning." He was trying to be emotional and trying to make the tears come to his eyes. However, when the light of dawn came and he had a chance to think about it and discuss it, he said, "What have I done? I almost resigned." He soon took it back. He is always big noting himself in this Parliament, but when it comes to the crunch he is always missing. He would have the courage of a small ant.

Mr Hooper: He is a newly married man. He has commitments.

Mr DAVIS: I am not one to discuss that sort of thing. I should not mention it, but I did notice the newly married couple with their tea and scones at the function on the lawn the other day.

I intend now to discuss the union problems facing the community, and I know that the honourable member for Pine Rivers will wish to discuss them further with me later. The "Hansard" report that I have in front of me relates to a motion requesting the House to "resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider an address to the Governor praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed in the supplementary Estimates for the present year the sum of £250 for Henry Walker in compensation for the loss of his two hands" when firing a salute from a gun in 1871 for the opening of Parliament. When the House divided, there were

12 ayes and 28 noes, the 28 noes being Conservatives, and the motion was lost. That leads me on to what I am about to say.

Mr Akers: It is a continuing story.

Mr DAVIS: It is a continuing story, all right, because I intend to discuss union matters.

As a former union official, I am very much concerned about the union-bashing that seems to be becoming prevalent. The media have been having a field day, with person after person having a belt at unions. Nothing annoys me more than the hysteria being built up by Conservatives in an attempt to paint unionists as irresponsible, arrogant and disloyal Australians. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Mr Powell: Which guard are you—old or new?

Mr McKechnie: He is the mudguard.

Mr DAVIS: I am pleased that the honourable member for Carnarvon has interjected, because I intend speaking about his favourite society, the League of Rights.

No organisation in the history of Australia has done more than the union movement to improve the everyday conditions of the men and women of this country. Admittedly, there may be isolated instances of strikes that appear to be unjustified, and I am sure that every former union official on this side of the House could give examples of those. But the present attacks on the union movement are only instances of history repeating itself, because from the very outset the Labor movement has had to endure the same distorted and biased attacks.

I went back to 1896, and the example that I took related to workers' compensation. Workers' compensation is now generally accepted, but its introduction was due to the work of the union movement and the Labor movement in the political field. Only 80 years ago, which is not really very long ago, kids of 8, 9 and 10 worked in the mines. In fact, at the turn of the century people belonging to the working class were really only one step away from being serfs. The great improvements that have taken place in living conditions in this country have come about through the union movement, and I have been proud to be associated with that movement.

The most vocal critics of the union movement are those who have accepted every benefit that has been achieved by that movement. My experience has been—and I am sure that my colleagues will back me when I say this—that not one critic of the union movement has ever knocked back a pay increase. They may protest after taking a pay envelope, but they never give the money back.

Mr Prest: They are like Powell—they want everything from the union but will not pay dues.

Mr DAVIS: That is a good example. They want other people to do their fighting for them.

The union-bashing episode yesterday was a classic example of the point I am about to make. I would not mind if it had been a spontaneous reaction and people had said, "We want to protest against that." Those who are protesting against strikes should remember that it was the union movement that ensured that they would have the right to protest. I did not see the Gabby Horans, Charles Connollys or Barbara Bowers lining up three or four years ago when we were endeavouring to have the right of assembly and the right to march embodied in legislation. There was no sign of them whatsoever.

Let us look closely at the three people who were involved in this episode. You will recall, Mr Miller, that you were in the Chamber a number of years ago when I spoke about Gabby Horan's involvement with the Housewives' Association. I do not want to recall how undemocratically she rorted that association; I do not want to mention how she was responsible for its splitting into two sections, and I certainly do not want to raise the matter of her rorting the association to such an extent that she got a life-time presidency appointment.

Mr Hooper: If you have seen Mrs Horan on TV in the last couple of weeks, wouldn't you agree with me that she is mutton dressed as lamb, that she has pancake make-up of about an inch and a half thick?

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr DAVIS: I do not believe in attacking the woman personally but I would add that she always says that she is non-political.

Let us look more closely at this non-political woman who was involved in this episode. In the '70s she was the CMO candidate for the electorate of Brisbane.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: And a shocking one at that.

Mr DAVIS: Yes, and she was defeated two to one.

She was a Liberal candidate in 1963.

Mr Prest: Non-political?

Mr DAVIS: Yes, non-political against Col Bennett—as a Liberal candidate.

Suddenly she is a great supporter of the Premier, Johannes Bjelke-Petersen.

The honourable member for Carnarvon has a strong association with the League of Rights. Where was Gabby Horan last October? She was co-sponsor of a seminar at Wavell Heights with the infamous League of Rights. Who else attended the League of Rights seminar at that time? Not only were Gabby Horan and Eric Butler there, but also Mrs Flo Bjelke-Petersen, a senator-elect, who, if she is chosen on Thursday, will rort poor old Dr Sheil of a few dollars.

Let us now consider Charles Connolly.

Mr Ahern: Why do you smear anybody who disagrees with you?

Mr DAVIS: I am not smearing. I am glad that the honourable member for Landsborough raised the matter. What does he mean by "smearing"? All I am saying is that these people are supposedly non-political. They like to say that they are non-political, but they reveal where their true political allegiance lies.

Mr Warner interjected.

Mr DAVIS: Listen to that old whinger! The member for Toowoomba South is one of the greatest union-bashers we have ever seen.

Charles Connolly is always a champion politician-basher. He sacrificed his principles when he nominated for Sherwood as a politician-to-be. Unfortunately for him the people of Sherwood showed how much they thought of him by giving him a handful of votes. As a businessman he is probably a little biased, and that is why he is not so keen on unions.

The third organiser of the rally is a well-known commentator—if one watches such programs—Mrs Barbara Bowers. She just happens to support every Right-wing organisation in the community. She organised the Right to Life organisation and she supported our involvement in the rotten Vietnam war.

To be quite cynical, I would say that the anti-union bash yesterday would have been just a little Right-wing oriented.

I will now refer to an article by Hugh Lunn in this morning's "Australian". It is amazing that whenever there is confrontation between the Left and the Right the police always seem to be involved in collecting Left-wing supporters.

As an example, I shall relate what occurred a couple of years ago. I am sure that the honourable member for Wolston will support me in what I am saying. We took part in a Labour Day procession which ended at the Exhibition Ground. There was a bit of a dust-up between a couple of people there, which was sorted out by two officials of the union movement. However, from out of the blue, a member of the Special Branch charged in and wanted to arrest one of the persons. That is a classic example of what is occurring.

How can police, in all of the noise and confusion at demonstrations, hear offensive language and try to arrest somebody? Anybody who has been to a demonstration or a political meeting knows that many four-letter words and loud and obscene remarks are heard, yet suddenly, if the police want to use their powers, they charge in and arrest certain people for using obscene language.

I dub yesterday's protest as a shocking example of union-bashing and a demonstration of how a divisive forum can separate a community. I am sure that, in saying that, I am speaking on behalf of all of my

colleagues on this side of the House. We want nothing to do with that sort of action.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Miller): Order! I call the honourable member for Aspley. I remind the House that this is the honourable member's maiden speech and I expect the usual courtesies to be extended to her.

Mrs NELSON (Aspley) (2.32 p.m.): On behalf of myself and the people of the Aspley electorate, I pledge allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and thank His Excellency the Governor, Sir James Ramsay, and his wife, Lady Ramsay, for their service to the Crown. Their warm friendliness and devotion to duty have won them the admiration of us all.

May I also, in his absence, congratulate Mr Speaker on his election to that high office. He has already extended to me every courtesy, as a new member, and I thank him for his kindness and assistance.

The electors of Aspley have given me the privilege of serving them in this Parliament. I thank them for their confidence in me and commit myself wholly to their service. Sadly, it is not a usual procedure for women to be elected to the Parliament of Queensland. Therefore, I believe it is important that honourable members understand a little of my background before entering the political arena.

I was born and reared in Queensland, mainly in Brisbane, and at Tara and Toowoomba. Despite my mother's being widowed when I was a very young child, her devotion and dedication enabled me to enjoy a childhood that was rich with the experience of pleasure and learning. In 1967 I completed a diploma course in radiography and subsequently worked at the Royal Brisbane Hospital, the Children's Hospital, and briefly in Sydney.

In 1968, I married John Arthur Nelson. At this point I pay tribute to my husband, who is not only a wonderful husband and father but also the best companion any woman could ask for in this life. John and I, with our family, have lived within the Aspley electorate for the most part of our married life. By living in this community, I have been able to learn its various needs and aspirations.

Our family has been actively involved in voluntary community work and, since the birth of our son David, in work for the disabled. It was this work that prompted my more active and vocal role in Queensland politics. I shall research that word later in my speech. In 1979 I commenced studies in arts at the University of Queensland, and I hope to major in history and government.

Before commenting on the Aspley electorate, I should like to pay a special tribute to the former member, Mr Fred Campbell. Fred is a giant among men. As the member for Aspley, he worked tirelessly to develop

a quality of life for his electors and their families. As a Minister, he managed his various portfolios with ability and sensitivity. His wife, Mac, is a true wife and companion, and was as much a servant of the people as was Fred Campbell himself. May they enjoy in retirement the peace and contentment they so richly deserve.

The electorate that I serve is a large, densely populated area with all of the special problems of city life. It is well served with excellent schools, a hospital, retirement villages, business houses, industrial centres, transport, etc., and the credit for that must go to Fred Campbell. The people living in the electorate are, in the main, motivated to care about their environment and to serve their community, so that Aspley is a visually bright, clean and attractive area and community service groups are numerically strong and very active. Despite these virtues, the area is noisy and the roads are overcrowded and unsafe for pedestrians, with exhaust fumes being a part of daily life. Under the surface of apparent affluence is a growing number of families trapped in an environment of poverty through unemployment, chronic illness and, in some cases, a lack of life management skills.

I believe that the Aspley electorate is a microcosm of all the problems which will challenge us in this decade and beyond. With the expansion of the power of executive government and of the bureaucracy, with rapid advances in technology and with the onset of the so-called resources boom, many of our citizens feel left behind. Our nation is in grave danger of developing into a small "have" and a large "have-not" society. There is an atmosphere of greed and selfishness which pervades every strata of our society today, and I believe that this is leading to great division and instability in our society. With campaigns for tax evasion schemes assisting the already wealthy, on the one hand, and campaigns for higher wages for shorter working weeks on the other side, is it any wonder that many ordinary citizens are fearful of our future?

In her history of the development of the role of women in English politics, Sylvia Pankhurst speaks with great affection and respect of her father, Dr Richard Pankhurst. He was a fore-runner of the modern Liberals, and surely would have won high office in his country but for his untimely death at the age of 46. Speaking at the opening of one of the first mechanics institutes, he said—

"The production of a nation's wealth is presided over by the laws of nature, but the distribution of a nation's wealth is presided over by the hearts and minds of men."

Despite the industrial and technological revolutions of the 19th and 20th centuries, that statement is still largely true, and I congratulate His Excellency the Governor for

drawing to our attention our responsibilities in this area during his Opening Speech to this Parliament, when he said—

"With mineral resources promising long-term security, the Government's role is to husband these resources wisely, converting them into jobs, income and improved living standards".

It is to some of the more urgent problems of the 1980s that I now wish to turn my attention.

With the abolition of death duties in Queensland and with the added attraction of a sub-tropical climate, thousands of elderly people and many of those approaching retirement have moved to our State. I do not believe that we have even begun to realise the stresses placed on our service facilities by this influx of permanent citizens. This is particularly critical in areas such as the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast, which will require massive capital expenditure to cope with this growth and with the change in the age of their populations.

Between 1969 and 1979 the number of aged pensioners in Australia doubled, and the amount of money paid out to them overall as at 30 June 1979 was \$63 million per week, which represented 10.9 per cent of the 1979-80 Budget. Both Federal and State Governments now provide extra assistance to the elderly in the form of rent allowance, home care services, Meals on Wheels, senior citizens' residential and day centres, subsidies for nursing homes, telephone concessions, rate concessions, free medical and pharmaceutical services and some free hospital services.

A recent radio and television survey in Brisbane showed that despite this apparent financial security, despite the closeness of city life and the comparatively easy access to its facilities, many elderly people are lonely and afraid. The biggest and most vulnerable group are aged widows on limited incomes. Since this whole group of the elderly will increase by 28 per cent by the year 2000, it requires a much greater awareness of responsibilities in families and by Governments, particularly if we are even to start to find practical solutions to this growing problem.

Because this burden will fall more heavily on the Queensland Government, it is important that we begin now to plan for services which will undoubtedly be required by 1990 and beyond. Our country hospitals should be divided into acute and nursing-home sections so that elderly people requiring full-time nursing care can stay close to their families instead of having to leave them and live thousands of miles away from them. Individual families must be encouraged to take more responsibility for the care of their parents where there is no serious disability other than age itself.

The Government must ensure that residential centres for the aged are as home-like as possible, and must enable those residents

to enjoy as much privacy and independence as possible, whilst still providing essential supervision and security. The Government must also ensure that building and health regulations are strictly adhered to, and regular and unannounced inspections of such centres should be made to maintain a high quality of care. I believe this particular facet of the care of the elderly requires urgent attention. Present funding arrangements are forcing elderly people to move into residential centres long before it is really necessary in order to avail themselves of nursing-home facilities later. This has led to an acute shortage of such accommodation and the position should be re-examined immediately.

Building codes should be altered to allow the construction of small granny flats adjacent to family homes. This allows elderly parents to live close to their families but to maintain their own independence, with both groups maintaining their privacy. Centres which encourage elderly citizens to draw together for support and companionship should receive much greater support from the State Government. Institutions of learning should have courses which include the teaching of special skills required in the care and treatment of the aged. Most essential is the need for all of us to plan as far as possible for our own retirement.

I would now like to draw the attention of the House to another challenge of the 1980s, and it is a special interest dear to my heart—the care of the disabled. This is a much smaller group but it is growing rapidly. Because of the wide range of disabilities (physical, emotional and intellectual) in our society, there is great diversity of thought as to what are the best ways to assist disabled people and their families. The one common thread is the need for our whole society to recognise that disabled people are an integral part of our society, with the same needs and aspirations as any other citizens.

The greatest disability such people face is other people's attitudes towards them. Somehow they are made to feel less than whole beings, as if a physical or intellectual handicap deprives them of the normal human feelings of love, hate, etc. It is therefore, I believe, the greatest responsibility of Government in this decade to help break down those barriers of ignorance between the disabled and the rest of the community. Apart from a change in attitude, there need to be radical changes in the provision of present services. It is neither suitable nor acceptable to have permanently disabled people as patients in hospitals. It is wrong for their care to be solely nurse-based, although good nursing care is vital to the progress of some physically disabled people.

In a speech to a large group of parents of retarded children and adults, I referred to them and their children as "crimeless

victims" being punished by society for something for which they were not responsible. This simple statement evoked such a response from the audience that it brought home to me the need for our whole community to help share the burden such families carry.

This past decade of the 1970s has seen many advances in financial assistance to the disabled by the Federal Government, with the introduction of the Handicapped Persons Act, the Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act, extensions to the Social Service Act and the introduction of the handicapped child's allowance, amongst others.

Such change, I regret, has been much slower in Queensland. Many voluntary organisations still carry the full responsibility for the delivery of services which are quite outside their charter and which places enormous strains on their limited access to resources.

It is somehow undignified that disabled people have to rely for their daily needs on art unions and beauty quests. During his term as Minister for Health, Dr Edwards's visionary approach to the needs of the disabled led to the establishment of the Division of Intellectually Handicapped Services within our Department of Health. The response to this service has been so great that case loads are increasing by over 600 a year. With the ceiling placed on employment by the Public Service Board, this division is stretched far beyond its resources and is able to offer only token assistance to many families. As well, many available residential centres are overcrowded, underequipped and understaffed. Despite this, they have long waiting lists.

Stagnation in this division is also due to an overall shortage of funds, the failure of the Public Service Board to allow job sharing, and some lack of understanding within the community as to the role of the division.

In spite of these setbacks, Queensland is still a pace-setter in the area of special education programs for very young disabled people and in the area of alternative living centres for handicapped adults, both of which offer our best hope for the future. If Governments can provide appropriate education courses, access to vocational and tertiary training for disabled people and support for voluntary groups providing welfare services for the disabled, and can help change community attitudes to the disabled, they will have significantly helped to share the burden.

Discussing the needs of the disabled creates an awareness of the critical state of our nation's most overriding problem—the carnage on our roads. In his maiden speech to this Parliament in 1966, Mr Charles Porter, as he then was, said—

"It is something that constitutes a daily—even an hourly—threat of death and mutilation: a threat which makes no discrimination as regards sex or age. The smallest child, the most important citizen, all are grim grist to its mill."

Mr Porter went on to comment on how unfavourably our society compared with other nations in our efforts to minimise this dreadful toll. How do we fare in 1981? I suggest to the House: only a little better. Our efforts are left largely to the goodwill of statutory bodies with limited resources, and to the social conscience of the Press, which gave us "Campaign 550", which was so successful in 1980.

Again, the problem is one of attitudes and awareness. Nothing short of a radical change in driving instruction techniques, better roads, lowering of speed limits, safer cars, strict adherence to the traffic code, and the rigid enforcement of the laws relating to the consumption of alcohol and driving, with a massive community education program, will bring about a real lowering of our road toll.

In 1969 the number of motor vehicles registered in Queensland was 674 226 and the number of deaths was 556. In 1980 the number of vehicles registered was 1 302 477 and the number of deaths was 555. Before making the obvious assumption that in relative terms the number of deaths has reduced, it must be remembered that compulsory seat-belt legislation was introduced in that decade. That decision has undoubtedly resulted in the saving of thousands of lives and the Government is to be commended for it. However, one only had to hear the Minister for Transport this morning commenting on the fact that about 30 per cent of people do not wear their seat-belts to understand why our road toll is still so high. At this stage I wish also to comment on the smooth introduction of "T-day" throughout Australia, which showed some moves by Governments to co-ordinate their attempts to reduce this toll.

But there is no real evidence of a change in driver attitudes and the figure of 555 deaths must be totally unacceptable to a society as small as ours. The majority of these deaths were of young people whose lives had hardly begun. In many cases they were inexperienced drivers of powerful cars, and in many cases also alcohol consumption and speed were the major factors in the accidents which led to their deaths. The most frightening aspect of this carnage is that for every one death there are three people permanently disabled. They become a great burden to their families and to the whole community, which shares the burden for their care. Their lives are too precious to waste.

It is the responsibility of all members of the community but, in particular, our responsibility to see that organisations attempting to deal with this problem are, firstly, listened to and, secondly, provided with support and resources to provide the program which can successfully conquer it. As Mr. Porter said in 1966—

"We are at war with the motor vehicles . . . Bold, courageous action to win a war that at present we are losing, must start here in this House."

Although I am a new member in this Chamber, I have been a keen observer of the political process for some years and, in more recent times a student of its process. Most of what I have spoken about in this speech has related to community attitudes and awareness, and to how the actions of Parliament can assist our citizens to develop a sense of pride in their community and to be more aware of, and concerned about, the challenges our society faces in the future. It will not respond to those challenges if the institution of Parliament itself is neither understood nor respected.

I have never believed that this House was merely a facility for the sensation-seeker to titillate the baser human emotions. This is the place where the power of princes and potentates is balanced by the voices of all of the people. Anything that is done to reduce that power of the voices of all the people breaks that balance and has serious consequences for the future of parliamentary democracy. In my term as the representative of the people of Aspley I shall do everything in my power to see that that balance is never broken.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Akers): Order!

Mrs NELSON: I thank all honourable members, particularly Mr Gallagher and Mr Sheen, for their kind attention and look forward with enthusiasm to participating fully in the decision-making processes of this Parliament.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the member for Surfers Paradise, I point out that this is the honourable member's maiden speech and I would ask members of the Opposition especially to pay him the usual courtesies.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (2.52 p.m.): It is with a great sense of responsibility and humility that I stand before you today, Mr Deputy Speaker, as the member for Surfers Paradise. In doing so, I express my loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and to her most worthy representative, His Excellency the Governor. I join with my colleagues in congratulating the Speaker on his re-election to that high office. In doing so, I thank him, his staff and the officers of the Parliament for the goodwill, patience and invaluable assistance that has been extended to me since my election as the youngest member of the new Parliament.

I am very much aware of the need for enthusiasm to be tempered with responsibility and restraint, and it is my aim that my contribution to both the Parliament and the Government of Queensland be a constructive one. I am honoured at the support I have received from the electors of Surfers Paradise. I was greatly encouraged by my topping the primary vote at 42 per cent in a keenly contested four-way contest. The election result clearly indicated that my

electorate is coalition oriented and will not tolerate disloyalty in government. I can assure the Premier and the Deputy Premier of my deep personal commitment to loyal and positive participation in the decision-making process—and of my respect for the great need for Government solidarity and Government unity. It is an assurance that I believe is important and necessary in respect of all Government members for the viable and proper function of the democratic process.

However, I think we need to be reminded at times that good government operates to serve the people, not vice versa. Government is a means to an end; it is not an end in itself. It was Churchill who once remarked that we must beware of creating a society where no-one counts for anything, save a politician or a public servant, where enterprise gains no reward and thrift no privileges. In essence, in that statement he warned against the threat to the free enterprise ethic, and the majority of us in this place subscribe to that philosophy. From time to time we should reflect on our privileged position of being the last real bastion of free enterprise government in this land and on the inherent responsibilities that accompany that privilege.

This great spirit is epitomised in the electorate of Surfers Paradise. If you wish to be a witness to what tax cuts, incentive and initiative can achieve, Mr Deputy Speaker, then try to assess the boom on the Gold Coast in the wake of the abolition of death and gift duties; try to assess the number of jobs created, the industry encouraged, and the peace of mind attained. Entrepreneurial imagination has been fired to an unprecedented extent, and this has come about because of less government, not because of more government.

The State coalition has paved the way for this unparalleled growth and development. These views are shared by the tens of thousands of new Queenslanders who have found a Government and a Government leader in which they can place their faith. There has been a 25 per cent increase in enrolments in my electorate alone over the past three years. Since 1977, 25 000 additional voters have been enrolled on the Gold Coast, and, significantly, four members of the political party to which I belong have been returned to this Parliament from the region.

Probably I am the only member of the House who has constituents who may live in a 40-storey accommodation tower or on a dairy farm, who represents an area in which high-rise development exceeds the combined totals of high-rise development in Sydney and Melbourne, and where there is an incredible diversity of problems, challenges and, most importantly, people. An increasingly cosmopolitan atmosphere has engendered a sizable community of diverse ethnic cultures.

The life-blood of the Surfers Paradise electorate is tourism, and for the four years prior to my election that great industry has been

my life. I appreciate the recognition of the Premier and the Government of the importance of this great job-creating industry and look forward to working closely with the new Minister.

Tourism is the world's second-largest industry, with an increase of nearly 30 per cent in the number of international visitors coming to Australia in the last year. Industry estimates place Queensland's share over that 12-month period at a base level of \$400m. Research undertaken by the Bureau of Industrial Economics indicates that an additional 1 400 jobs can be created with every 25 000 international tourists visiting the State, and that an extra one to two jobs can be created with every additional \$10,000 spent in the domestic tourist industry.

Tourism will be the great employment generator of the '80s and well into the next century, and we as a Government and a Parliament must capitalise on the extensive and profound benefits that will flow on to every sector of our community. As a member of the Government's committee and as parliamentary representative on the board of the Gold Coast Visitors' Bureau, I look forward to continuing to represent the tourist industry in my electorate.

I should like to touch briefly now on one specific matter that I know is concerning people in the tourist industry in the electorate of Surfers Paradise. I have been alarmed and concerned at repeated attempts by the Gold Coast City Council to implement a bed tax or tourist levy. I understand that it is now examining differential rating as a means of getting around the Local Government Act to tax the tourist. Like a bad dream, this proposal surfaces from time to time to haunt the tourist industry on the Gold Coast, an industry that is still predominantly small-business oriented. Assurances given last year by the Minister for Local Government and the then Minister for Tourism that any such move would be blocked was a responsible and practical reaction. I urge the Government to continue to monitor the position, as the imposition of such a tax could well sound the death-knell of an industry.

While I appreciate the council's dilemma in using ratepayers' money to fund some tourist requirements, I state clearly that discriminatory taxes are not, and never have been, the answer. Arguments in support of them are biased and sectional and totally ignore the proven flow-on benefits through an entire community that the tourist industry creates. It should also be noted that the tourist industry and accommodation houses are ratepayers, too, and that a significant proportion of council rate revenue comes from high-rise accommodation complexes. In addition, as well as normal rates the Gold Coast City Council already imposes a \$15 a year per room levy on accommodation houses. When these factors are taken into consideration it is clear that there is no justification, economically or morally, for a bed tax concept to be pursued, or for a differential rating proposal to be advanced.

The imposition of such a tax, whatever the name that may be used to promote it, could cause considerable damage to the industry, to employment opportunities and to investment potential. To contemplate taxing people for holidaying on the Gold Coast is not acceptable and is deserving of total community rejection. On behalf of the industry in my electorate, I thank the Minister for Local Government for his actions and statements on this question in the past, and trust that we will continue to make it perfectly clear that any such move is unacceptable to the Government of Queensland.

The Queensland Government will shortly make certain decisions in regard to Queensland's first casino. I express my confidence in the Cabinet committee currently examining the matter, but firmly express the view that such a complex should be located in the electorate of Surfers Paradise. It is practicable and logical that a centre so closely associated with leisure, relaxation and tourism should be the venue for such a facility.

It was suggested by the Minister for Local Government initially, and many others since then, that a sizeable amount of Government revenue from the casino operation be redirected into areas such as beach replenishment and tourist promotion. Those are commendable proposals and I know that Cabinet will take on board the great benefits that can be achieved in these vital areas of community funding.

I am confident that a sound and properly run casino operation would be a great asset. I believe that in the long term we will have a far superior casino operation, with the greatest possible benefit for both the taxpayer and the tourist, than could have resulted had we rushed in without detailed and proper consideration. Building on the successes and failures of overseas and interstate operations, we could have the finest casino in the world. I draw an analogy with the aviation industry in making that assessment. Members will recall that it was the British Comet that was the first pure jet airliner, but it was the American Boeing company that capitalised on that development and prospered.

On the question of aviation and airline operations as they affect the people in the area I represent, I submit that a direct air link between the Gold Coast and New Zealand is crucial for continued tourist development and expansion. Short-haul international flights operating into and out of Coolangatta are, I believe, justifiable, necessary and inevitable. Last year 105 000 New Zealanders visited Queensland. The majority of those tourists visited the Gold Coast. There has been a great deal of interest on both sides of the Tasman in the possibility of a trans-Tasman link. In view of the Federal Government's decision to permit TAA and Ansett to fly from Hobart and Christchurch, there can be no bureaucratic, legal or moral objection to this Gold Coast

move. The Federal Transport Minister is sympathetic and this proposal is now entirely possible in the short term.

On 25 January last, the Qantas 747 SP City of Gold Coast-Tweed easily handled the Coolangatta runway. I am told that with some structural improvements to the tarmac the 747 SP could operate into and out of Coolangatta. With provision in the new terminal building for a Customs and Immigration area, the time is ripe to make the move. Coolangatta is the second-fastest-growing airport in Australia, with an increase in traffic now in excess of 27 per cent per year. Last year, 606 000 passengers used this airport. That was 130 000 more than used Hobart, which has been granted international status by the Federal Government. Coolangatta has achieved these traffic figures despite what has been undeniably the most disgraceful terminal building in the country. Its replacement is long overdue. The long-awaited new terminal will be capable of handling six 727-200 jets simultaneously and is due to open on 1 July next. Now is the time to act on the vital and urgent question of short-haul international flights into and out of Coolangatta. I commend the Minister for Tourism on his active representations to Canberra in this regard.

The provision of additional funding for regional tourist authorities also is an important matter affecting the Gold Coast and the electors of Surfers Paradise. I should like to support the suggestion that the limit be increased from the present \$25,000 level, on an incentive basis, up to an additional \$25,000. There is increased action in some other States in this regard, and I commend the proposal to the Minister.

The small business sector is an integral and vital component in the economy of my electorate. There is increasing concern in small business circles at the amount of red tape constantly frustrating small businessmen, especially at Federal Government level. In Canada, for example, it has been estimated that the direct financial cost involved for small businesses in dealing with bureaucracy now exceeds \$10m a year.

In the Australian context, I particularly mention the Australian Bureau of Statistics. While the ABS has an important function, at times it becomes a prime offender. In fact, in many respects this Federal Government body has gone completely overboard. Last year, in the electorate of Surfers Paradise and generally throughout many areas in this State, the bureau distributed the most monstrous, unjustifiable, irrelevant, time-consuming and arrogant survey that I have ever seen. It was entitled, "The 1980 Economic Census."

The bureau proceeded to bluff, bludgeon and intimidate, under threat of prosecution, hundreds of small businesses into completing this complex business analysis, with the due date being just after the end of the last financial year. Many of the questions were

personal and required detailed scrutiny by an accountant. Many businesses had already lodged their books with accountants for the preparation of income tax returns; hence the required information was not readily available. Objections lodged with the bureau received little or no sympathy.

This is a prime case of the Canadian experience and of a Federal Government body flexing obscure, bureaucratic muscle and causing expense, hardship and excessive intrusion at an already busy and difficult time of the year for the small business community. It was an inexcusable abuse of bureaucratic privilege and, I am informed, resulted in discussions between the Queensland Small Business Development Corporation and the Federal Minister concerned.

I am told that this particular statistical survey, when completed by an accountant, would cost in the vicinity of \$15 to \$20. Such excesses and burdens on the small business community are just not acceptable and I will be asking the Small Business Development Corporation to monitor any further such excesses by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

This House has already paid tribute to the late Sir Bruce Small. I would, however, as the National Party member following him as the member for Surfers Paradise, like to pay my own personal tribute to that great man. Sir Bruce Small's support and encouragement prior to his passing were instrumental in my decision to stand for election to Parliament. I mean no disrespect to my coalition colleagues when I express the regret that he did not see his party regain the seat that he held so dear.

Bruce Small will always be regarded as the father of the modern Gold Coast. There exists a need to perpetuate his memory. His vision goes on, his ideals endure and his dreams shall never die. Some permanent and appropriate monument must be established on the Gold Coast to this 20th century pioneer. If the Gold Coast City Council is not prepared to act, then I express the hope that the State Government will take the initiative.

The electorate of Surfers Paradise is not without problems. Many are growth related and fall within grey areas of Federal, State and local government administration. Public transport is a major concern, and as time goes on in certain respects it becomes increasingly inadequate. The elderly, the handicapped and the infirm are clearly disadvantaged, and the basic linear service along the Gold Coast Highway presents many problems. I look forward to the release of the Gold Coast Transportation Study. With the rapid development of the area the correct decisions will have to be made soon if we are to avoid chronic traffic congestion in the future. Even now at peak holiday periods traffic delays are frequent and pronounced. The problem is aggravated by

delivery vehicles at building sites and shopping centres, which are in turn hampered by too few loading bays.

Law and order is an important problem. I acknowledge the considerable efforts of the Minister for Police and the steps he has taken since his appointment to the Police portfolio, and I thank him for his assistance and co-operation. Despite some ill-informed and unreasonable criticism police numbers on the Gold Coast have been steadily increased since the State election. The Minister's announcement on 25 February of an additional eight officers will ease the situation, and I am pleased that this increase will continue over the next few months. The announcement last week of the building of a new multi-million-dollar police complex at Broadbeach was welcomed and appreciated by the electors of Surfers Paradise. The truth is that the Minister is delivering the goods in a difficult manpower and budgetary situation, and he should be commended for it. I regret that he has come under fire from the Surfers Paradise Chamber of Commerce. Statements issued under the chamber's banner have been unreasonable, unjustified, mischief-making and born of political antagonism towards the Minister. Indeed, it would appear that the Surfers Paradise Chamber of Commerce is being manipulated for political reasons by a former member of this Chamber. I am also of the opinion that the statements issued under the banner of the Surfers Paradise Chamber of Commerce do not reflect the generally held views of the business community in the electorate.

I am satisfied that all that can be done to relieve our police shortage is being done, and I congratulate the Minister. We are fortunate to have a competent, capable and dedicated Police Force, and the provision of the extra officers will greatly relieve their work-load. Because of the very nature of the electorate, a noticeable police presence is essential. I am informed that the expected increase in police numbers will permit permanent reintroduction of uniformed police officers walking the beat. As any member who has visited the United Kingdom will be aware, this is a very effective method both in terms of law enforcement and public relations.

A significant proportion of my constituents are retired. Many of them are pensioners. Particular problems face our older residents, and whilst in much of the electorate there is considerable wealth, this is by no means the general rule. I have initiated a liaison with senior citizen and pensioner groups in the electorate with a view to assisting them in areas that come under State Government jurisdiction. I assure them of my support.

The challenges that face us all, as members of this Forty-third Parliament, are immense ones, but they are not insurmountable. With reason, good will and dedication,

much can be achieved, and I express the hope that these ideals will prove effective in representing the electorate of Surfers Paradise.

Mr SCOTT (Cook) (3.14 p.m.): Right from the very beginning of this Forty-third Parliament we have heard the old refrain—it arose during the debate on proposed Opposition amendments to the motion relating to the Standing Orders of this Parliament—that back-benchers do not have sufficient opportunity to talk about matters of importance to their electorates. There is an old story about a member running into one of his constituents who said, “I voted for you—and I want you to bring this matter up in the Chamber.” Of course, what he did not know was that a member would not get too many opportunities to raise the matter that was so dear to his heart.

Mr Innes: Don't waste any.

Mr SCOTT: Our glamour boy over there is interjecting but I will not waste much time on him. He has a long way to go before he gets into the ministry. I am not going to waste my time; I am going to mention many matters that are important to my electorate. The Address-in-Reply debate gives a member an opportunity to do this. Except for a very few, we are all back-benchers in this Parliament. Three or four Ministers over there are the cabal of this Parliament; they have all the power. If we can believe the Press reports, a glaring example of that is the way the Minister for Mines and Energy has had his way. Of course, he is the protege of the Premier, and he will have his way in the Cabinet for a little time because he is pushing the Premier's barrow. Whether he will replace the Premier, only time will tell.

Mr Hooper: What would you know about mining?

Mr SCOTT: I know quite a lot about mining. The member for Archerfield is not in his usual place, but I will forgive that interjector.

The Address-in-Reply debate gives a member an opportunity to talk about various matters. I intend to follow the accepted norm and, on behalf of my electors, the people who reside in Cook, express loyalty to the Crown and to the Governor. I congratulate Mr Speaker on his re-election to that office. Mr Deputy Speaker, I also wish to congratulate you on your change in status. You are a newly married man. It is very interesting to note that two respected members of this Chamber are married to each other. I am handing out a few bouquets here. Some members who have been appointed to the ministry might prove that they are capable of looking after the interests of their electorates and their portfolios, but there are many dunderheads

in the ministry, and we on this side of the Chamber are quite able to take them on, and we intend to do so.

We are debating the Opening Speech which His Excellency the Governor delivered to the assembled members of this Chamber. I will seize on one word in that speech, namely, the word “stoicism”. His Excellency has travelled throughout Queensland. He said that he admires the stoicism displayed by those who are suffering privation in the primary industry sectors. They are stoical people. Where I come from, people must be stoical to survive because they do not receive much from the Government to help them on their way. All that many good people in the Cook electorate need is a minimum of assistance, and then they are very happy.

It is customary for members not to interject when a new member is making his or her maiden speech and that is a custom that I whole-heartedly support. However, the newly-elected member for Aspley delivered a tirade of complaints against her own Government. In her first speech to this Chamber she criticised the Government for what it is not doing. Then we had the speech from the member representing the gold-plated electorate of Surfers Paradise. It was rather interesting to see the rapport between him and the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police.

I have often noticed in the foyer on the third floor of this building an illuminated address from the people of the Burke shire. That shire is not in my electorate, but I wish to quote from the copperplated address. It is a remarkable artefact. I suggest to all members that they go down to the third floor and read the words that are printed in copper.

An Opposition Member: Terrific.

Mr SCOTT: I appreciate that interjection. It is terrific. The words virtually define the Far North. They read—

“A land of characters—black and white, isolated, separate yet sharing adversity. Individuals standing steadfast, united in determination to keep the outback ‘open’ for all future generations.”

Those words sum up the view of the people living up there. They ask for very little.

What we are actually debating today is the motion “That the following Address be presented to the Governor in reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency . . .” So the basis of the motion is the Governor's Speech. I referred earlier to the travels of Sir James Ramsay. In his Speech he said that he has travelled throughout the State. He has. I also notice that the Governor-General in his address to the nation, told us how much he has travelled among the good citizens of Australia. That is very good. But I urge Sir James Ramsay, in particular, to travel a little more. He should take off his white suit, get into a windy old four-wheel-drive vehicle and travel on

country roads. Let him get a little bit of dust on himself, on his equerry and his aide-de-camp and see what the roads are like in parts of the northern electorates, particularly in the Cook electorate.

An inverse relationship applies in Queensland: the further one is away from Brisbane the less support one gets from this Government. I will watch very closely the performance of Ministers like Bill Glasson, who comes from a western electorate and so far has shown some little interest in country affairs. That is good. Let us see a lot more interest from people such as the Minister for Lands and Forestry.

I was interested to receive a copy of a letter from a local magistrate who saw fit to write to the Mareeba Shire Council to complain about the condition of roads. He drives over them to administer justice. We hear many reasons why roads should be improved. There are economic analyses, and I will look at them before very long. There is also the humane attitude and the decentralisation point of view. It is simply a matter of supporting people who live in the country. The administration of justice in remote areas is held up by bad roads. That is a bad state of affairs. I was pleased to see the magistrate take the trouble to write about that subject.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you can see that the main thrust of my speech will be on roads. In outback areas that is what it is all about. In the Governor's Speech mention is made of the provision of \$260m for the funding of main roads in Queensland—a combination of Commonwealth and State funds. I also note that \$90m is to be spent on the Gateway Bridge over the Brisbane River—in the south-east corner of the State, an area which already has as many bridges, overpasses and underpasses as it needs. Looking from the Parliamentary Annexe one notes the complicated construction of bypasses and other road-works, any one of which would be gratefully received in my electorate.

Mr Burns: Only half of them.

Mr SCOTT: That is right; any small fraction of them.

Commonwealth funding was mentioned in the Governor's Speech. During the recent election campaign in Far North Queensland there was a flurry of activity over roads. On one of his rare flying visits the Premier said he was impressed by the complaints made to him. At least he said he was impressed; I really do not know whether he was or not. However, he asked that urgent action be taken by the local Main Roads engineers to provide him with estimates of construction costs or exceptional maintenance costs that he could present to his Federal colleague, Mr Fraser, in an effort to get more Commonwealth funding. I want to know the result of that discussion between Mr Bjelke-Petersen and Mr Fraser. I do not see any result from it. I know that a meeting of

some Government members has been convened in Brisbane by the Minister for Northern Development and Maritime Services, but that related only to flood repairs. Is that all we are looking at? Flood repair is a perennial problem. Honourable members opposite know that. Ministers go to the North on flying visits and make sympathetic noises, but they come back to Brisbane and forget about it all. Surely what action is necessary every year in connection with flood repairs is well known, and we do not need to go into it. But I want to know what Mr Bjelke-Petersen was told by his colleague Mr Fraser about the urgent submissions that were required from engineers in Far North Queensland. I will not wait for the answer with bated breath.

I now refer to a study of country roads in the Far North prepared by Coopers & Lybrand Services, engineering consultants, who were employed by the Cook Shire Council, Comalco and Aurukun Associates. The consultants were limited to an expenditure of \$15,000, which is not very much to prepare a complicated engineering survey. The consultants evaluated the road from the top of the Desailly Range, which will be the end of the sealed section of the Peninsula Development Road, to Weipa, a distance of 560 km. A cost-benefit study was carried out. For the benefit of those who may not be aware of the meaning of that term, it simply means that engineers calculate the cost of road construction needed to upgrade a road to a certain standard. They then determine the benefits by applying certain economic criteria. They divide one by the other and, if the result comes out at greater than unity it means that there is economic benefit. It is simply an economic analysis, not one based on some of the other criteria that I would take into account. If the equation is greater than one there is merit in upgrading the road.

The consultants looked at production and industry in the area—cattle, mining, tourism and so on. There could be as many as 20 000 head of cattle come out of the Peninsula area in one year. Because of the headings that were used in determining the economic benefits, the actual money involved in mining is not known. Mining is a vast industry in the Peninsula. Needless to say, some facts and figures were obtained from Comalco, and the consulting engineers were able to put a value on mining, but that is not the only value that could be put on it. Tourism is much more open-ended. It is impossible to determine the value to be placed on tourism.

One heading, "Other items", includes accident costs, time-saving, passenger comfort, defence requirements, animal disease controls and access to Aboriginal and other communities. How are those things to be quantified? Of course, they cannot be. The consultants carried out a limited cost-benefit analysis. The total cost for a bitumen surface providing trafficability for 11 months of the

year over that 560 km from the top of Desailly Range to Weipa works out at \$126m. I am not going to ask for that total amount. It would leave a fair-sized hole in the fairly meagre amount of \$260m that I referred to before. That is not on.

The engineers came up with a value greater than unity for the section from the Desailly Range to Lakeland Downs and a figure slightly less than unity from Lakeland Downs to Laura, a total distance of 152 km. It is quite feasible to upgrade the road over that section.

As expected, this study leaves many gaps. I mentioned vehicle damage. I am sure that the engineers carrying out this study—they had only \$15,000 to spend on telephone calls and so on—must have contacted the wrong hauliers. I am regularly telephoned by people who have sustained serious damage to vehicles on the road from Mareeba or Mt Carbine—take any point—to Cooktown, Laura and Coen. They are the places readily accessible to those who are prepared to sustain serious vehicle damage. A rig used to haul cattle or goods out of that area costs \$100,000. I have been assured by many hauliers that damage amounting to \$1,000 can occur on one trip. I notice that the reference to those contacted does not include Telecom. At one stage last year a Telecom crane turned on its side on the Laura Bridge. How does one quantify such incidents?

My secretary told me a little while ago that she received a telephone call from a haulier who ran into someone on the Byerstown Range, probably because he could not see the other vehicle through the dust. He drives an articulated rig, and he has to put his front wheels up the bank to get the back of the vehicle around the S-bend on the Byerstown Range. He rang and asked, "What are you going to do about it?" What can I do? I can speak here and hope that the words do not fall on deaf or uncaring ears. I can telephone the Main Roads Department—and I asked my secretary to do that—to ask what it is going to do about it.

I have referred at some length to the study by the consulting engineers because there are no studies available from the Main Roads Department. It does not publish its studies on what is needed for these roads. They form part of the data on which decisions are made, but they are not accessible to the public. We do not know what criteria are applied to those evaluations.

I noted that there is little in His Excellency's Speech that is of advantage to ordinary Queenslanders. The first seven paragraphs are simply soft-soaping, telling us what wonderful people his Government members are. From that point 13 paragraphs are devoted to coal-mining. The thrust of this Government's policies simply lead to the exploitation of coal.

The Government tries to tell us that the goodies from mining flow on to the people of Queensland. I am not against mining, big or small; I am certainly in favour of small mining. I have some reservations about the total value of big mining.

Weipa is in my electorate, and the mining there is a big operation. Honourable members opposite will not convince people who live in Weipa that they get many tangible benefits from the Government as a result of the mining at Weipa. They receive a flow-on of benefits from Comalco itself, because they are negotiated by the unions there—the much maligned groups against whom the fizz of a march took place in Brisbane yesterday. The unions negotiate constructively with the company, and they do get something good for the town; but very little comes from the Government.

Mr Goleby: You have not improved in the last three months.

Mr SCOTT: I have improved sufficiently to deal with the honourable member.

During the remainder of my speech, I intend referring to some notes in which I have commented on the various references in the Governor's Opening Speech to matters that would be of benefit to people living in Far North Queensland. First, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned the Burdekin Dam and said that the reference in the speech was probably a hoax and a sham. I note the words used—that there is now "a basis of agreement" with the Commonwealth over a 1983 start. That 1983 rings a bell. I wonder what is familiar about that. Could it be an election year?

The second point that I make relates to the setting-up of a land data bank. By using that data bank, is the ordinary citizen of Queensland going to be able to tell which land in Queensland is foreign-owned? I very much doubt whether that will be the case. The honourable member for Isis should not nod to me. The Government has had its own ineffectual committees looking into the matter and trying to discover what land is owned by foreign companies, but it still does not know.

Mr Powell: We do, you know.

Mr SCOTT: You do not. You still cannot tell me. I do not think that a land data bank, whatever good it might do, will tell us that.

Education was dismissed in a very small paragraph. That important matter was given little emphasis in His Excellency's speech. It said that the Government is "responding to changes in employment demands and opportunities". I ask the question: is the Government never ahead? No, it is not ever ahead. It may respond after a great deal of pressure; it may not. What about the Ahern report? Was that not worth a mention in His Excellency's speech? It certainly did not receive one.

As to police recruitment, I ask the relevant Minister: did he get the 300 policemen that the last Budget indicated he was going to recruit? I said at the time that that was a very optimistic figure, because I did not believe that the Government could recruit that number of people into the Police Force in that time. That shows the stupidity of policy statements that are made from the Government side of the Chamber.

Additional police certainly are needed in the Cook electorate. I have been pressing for white police to be stationed at Weipa South and Lockhart, and I have been asked by the people who live in those communities to do whatever I can to have white police stationed there. To my amazement, I discovered—and I will admit that it was at a late stage—that the cost of maintaining white police in those communities is borne by the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement. That means that the Budget figures for the Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs are reduced in order to provide police services. That is not right. If I press more strongly for more police in those areas, it means that the Minister's expenditure in other areas has to be reduced. Such a state of affairs is abhorrent.

For the fishing industry, a producer-controlled commodity marketing board is to be set up. I say, "At long last!" When Labor was in office in Queensland, it showed the way in marketing matters by setting up boards that worked, and only at this late stage is the fishing industry to receive the benefit of that experience.

What about the meat industry? Meat-marketing is in the too-hard basket.

The reference in the Opening Speech to the activities of the Queensland Housing Commission is to "providing more housing in areas of greatest need throughout the State". I know where that will be. It will be in the south-east corner, because that inverse-ratio formula to which I referred earlier certainly applies in the field of housing. Some houses and units will be built in the south-east corner of the State, but certainly they will not be built in remote areas. When I have asked about that, I have been told that the cost of building is so high that people will not be able to pay when the commission sets economic rentals. What a shocking state of affairs! Queenslanders who populate the remote areas are denied their rights as citizens because of the application of an economic test. That is not good enough. I urge the commission to apply different criteria—perhaps a sliding scale, or something that does not relate to the inverse-ratio formula to which I referred.

There is no accommodation for the aged in the towns of my electorate. I press the Government to do something about Cooktown particularly, because there is a strong demand from elderly people living there. It is a great retirement centre. People like

to retire in Cooktown after spending their working lives in remote areas. They have a right to accommodation, just like people who live in the most populated eastern areas of the State.

Accommodation for the aged is not available at Cooktown, Normanton or Thursday Island. What is to happen to elderly, infirm Aboriginal members of the community? To where can they retire? There is no place for them. I have seen too many instances of their being left in the care of other members of the family, left in houses half dead, half cared for and half fed because we have an irresponsible Government that does not care for citizens in remote areas.

I have expressed some little amazement at the shortcomings and omissions in His Excellency's Opening Speech. One matter that is not mentioned is Aboriginal affairs. I note that the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs is in the Chamber and is paying attention to what I say. He has recently taken on this portfolio and I believe him to be a sympathetic man. I certainly hope that he is. He has not had a lot of experience in Aboriginal affairs but he has already undertaken a familiarisation trip, which was too brief.

Mr Tomkins: I am going up there again shortly.

Mr SCOTT: I thank the Minister; I will be pleased if he lets me know about it. I must say that as Minister for Transport he released his itineraries relating to his portfolio.

What has the Minister to say about the repealing of the Act? Why was that not worth mentioning in His Excellency's address? Surely His Excellency spoke for black and white citizens. Did he or did he not? There is certainly nothing about them in his address. The Government has no policy in this matter. The move to repeal the Act was included in the Government's policy speech. Was it a sop for the Commonwealth Games that are to be held in Brisbane? Is that why it became Government policy? It received some publicity, and that seems to be the end of it. Nothing has been done about it so far.

The Aboriginal and Islander people were greatly concerned about the Premier's announcement, which flies in the face of other things he has said. It is contrary to his act of faith that he will act in consultation with them. That announcement came out of the blue. The people were shocked, upset and worried, because the Act has a bearing on their lives. Out of the blue came the statement that maintaining the Act was no longer National Party policy.

When will the Minister find out what he has to do? Is the Government talking to Aboriginal people or talking only to a limited range of Aboriginal and Islander

leaders—the same people whom the Government claims it has listened to before? It has not even acted on their advice. Some of the people whom the Government builds up and makes much of are out of touch with the ordinary people. I urge the Minister to listen to the ordinary people in the State.

I received a letter from the Premier about the Government's land policy. Black people want land rights. They do not want the whole of the top of the State. They do not want apartheid. They want only title to the land they live on, and again the Premier has denied them that. In a letter that I have circulated to the chairmen the Premier said they do not want title to their land. I simply do not believe that. If that is the word that came through, the Premier is listening to the wrong advisers. I have explained to them how land is held in Queensland in terms that can be understood by unsophisticated, undemanding people. They want title to their land.

I will now quote some words that have been attributed to the Minister, from a book called "Beyond the Act", meaning the Act governing Aborigines and Islanders. The quotation to which I refer follows this statement—

"In 1977, the Minister for Lands, Mr Tomkins, issued statements in response to suggestions that a Commonwealth Government Fund was purchasing land in Queensland for Aborigines."

This is the Minister's statement—

"If this programme is extended . . . it would create a 'black state' across the whole of northern Australia—surely apartheid in extreme and an introduction of the South African Bantustan policy to Australia, a situation the Queensland Government will not tolerate . . . It concerns me not because they are black but because this area would be allowed to become a burden on Australian generosity."

What dreadful words! He then goes on about the Archer River.

Here is a demeaning statement—

"They're good employees, good horse-men and musterers. It just seems to me most are on unemployment relief."

I will tell the House why they are on unemployment relief—because they cannot get employment. Are they simple words that can be grasped by this Government? Those people simply cannot obtain employment. When I talk with them when I am campaigning or visiting—doing the job in my electorate that should be done—they tell me that they are concerned about their children's future.

I could speak at great length about education in the Torres Strait area and what the Government is doing there. It is not providing education in that area and I want to see the situation changed. Parents tell me

that their concern is for their children growing up as citizens of the State. The Government is doing nothing to provide employment for them. That area has the highest rate of unemployment, but it is not because the people do not want to work. If the Government gives people short-term, medium-term or long-term goals, the people will work towards them. We do not want any more of that demeaning claptrap from the man who is the Minister in charge of that department.

He offered this gratuitous statement in connection with acquiring land—

"Work, make money, buy a block of land, and pay it off . . . It was whites who developed Australia."

A lot of people would question that very seriously and in a very humane way. I feel for the Minister in having to administer this department. It is a difficult one. He will be led by the nose by the director. He is the one who makes Aboriginal and Islander policy in Queensland and he will continue to do so. I wish that were not the case. I hope he will be controlled and limited and told to go in another direction. The ball is at the Minister's feet and he is the one who will have to take action.

I should like the Queensland Government to support Makarrata, which is a treaty between the Australian Government and the black people of Australia, because there is so much that has to be done. There has been a great deal of discussion about that treaty. I quote from a current affairs bulletin. The last paragraph is headed, "The Way Ahead." It was written by Bryan Keon Cohen, who is a barrister and holds some other qualifications in Aboriginal affairs. The paragraph reads—

"In my view, the Makarrata endeavour is worth while. It should be pursued if only to encourage debate about and some improvement in the Aboriginal condition. That condition is a national disgrace, and must be rectified. Governments have been generally slow in achieving amelioration."

He then talks about what Makarrata will do. He says—

"But this is a minimum expectation. A significant new charter of Aboriginal-settler relations can, it is to be hoped, be developed and a new beginning heralded."

I hope that that is the case.

There is great concern among Queenslanders over the brawling among the Liberals and the Nationals during the recent election campaign. The brawling was about policy.

Mr Goleby: What about the brawling in the ALP?

Mr SCOTT: This was not a brawl about administration; it was a brawl about policy.

There was a conflict about the particular type of policy to be introduced in Queensland. It was a dreadful display of public brawling which did Queenslanders no good.

We have had bad government for a number of years, and certainly in the last three years we have seen clear signs of bad government. Ill-advised and very poorly considered legislation was brought into the Chamber and it had to be amended shortly after its introduction. This Government would be the shame of every other democratic Government which adopts the Westminster system.

Since the election, reference has been made to the lack of ministerial representation from Far North Queensland. That is the dirty end of the stick again. It is a concrete example of that type of approach. I admit that the talent on offer was pretty poor. Who could be chosen—the member for Barron River, Flinders, Mt. Isa or one or two others? I do not blame the Premier. How could he choose one of them? Perhaps one could have been chosen as a sop, similarly to Mr. Camm, who was interested only in mining and not in the State. It did not happen, because the talent was not there. A group of back-bench National Party members said they would take the Chamber on and tell the Premier what they thought. Where are they? Who are they? Their names are not even known. Where was that nomination for the position of Speaker?

In the Cook electorate the Liberals went looking for a person with the same name as mine. They said, "We cannot beat the member, so we will get someone with the same name." What a cynical, shallow and demeaning thing to do!

Mr Milliner: It was disgraceful.

Mr SCOTT: That is right. But it did not matter in the end, because the electors of Cook are not donkeys. Members of the Liberal Party supposed that they were donkey voters up there, because they said to them, "We know you are donkeys, so we will put up this person. You know the name, and we think you will be easily fooled." Before the election the honourable member for Salisbury told me that this person was a wow from Canberra. I do not really know what a "wow" is, but, boy oh boy, that candidate was not a wow in Cook.

Mr Milliner interjected.

Mr SCOTT: I am not quite certain of the correct title, and I mean that kindly. The National Party stood two candidates, and they were both pretty hopeless. I know that one of them ran his private vehicle on Thursday Island without registration for two years. That man is a public servant. I ask: how can that dishonesty be condoned? This is well known, because it was referred to in "Hansard". I hope there are no bikkie tins without the lids firmly screwed down in the department in which that person works. The other candidate was supposed to be well regarded in Dimbulah, but that was only in his own estimation and that of his party supporters.

In the time left to me I would like to take members on a tour of Cook. I would have liked to do this right from the beginning, but for some reason members opposite are not interested in the remote parts of the State. I remember that when I did this on a previous occasion there were cries of horror from members opposite, but I note that on this occasion the idea is being treated a little more kindly. Perhaps my being here is growing on members opposite, and they are going to treat me a little more kindly.

Mr Powell: Are you going to give your electorate eight minutes?

Mr SCOTT: I have been talking about my electorate. Has the honourable member been asleep? I am glad the honourable member mentioned the time because that simply highlights the fact that in a 40-minute speech there is insufficient time to cover an electorate that is being properly worked. Sure I am going to give them eight minutes, and I would ask the honourable member to sit there and listen. At least he is in the Chamber, unlike the majority of his colleagues.

I have divided the electorate into a series of towns, but this gives no indication of their relative significance to me. I treat them all equally, and I visit them all as much as I possibly can. The first three are Dimbulah, Chillagoe and Irvinebank. Members will find as I refer to these groups of towns that there is a common range of needs. In almost every case the greatest needs are schooling and roads, and in most cases I could add health.

In the area encompassing those three towns mining is a significant industry. I want to see the State Treatment Works at Irvinebank upgraded. It is a State property, but that is anathema to the so-called anti-socialists opposite, although generally they like to socialise their losses and capitalise their profits. It is a State-owned works and the people in the area are very proud of it. They work very hard to supply it with minerals, and they want to see it upgraded.

This year is Irvinebank's centenary year. It is 100 years since minerals were found in the area and the name of John Moffatt was enshrined in the records. The centenary committee is very active and will do a lot of good during the year. A wonderful celebration will be held in the area before very long, and I ask this Government for all possible support for the Irvinebank centenary.

The next group of towns includes Mt Surprise, Georgetown, Croydon, Normanton and Karumba—the road across the base of the peninsula, for members who are not familiar with the geography. Here again I have in my notes the words, "School needs, community health." I must also mention the perennial question of the Karumba water supply. I would like to ask whether the Minister for Local Government is again going to be beaten by the Treasury on this question. He received a delegation from the

Carpentaria Shire Council and virtually dismissed them with the very kind words, "Yes, I don't think the industry should have to pay for a water supply. I am not going to treat Karumba any differently from any other town. The water supply should be provided from loan funds to be repaid in the normal way." But that big hulk of a man—he has been described as a wonderful, great brute so I suppose it depends on one's point of view—went to water in Cabinet on that point. He was beaten by insignificant little Dr Edwards. Karumba still needs a water supply and an augmented electricity supply. The whole area needs improved educational facilities.

Like many people living in country areas, members of the parents and citizens' association in my electorate took the Ahern report seriously. They read it, dissected it and talked about it. They debated its merits. They did this because there was a section in it pertaining to country education. They went to a lot of trouble. Members of the combined p. and c. associations in the Gulf got together a very worthwhile submission on the educational needs of children in remote areas. They have been able to relate that submission to the matters set out in that particular part of the Ahern report.

They presented that submission to the Government, to a number of Ministers. I am pushing it for all it is worth because it is an extremely good submission. Unfortunately, it has been greeted with silence—once again, typical of this Government. The new Minister for Education has expressed some interest in this matter. He is a country person himself and he might well look at this aspect of education. He might not be capable of grasping the totality of his portfolio, but I hope that he looks at country education and its needs.

Another group of important towns in my electorate is Cooktown, Hope Vale, Bloomfield and Laura. Here again, education, roads and employment are important matters. Unemployment is a big factor in all sections of my electorate. I would like to see the Government take specific action to ameliorate that situation. I do not expect the Government to do so, but I would urge it to do it.

I must mention Lakefield National Park. Members might be interested to know that there is still an entrepreneur grazing cattle on this national park. I wonder what some Government members who own grazing properties think of a situation where a couple of nice little entrepreneurial people can make money out of a national park. How long is it since this park was declared? It is years now. There are still over 1 000 head of cattle there. Cattle are being bred on and taken off the national park. People are making money out of the park. I have been told that with their usual method of fire-stick cultivation they have set fire to a large well-grassed area of this national park,

and that is a shame. An attempt was made to blame the national park people for this, but they were certainly not to blame.

Also in my electorate are Coen, Weipa and Bamaga. I have spoken a little about Weipa, and I have mentioned the problems in communities such as those at Bamaga and certainly at Coen. Once again, roads and education are important questions. Other services are important in Weipa. Employment is an important matter throughout that whole area.

This Government does nothing in Weipa. It provides nothing but a bare minimum of services. It runs a hospital, school and police station, and that is all. Nothing special is provided up there to make up for the vast amount of money that comes from Weipa. There is not only the money that the company earns in export earnings but also the taxes paid by the people.

Finally, I turn to Thursday Island, in the Torres Strait. Of course, this Government does not know anything about that area. I have challenged the Government to talk about the border agreement between Papua New Guinea and Australia. That subject has never been mentioned once in the three years that I have been a member of this Parliament. It is long overdue for the Premier to tell us what is happening about that border agreement; to give an explanation to the ordinary Queenslanders, not only the people who live up in the North in the Torres Strait, who are vitally concerned about what is an extremely complicated arrangement, but also the people in the rest of Queensland. Let us hear from the Premier. Let him tell us what is happening up there.

The cost of living is an important matter in that area. Part of the Thursday Island High School was burnt down some time ago and it has taken this sluggish Government a long time to do anything about reconstructing it. Education is being provided under extremely difficult conditions.

(Time expired.)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Miller): Order! Before I call the honourable member for Mulgrave, I point out to the House that this is his maiden speech and I expect the usual courtesy to be extended to him.

Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (3.55 p.m.): I take this opportunity to pledge the support and loyalty of myself and the electors of Mulgrave to the Crown. At the same time I thank the electors of Mulgrave for electing me to Parliament. I promise them that at all times I will try to do as much as I can for each of them.

Before going into some of the things that I would like to mention about the electorate, I pay tribute to the former member for Mulgrave (Mr Roy Armstrong). Roy had been the member for Mulgrave for over 20 years. He served on local authorities, in

the sugar industry and then in Parliament. Everyone who knows Roy, and has known him for years, knows him as a friend. Regardless of anybody's political colour, he would agree that Roy Armstrong is a person who would help everyone and who has done a lot for the people of Mulgrave and, in fact, the rest of North Queensland. For many years Roy Armstrong was the only Government member from North Queensland, and he did an enormous amount for the people there.

I did not intend to comment on previous speeches but I must refute what I believe were a few unfair comments made by the Leader of the Opposition when he referred to northern National Party members, because they were not appointed to Cabinet, as not having ability. Those remarks need not have been made. The honourable member for Cook made some similar remarks, which I also refute. The members from North Queensland have proven themselves, but not everybody can be appointed to Cabinet.

For my part, I am satisfied with the Government's performance in North Queensland. We do not get everything we ask for. In an earlier speech this afternoon a Government member complained about the Government, but it is up to members of Parliament to try to receive benefits from the Government. If we do not do that we are not carrying out our duties. No matter what an electorate receives it will always have additional needs to help it progress.

I am not being critical of the Government but I believe it should have a more forward-thinking policy in an effort to put young people on the land. I do not say that Aborigines or anyone else should not be helped; whether a person is white or black he should have the opportunity to own his own land. The Government should look at greater incentives through long-term low-interest loans. Every day in the Mulgrave electorate I get requests from young men and women who are trying to get on the land. They are not all children of farmers but include youngsters who work in towns and would like to become farmers and own their own land. That is a real need in the community. Over the years people have drifted to the cities, but I believe that that flow has been reversed because country life is a much better one and there is a need to increase primary production.

Atherton has a very good hospital which was recently renovated by the Government at a cost of about \$3.5m. I ask that consideration be given to the provision of a radium clinic in Atherton, which would be the centre for the Tableland. Naturally in North Queensland a lot of people suffer from skin cancer. At present they have to travel to Cairns from all over Far North Queensland for treatment. I have had many requests—and I support them—that consideration be given to setting up a clinic at the Atherton Hospital. It is a beautiful hospital, and I will certainly be pushing the Government to do something along those lines.

Reference was made earlier today to incentives for small business. I, too, support incentives for small business, which I believe plays a very important role in the economic well-being of the State. I would prefer to see a small business prosper than to worry greatly about big business. Small businesses care for people much more than do big businesses.

Earlier I mentioned helping young people to get on the land through incentives. I advocate the introduction of a State bank in Queensland to utilise Government funds to help young people to get on the land. A serious problem is arising. Such a bank would help solve unemployment in Queensland and increase our exports.

I urge the early completion of the Palmerston Highway. Everyone is hoping for an early completion of the project. What has been done has made a tremendous difference to the drive to and from the Tableland, but we still have a bad section. I hope that the Government spends sufficient funds to complete it as soon as possible. I know that funds for roads are always hard to get, but that is one road that should be given top priority. The Babinda bypass is one section of the Bruce Highway that is flood prone. It is inadequate for present-day traffic. I urge the speedy completion of the plans for that section and the implementation of the work.

I am greatly concerned about the expansion within the sugar industry. Although I am interested in all facets of primary production, I believe that on this occasion it is necessary for me to refer to sugar. It is the industry about which I have the greatest knowledge, but that is not my reason for referring to it. My reason for doing so is my concern that the major part of the industry, particularly the cane-growing section, is being set up to serve the convenience of a minority section that is aiming to control ethanol manufacture in Australia. The key to such an achievement is to commit cane growers to the production of huge quantities of sugar-cane, the sugar from which cannot be viably placed on sale. That cane could then be used to provide low-quality, low-priced invert sugar. The ethanol manufacturers would thus procure a very suitable material—invert—for their factories at "dump" prices.

The justification for this concern—and it is not only mine but that of a lot of the more forward-thinking people in the sugar industry—lies in the expansion program that commenced in July 1980, when, acting on a ministerial reference, the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board decided on a modest expansion of the industry's production capacity by 5 per cent. However, the hearings were adjourned until December for further consideration, when a further modest 3 per cent expansion was decided upon. "Modest" is the key word in the submissions of those urging expansion and in the board's decision condoning it; but the two modest expansions in such a

short time gave a not-so-modest expansion of 8 per cent in six months. On the principle of a little often, modesty is seen to be nothing but a ploy. Nor does the situation end there, because the board has now recommended another expansion review for December 1981, or earlier if considered appropriate.

I am sure that expansion as such is not blindly opposed by anyone, as long as circumstances are appropriate. There has been a great deal of deliberate misrepresentation on the approach to expansion. But, relative to the 1980 expansions, the marketing papers put out by CSR marketing group gave no cause for confidence for a period longer than one or two years or for security of markets at a worthwhile price.

Two interesting comments were associated with the marketing papers. One was to the effect that the world price related to the expanded production could drop below cost of production. The second was that if the sugar marketing situation became so bad as to limit the volume of sugar able to be sold, the remainder of the crop could still be taken and processed for the production of invert. When regard is had to the fact that the land assigned to cane-growing before July 1980 had a production capacity surplus to the requirements of even fortuitous sales, it becomes quite apparent that a great deal of cane will have to go to invert.

For the benefit of those who are not well acquainted with the conduct of the sugar industry, I shall explain that for half a century the basic stability of the industry has rested on a policy of production control within a reasonable tolerance of acceptable market prospects. Control is effected through fixing the area on which cane can be grown and also by fixing an amount of production from such land for assured acceptance in any one year. At farm level, these controls are referred to as assigned area and farm peak, the latter being expressed in terms of tonnes of cane grown or tonnes of sugar permitted to be produced from cane of that assignment. A cane grower can produce more cane on his assignment than is his production entitlement, but that additional production is at risk. If there is not a profitable market for that part of his crop, it is left in the field. However, if he does not use his assigned land to grow cane, he can have his assignment cancelled, or if he does not produce to the full capacity of his tonnage entitlement, he can have it reduced, and the lost tonnage is redistributed amongst those growers producing more than their entitlement. Thus it is easy to see that, even in bad times of reduced acquisitions and low prices, farmers are still going to produce to protect their investment and to ensure that they still have their assignment and peak to use when better times arrive.

This policy of control for profitability has been endorsed by a number of inquiries and commissions. The Gibbs commission of

1963 deviated from the strict principle by recommending some world market price sugar into peaks; but, in fairness, it must be stated that the commission had reservations and recommended a two-tier system of peaks that would allow the production of that world price sugar to be reduced if required. Unfortunately, the two-tier part was not adopted, and within a couple of years prices nose-dived and the industry had to borrow about \$20m from the Federal Government to stay intact, and it took ten years to pay the debt off. So it can be seen that if unlimited quantities of sugar for which there is no viable market can be pushed into peaks, the growers will continue to grow it, it will be pushed into invert, and the cane-growing industry will have been prostituted to the requirements of the ethanol manufacturers. Legitimate returns from sugar sales will then have been manipulated into subsidising the price of the raw material supplied to the ethanol manufacturers.

Who are the ethanol manufacturers? There are four molasses distilleries making industrial alcohol in Australia. Bundaberg Sugar has one and CSR Limited has three. I believe that CSR has now moved into the Ord River area to tie up the sugar and ethanol industries there.

Ethanol can also be produced from cassava. CSR Limited and Bundaberg Sugar have joined forces with Fielder Gillespie in a consortium to produce cassava and use it as an ethanol feedstock. Looking at the situation from the ethanol manufacturers' side, we can see that they have a lot going for them. They are all industrial heavies in their own right. Two of them have the present relatively small ethanol distilling industry fairly well in their grasp. CSR Limited is the advisory, management, financing and marketing mentor of the Sugar Board. It is also a powerful influence within the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board. It is already involved in the industrial use of alcohol and has acquired huge stakes in the varied energy resources of Australia. As the principal identity in the ethanol consortium, and in its own right, CSR could not tolerate any other enterprise crowding in on its interests in ethanol from sugarcane. What better way to protect its interests than to have all possible cane-growing land assigned, so that all sugar cane is acquired by law? Growers must grow it, mills must process it, and the CSR will market it. Because all cane will be coming off assigned land and must be delivered to mills for Government acquisition, there will be no other supply available for a potential opposition to go into business. If CSR and its cassava partners get in early and tie up the bulk of cassava production, and CSR also ties up the Ord River area, they will very comfortably dominate the ethanol market in Australia, be it for liquid fuel or industrial manufacture. Add this to the CSR holdings in other energy sources and it is quite apparent that CSR within a few years will be Australia's power power.

My main concern is for the sugar industry, particularly the cane-growing section of it. I am fearful of its future in the hands of ethanol manufacturers. It has to be totally unacceptable to any Government in Queensland that the sugar industry should become a vassal producer for an ethanol monopoly. I say that here now so that there can be no misunderstanding of what is involved and no ducking of responsibility if nothing is done and disaster strikes later.

The Central Sugar Cane Prices Board must develop a wider apprehension of its role and responsibilities so that it will have a much greater appreciation of realities. This ethanol trap must be sprung by removing some part of the acquisition proclamation that equates invert with sugar. A totally separate legislative structure is needed to identify sugar cane for invert in a category of its own, such structure being totally removed from the sticky reach of the ethanol manufacturers. I look to my colleagues in Government to ensure that these proper things are done, and done promptly, to ensure that the present infiltration and erosion of the sugar industry, as a sugar industry, is stopped for all time.

The last matter I wish to touch on, which I think is very important in Queensland, concerns water resources. We must put greater emphasis on the need for water resources. Yesterday I received a report on the Herbert River Study on Flood Mitigation. In Babinda we have a flood mitigation problem. We are hoping for some Government action on the report. From Ingham to Mossman, within the sugar-growing areas, there are problems with drainage and flood mitigation. There should be a separate department for drainage and flood mitigation. These matters should not have to compete with irrigation. I am in no way trying to take anything away from irrigation. I know that it is needed in Queensland, but in North Queensland the real need is flood mitigation and drainage. To stabilise and increase productivity it is of the utmost importance that the Government place greater emphasis on flood mitigation and drainage. That emphasis can be achieved by placing these matters under a separate department, which would have their sole interests at heart.

Babinda has suffered badly from floods during the 1980s. Floods have cost North Queensland millions and millions of dollars worth of cane. This loss reflects itself in the number of jobs available to mill employees. The more cane that a mill crushes, the more people that it can employ, so everyone gets a better deal. One of the best investments the Government could make would be to place more emphasis on flood mitigation and drainage.

Mr POWELL (Isis) (4.16 p.m.): It is my pleasure to rise and speak in the Address-in-Reply debate. At the outset, I pledge my allegiance and that of the electors of Isis to the Throne. I congratulate the

honourable member for Toowoomba North who so capably moved this motion. I echo the remarks he made at the beginning of his speech. I congratulate the honourable member for Whitsunday who seconded the motion and the other new members who have spoken so far in this debate.

I place on record my thanks to the people in the electorate of Isis for giving me the opportunity of representing them in this Parliament for another three years. I hope that, during the next three years, the progress that has taken place in the Isis electorate over the past six years will be continued.

In his contribution today, the Leader of the Opposition continually harped, as he has done over the past few years while he has been Leader of the Opposition, on the results of the recent election.

Mr Davis: Why haven't you followed the usual format and thanked the King, the Queen, and the Boy Scouts?

Mr POWELL: I thought I had already done that. The honourable member must have been asleep.

The Leader of the Opposition seems to have a strange way of adding up. He seems to think that, having gained 41.56 per cent of the vote, he had won. He would have us believe that the people of Queensland had voted out the Government although, by some strange quirk of circumstances, the National/Liberal Government is in control of the Parliament.

For the benefit of those who read "Hansard" the facts, as correctly as they can be given, are that in 1977 the National Party gained 27.15 per cent of the vote and in 1980 gained 27.85 per cent, an increase of 0.7 per cent; in 1977 the Liberal Party gained 25.22 per cent and in 1980 gained 26.93 per cent, an increase of 1.71 per cent; and in 1977 the Labor Party gained 42.83 per cent and in 1980 gained 41.56, a decrease of 1.27 per cent. The other parties and the Independents gained 4.8 per cent of the vote in 1977 and 3.66 per cent in 1980, a drop of 1.14 per cent. They are the figures that Mr Casey was arguing on this morning. They make it patently obvious that fewer people voted for the Labor Party in 1980 than in 1977.

Mr Goleby: What do you think is the trouble in the ALP—its leader?

Mr POWELL: It is not for me to say what are the troubles in the Labor Party. There are enough members opposite to work that out for themselves, and I certainly do not intend to help them.

But the plain fact of the matter is that in 1980 the Labor Party received fewer votes than it did in 1977. That is a pertinent fact that ought to be brought before the Parliament and, indeed, the people of Queensland, at this time. It is important that the true intent of the people is reflected in the

membership of this Parliament. If one reads some of the rubbish produced by the daily Press and written by academics one would imagine that every person in this Parliament should have at least a degree in political science and probably a degree in something else as well. That is so much rubbish. Quite clearly the Parliament should reflect the people at large. I believe this Parliament does that, because we do have some people with academic qualifications and we also have others with no academic qualifications, and then the remainder of the spectrum in between. Frankly, I believe that is the way it ought to be, and I cannot countenance the proposal put forward by academics that it is only they who should have the opportunity to comment on legislation and social issues and therefore decide the policies that will affect this State. I am indeed pleased that the Parliament of Queensland reflects fairly accurately the people of Queensland, and I hope that we can maintain that sort of reflection. It is only in that way that the Government will, at the behest of Parliament, be able to do what the people of Queensland wish it to do.

A previous Opposition speaker seemed to be of the opinion that the Government should be one step ahead of the people. That is also a proposal that I reject, because I believe it is the responsibility of the Government to do the type of thing that the people would think is its responsibility. The idea of the Government's being the leader in social reform is abhorrent to me. I can imagine that some members opposite might consider that that is a reasonable proposal but, quite frankly, those of us who seriously think about where our country is going and the type of place in which we are living surely do not want the Government to be a pacesetter of the type that social reformers would like. I also reject that argument out of hand.

In his Speech the Governor gave us an indication of the sort of legislative initiatives that the Government will be bringing forward. When they see it most honourable members will agree that the Government is being responsible in the type of legislation it is bringing before the House. It is incumbent on every member of Parliament to use this opportunity to put forward his own ideas and make some suggestions about the type of legislation the Government ought to be introducing.

Today a massive report on the efficiency and administration of hospitals arrived on our desks. I suppose there are not too many of us who think about health matters until we or our close relatives become sick, and so we generally accept what is being done in hospitals without a great deal of personal interest in it. Unless one is a doctor it is a bit difficult to understand the ramifications of all that goes on, but a hospital is an essential community service, and one which needs to be provided close to the people who use it.

In my electorate, as in other electorates on the central coast of Queensland where there is a rapidly growing population, the health facilities are very quickly being outstripped by the population explosion. The hospital at Hervey Bay has always been a bone of contention. People wishing to gain some notoriety refer to it in the Press in disparaging terms, but recently we were fortunate to have the newly appointed Minister for Health come to Hervey Bay to have a look for himself at the problems being faced by the people in the area.

I think it might be wise to include in "Hansard" figures that indicate that the Health Department and its agent, the Maryborough Hospitals Board, must do something fairly quickly to upgrade the hospital at Hervey Bay. The Minister has informed us that the Maryborough Hospitals Board has been asked to prepare plans and specifications for an expansion of the existing hospital to a 30-bed hospital. That is welcomed by all sound-thinking people in the community. However, if one looks at the population explosion in the area it becomes apparent that a hospital of more than 30 beds is required.

The present population of Maryborough is 22 000. Maryborough has a base hospital with a considerable number of facilities, as most base hospitals have. The present population of Hervey Bay is 14 000 and, if the present population trend continues, by 1988 Hervey Bay's population will be similar to that of Maryborough. So the Health Department is faced with the position of having two cities with populations of about 20 000, only 25 miles apart, one with a base hospital and the other with smaller hospital facilities.

I propose that the Maryborough Hospitals Board should be asked to prepare plans and specifications for not a 30-bed hospital but rather a 60-bed hospital to be built in three stages; the first stage to expand the hospital to 30 beds, the second stage to 45 beds and the third stage to 60 beds. That is the only way in which we will be able to plan successfully for the future.

It is important to consider many of the reasons why the Maryborough Base Hospital should be expanded. Firstly, one has to consider the problem faced by people, including the elderly, who live at Hervey Bay and have to visit relatives in the Maryborough Base Hospital. The problem is greater if a person does not have his own motor vehicle, because public transport between the two areas is deplorable. There are three buses from Hervey Bay to Maryborough at 7 a.m., 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. That would be great for an elderly person visiting a relative in the Maryborough Base Hospital! The return trips are at 8 a.m., 3.30 p.m. and 5.10 p.m. In other words, a person visiting a relative in the Maryborough Base Hospital on Mondays to Fridays would have to leave Hervey Bay at 9 a.m. and return at 3.30 p.m. I wonder how those times fit in with the visiting hours at the

Maryborough Base Hospital? On Saturday there is only one bus from Hervey Bay to Maryborough. It leaves at 7 a.m. There is no return bus. There are no buses at all on Sundays.

That is bad enough; but let me turn now to the railway system. Most people, particularly those who live at Hervey Bay, do not realise that this passenger service is so bad. On Mondays to Fridays a train leaves Maryborough at 6.5 a.m. and arrives at Hervey Bay at 7.29 a.m. A person from Hervey Bay who wishes to travel to Maryborough by train must leave Hervey Bay at 10.20 a.m. The train arrives in Maryborough at 12.30 p.m. There is a return train the next morning at 6 a.m. Such is the efficiency of the timetabling of that service! The people who are responsible for providing this service say, "We have no passengers, so how can we schedule a train?" It is just like the dog chasing its tail. How can there be passengers if there is no train? Clearly some positive planning is needed in that area.

Turning once again to the population of the area—as I have said, the permanent population of Hervey Bay is 14 000, but during major holiday periods, such as Easter and school holidays, the population increases to 40 000—greater than that of Maryborough.

No blame should be attached to the Maryborough Hospitals Board, nor to the staff at the Hervey Bay Hospital who have done their absolute utmost to satisfy the needs of the people. They just have not got the facilities to do all they would like to do. The Health Department must realise that it is time it looked at Hervey Bay as a separate city, not part of Maryborough, which it is not. It is clear that this hospital must be progressively expanded, that it must have a full-time medical superintendent, that it must have increased nursing staff and that the doctors at Hervey Bay must be allowed to use that hospital as it is designed to be used and not in the restricted way forced by the Health Department to date. The population explosion in the area is very real. Probably the figures I have given are particularly conservative.

As in most other electorates of Queensland that face this very high rise in population, education facilities—in fact, all the facilities offered by government—are placed under great strain. I must acknowledge the tremendous assistance that has been given to the electorate by my neighbour, the Minister for Works and Housing. Without his assistance and the assistance of the Minister for Education, the education facilities in that area would not be anywhere near as good as they are at the moment. But much needs to be done.

Probably every member will argue for more education and hospital facilities as well as all the other facilities provided by the

Government. However, we must also acknowledge the financial restraints placed on each department. In recognising those restraints we must also recognise that Queensland is the lowest taxed State of Australia. Clearly that is the way the people want it, otherwise they would have voted for the ALP, which is a high tax party.

Mr Davis: That is not right.

Mr POWELL: That is right. The results of the election prove that that is right.

Therefore the Government must be very careful in the way that it spends its money and must ensure that it is distributed in a sensible fashion. That is why I believe that far more sensible planning must take place for all these facilities. The infrastructure required when industry and commerce move into an area must be such that Government departments can cope with the strain that is placed on them by an increased population.

A previous speaker opposite spoke about the education policy contained in the National Party's platform and policy speech in November last year. It was clear that he did not understand what was being said and he made some very stupid remarks about it. He also made some very stupid remarks about the newly appointed Minister for Education. It is quite clear that the Minister has not received that member's submission, otherwise he would have responded. I suppose, to be fair, the member opposite may not have bothered to give an accurate record of what the Minister would have told him.

In looking at education in Queensland, the Government is very mindful of the pressures placed on students to continue at school, peer group pressure and pressure from parents who seem to demand that children stay at school to obtain the highest qualifications. What is not recognised is that some of those children are simply not capable of obtaining upper secondary or tertiary qualifications. The Queensland Government recognises this. I am sure that honourable members will be happy to learn later in the year of plans that the Government has to assist people in this predicament, because the major problem of discipline in high schools occurs because of large classes and inability of students to cope with the work.

Consequently, much more needs to be done through liaison with the technical and further education colleges. A tremendous amount of money has been spent in those colleges in the last five years. In some quarters it has been said to be too much. However, again I believe that a sensible look is needed at education planning. When one considers the massive amounts of money spent on colleges of advanced education and universities, the amounts spent on technical and further education pale into insignificance. Quite frankly, the Federal Government could well remove itself from the education-funding field completely. The amount of money it is spending at the moment on

tertiary institutions should be given straight to the States for distribution as the States think fit.

In this State I believe that we have far too many tertiary institutions. Some of the colleges of advanced education are churning out courses simply to perpetuate themselves. I invite any honourable member who doubts that statement to speak to teachers who are doing the so-called upgrading course that the CAEs are offering. As many teachers have pointed out to me, the upgrading course has absolutely nothing to do with what they are teaching in the schools. It is of absolutely no help at all. Clearly, it is just the CAEs perpetuating their own existence. Frankly, we cannot afford it. We should be looking at educating children of our State as effectively as we possibly can.

Dr Botsman, the principal of the Kelvin Grove CAE, made a statement in Maryborough only last week that he felt that schools were being called upon to do too many of the social training tasks that parents themselves ought to be doing. I could not agree with him more. He instanced such things as drug education and driver training; but there are many more things that the schools apparently are asked to do—I emphasise “apparently”—on behalf of parents. Quite frankly, I am not prepared to hand over to any State institution my responsibilities as a parent, and I would hope that all the responsible parents of this State feel the same way. Therefore, we might clearly examine why CAEs feel that they should teach teachers to handle social issues.

Earlier I said that I do not believe that the Government should be the pace-setter in social attitudes; neither should the school or the college. Clearly it is their responsibility to teach facts to children and to give them the understanding of how to disseminate information and go about it themselves. Clearly it is the responsibility of parents to decide how a child should be taught moral issues. Parents should accept that responsibility. If they feel that they are unable to accept that responsibility, because of either lack of knowledge or lack of information, then the request to the Government ought not to be for the teachers to teach them but rather that our technical education colleges be used to assist the parents in their handling of these issues with their children.

I am firmly of the opinion that if we could maintain our colleges and schools so that they taught facts, and facts alone, then we would be saving in education and saving in the consulting rooms of psychiatrists and others making large sums of money simply because of stresses that are placed upon students. The education system must be designed to cater for the children or the

students who are using it. It ought not be designed to cater for the whims of lecturers or teachers.

Mr Davis: Have you changed your views on sex education?

Mr POWELL: Definitely not. If the member for Brisbane Central had been listening to me for the past ten minutes, he should have woken up to that fact. However, I suppose for the benefit of that gentleman we should spell things out in words of one syllable so that he can understand them.

In developing my argument, I suggest that it is fairly clear that the education system must respond to the need for vocational training in the Year 9 and Year 10 levels at secondary schools. Pupils who cannot capably handle higher maths, who cannot capably handle the intricacies of English, ought not to have to do so. They should be able to communicate, they should be able to add and subtract, and they should be taught the effective use of their hands and the skills that they will need to live in the community and to get a job.

To me, the stupid attitude that is often adopted—and it is adopted in tertiary institutions as well as in some of the secondary schools—that we must educate children to handle unemployment is a lot of rot. We should be teaching young people how to handle a job and how to keep a job. Some of the most successful courses in the colleges today are the pre-vocational courses offered in colleges of technical and further education. If any honourable member doubts the truth of that statement, I invite him to go to the nearest TAFE college in his electorate and ask the principal what the success rate is of those who have undertaken pre-vocational courses. It is very high indeed—well over 90 per cent—and that indicates to me a weakness in our secondary school system.

That comment should not be taken as a criticism of secondary school teachers, who simply teach the curriculum that is handed to them. But there certainly needs to be flexibility in that area, and I know that the newly appointed Minister for Education agrees with that philosophy.

Before leaving education topics, I must say that I am disgusted by a paper called “Country Honk” that I have received from one of my constituents. It is put out by the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, and, quite frankly, I am sorry if the people who wrote that, or had anything to do with the publication of it, have anything to do with advanced education. The standard of language in it is what one would expect to find used in the gutter. It is certainly not language that one would expect to be used by educated people.

Mr Davis: I have not received a copy. Could you read it into “Hansard”?

Mr POWELL: It might take a bit too long to read into "Hansard". I am sure that if the honourable member for Brisbane Central applies to the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education he will be supplied with a copy.

The question of university student union fees arises, and this argument has been put forward many times. I understand that this publication is the work of the student union at the Darling Downs Institute. If that is the best they can do with their fees, I am all for allowing people to opt out of the student union. I believe that their efforts could best be directed towards being in the union and changing the absolute trash that comes out of that institution. It is an insult to the students; it is an insult to decent people who wish to go to an institution such as that to obtain higher learning.

One of the topical issues in the media today—and it ought to be topical—is power and the natural resources that we have in this State. The honourable member who preceded me in the debate spoke about ethanol production and his fear that its control was being limited to a few companies. I echo his sentiments and support what he said on that subject.

When the coalfields were first opened in Central Queensland, Queenslanders were told that, because of some very good deals done by the Government, steaming coal there would be available almost free of charge for power generation in Queensland. Sensible people applauded the Government's attitude on that issue, and it certainly was a very sensible one. However, the Government seems to have retreated from that policy to some extent.

As a person interested in power generation and natural resources in Queensland, I will be watching very closely what happens to Queensland's steaming coal. It is a very valuable natural resource. When we build power-stations we sometimes have difficulty in getting people to man them or to continue working in them. That should be sorted out without too much trouble. I am waiting for the Minister to show a bit of gumption and do it. I am concerned that we may be getting less than a good deal on steaming coal in Queensland. It is important for the State that this natural resource be kept for power generation in Queensland.

When speaking about power generation I could not let the opportunity go by without regretting the fact that the Queensland Electricity Generating Board closed down the Howard Power Station on the basis that it was inefficient and too old. Perhaps it was, but the fact of the matter is that it worked. The people who worked there were prepared to work and produce electricity for the benefit of the people of Queensland. In Gladstone and Collinsville we find a vastly different attitude.

Some people find it completely incomprehensible that yesterday's march in Brisbane should have taken place. They cannot understand that people are fed up with strikes.

Mr Davis: Union basher.

Mr POWELL: Why should the people of Queensland suffer black-outs when we have ample capacity for power generation? Simply because a few selfish people refuse to work! Why should the people of Australia be held to ransom by a few who will not man an aircraft? Why should not a company employ its staff who are willing to continue to serve the public?

It is about time that the consumer got a fair deal in power generation. The cost of power generation in Queensland is far greater than it ought to be. That is caused by the attitude of the people operating power-stations. It is about time that the Government looked at this matter very seriously.

When will the people who run unions understand that the people do not want strikes? I have been accused of being a union basher. I am not; I am a supporter of unions. I wish that all members of unions could turn up at meetings and have their say without being bullied by the loud-voiced bully-boys who take over some union meetings. I wish people would take an active interest in their union meetings. I wish that they would attend them no matter how inconvenient it may be—and in most cases it is made inconvenient—and really take control of the unions, because that is the only way to control the situation. I hope that the wildly Left-wing people will wake up that Australia is not the place to accept their doctrine and attitude.

Queensland is developing quickly. Since I have had the honour to represent the people of Isis I have supported the Government's decentralisation policy as fully as possible. In this way we have been able to create more jobs in and around some of the Queensland country centres. We have been able to provide employment so that people who live in country areas can get a worthwhile job close to home.

It was with mixed feelings that I listened to the announcement that an aluminium smelter is to be established virtually on Bundaberg's doorstep. That smelter will bring a certain amount of prosperity to Bundaberg, but people in the sugar industry are concerned because they have not been given the assurances that they ought to be given. The smelter will create employment opportunities, and we welcome them. It will bring economic stability to the Bundaberg and Isis districts, and we welcome that, too. But we have to be sure that the smelter does not in any way affect the very successful sugar industry in that area.

There seems to have been no legitimate research which shows that the effluent from a smelter will cause no damage to sugar-cane.

By the same token, it must be said that we have had absolute and complete co-operation in discussions with the company that will build the smelter. It would seem that the latest techniques being used to clear air expelled from a smelter will allow so little pollution that it will cause absolutely no damage at all.

The people of the area must be reassured. We look forward to the results of the planning done by the Co-ordinator-General's Department in this matter. We know that that department has been very carefully assessing the environmental impact study that is being undertaken. Personally, I am confident that all of these assurances will be forthcoming. Also I am confident that the establishment of the smelter at Goodwood will cause no damage to the environment of the area.

It certainly will mean a lot more people coming into the area and there are some who regret that. Looking at it realistically, because they have had the place to themselves I suppose they cannot be blamed for feeling that way.

It is important to remember that, while the smelter will bring economic and employment stability to the area, there is a nagging doubt, sown no doubt by people who do not know what they are talking about, that damage could be done to the sugar industry. I am looking forward to the Government, particularly the Minister for Primary Industries, making statements on the matter through the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations, which will not only give encouragement to but will also dispel the worries of the people who live in the area.

No speech from me in this Chamber would be complete without my mentioning something to do with irrigation. In spite of the rain that has fallen in certain parts of the State, the area that I represent is still not saturated. In fact, water is still needed for the irrigation of the cane crop.

We are heartened by the remarks of the newly appointed Minister for Water Resources that it will not be too long before a start is made on the Isis section of the Bundaberg/Isis irrigation scheme. People in that area have waited 10 years for this to happen and it will be a red-letter day in the area when construction is started on the channel.

We must remember the expansion that has been effected in the sugar industry in Queensland. There was a 5 percent expansion in the middle of 1980 and a 3 percent expansion at the end of 1980. I might add that they were welcomed in our area. The area under cane in the Isis district has increased in the past 20 years from just over 14 000 ha to approximately 19 500 ha. This is a significant growth, and it should continue. We have problems in finding enough land to grow that cane but I am confident that negotiations with the Forestry Department and the Lands Department will prove to be fruitful so that the industry

in the area will be stable and that planning will be effective. The whole stability of an area, particularly its economic stability, depends on effective and sensible planning. I am thankful for the way in which this Government, through the Co-ordinator-General's Department, has co-ordinated the type of planning and development that is taking place.

An Opposition speaker said earlier that the Government does nothing at Weipa. That is absolute nonsense. The Government has spent millions of dollars at Weipa. Because of the coming of the aluminium smelter—the final decision is not yet made—officers of the Co-ordinator-General's Department, together with representatives of the local authorities concerned, have made many visits to the Bundaberg district. They have considered the sort of infrastructure that will be needed when the smelter is established, and for the 1 000-odd people who will be employed there.

Rather than being castigated, I believe that the Government should be congratulated on the way in which it has sat down with the company and the local authorities to ensure that the infrastructure will be available. The company and the Government have no intention of telling the workers at the smelter where or how they must live, so we have to wait for a certain period to find out exactly where the people will live.

I conclude by saying that I am confident that the Government will do everything possible to make sure that planning continues.

Mr HANSEN (Maryborough) (4.56 p.m.): In rising to speak in this Address-in-Reply debate, might I first offer you, Sir, my congratulations on your re-election as Speaker. I think you might be aware that I did not vote for you, nevertheless you have the confidence of the majority of the House.

Mr Moore interjected.

Mr HANSEN: I am telling the honourable member. I look forward to seeing the introduction of the reforms to the Standing Orders of which you have given an indication, Mr Speaker, particularly now that I have become a member of the Opposition's Standing Orders committee. I also offer my congratulations to the new Ministers who have been appointed and the new members who have taken their seats in the Chamber.

I believe that His Excellency's Opening Speech was lacking in certain respects, but before dealing with them I want to refer to the portfolios of some of the new Ministers. I have a great deal of sympathy for the new Health Minister, who has inherited a portfolio in which he will come under a great deal of pressure.

Mr D'Arcy interjected.

Mr HANSEN: We will see how he stands up to pressure. He has at times referred to tyre pressures, but we will see how he

stands up under pressure from the Commonwealth Government, which seems to be trying very hard to rid itself of its responsibilities in the field of health and unload them on to the States.

It has previously been accepted that the provision of health services is a national responsibility, but it now seems that the States will be left to foot the bill. Those States that want to provide health services for all their citizens will face problems, and Queensland in particular will face problems in its endeavours to provide such services. A former Minister for Health said that free hospital services as we know them in Queensland will be retained, but we will face enormous pressure in our attempts to do so.

In some circumstances our hospitals are already being forced to try to contain costs, and as a consequence we find that the meat in the sandwich are the sick, the aged and the needy. The decision to treat all patients who spend over 60 days in hospital as long-term patients and leave them with only a few dollars of their full pensions, plus their supplementary assistance, is, I believe, the first move in this direction. If these patients do not receive the additional \$5 per week in supplementary assistance, they will be looking at having to draw upon whatever reserves they may have accumulated during their lifetime, and when people are in their advanced years this becomes a very real problem indeed. There have been instances of relatives collecting the pensions of these patients and just leaving them in hospital. I do not agree with that, either. I believe that the hospital should act as trustee for these pensioners during their stay in hospital.

There is a great deal of difference between the needs of a person in a nursing home and those of a person in an aged persons' home. An inmate in an old people's home has a greater need for clothing than has a person in a nursing home, because he or she has to get about and mix with the rest of society. Such people need money to enable them to get out of the home and visit their relatives and friends. An unfair burden is placed upon them if they are left with just a few dollars. If they are dependent solely upon their pension, they will find difficulty in buying many of the things that we take for granted.

I believe it is wrong to charge these people the same rate of board as that paid by nursing home residents. I have pointed this out to the Minister. I know that he has plenty on his plate at the moment, but I expect he will see that some justice is meted out at least to people in Health Department homes. It is incongruous that in this, the International Year of the Disabled, the pin-money of physically handicapped persons in country areas is being drastically reduced because of a policy that has been implemented by the Commonwealth Government, which wants to make everyone pay his way.

Much has been said about the greatness of private enterprise. I was pleased to hear

the member for Isis say that he fully supports any moves for decentralisation. I believe that assistance provided to decentralised industry can always be measured against the cost of providing freeways, bridges and other facilities in built-up areas so that the traffic can be shifted. A vast sum is being expended on the Gateway Bridge. I do not quibble about this expenditure; it has to be incurred because of the vast population in that area. These problems do not arise in decentralised areas. People are provided with housing in low-cost areas. Land is much cheaper. All these points can be used to counter any argument about providing Government assistance to decentralised industry.

Getting back to private enterprise—there are those people who say that the Government should not interfere in the affairs of the market-place; that business should find its own level and that as long as it is done lawfully it does not matter. I do not agree with that proposition, and neither does the Labor Party. We maintain that public interest must come first. If not, we leave ourselves open to the raiders who still operate, perhaps with a lot more finesse than Genghis Khan but with a not dissimilar result. I agree with the action that the Government took late last year regarding the raids on two of Queensland's foremost industrial firms. They were both long-established and their economic operation is vital to Queensland and to the Queenslanders they employ. I fully support the Government's intervention in those instances, and I believe that it saved the jobs of many Queenslanders.

In the case of Walkers Limited, it did maintain a core of management in a decentralised area of this State and the employers' general contribution to the social life and economy of the Maryborough district. I applaud the intervention. I know that there are arguments as to the extent of Government involvement and how long the shares may be held once they have been purchased. I welcome any Government sharing in the industrial growth of the country. I believe that it is more laudable to invest State Government Insurance Office funds in those undertakings than in shopping or hotel complexes.

The sad history of the take-over of Queensland enterprises has often been repeated in this House by the honourable member for Lytton. He has referred to cases such as the take-over of Provincial Traders. In their wake they have left a depleted work-force and the management has been shifted to southern States. Job opportunities for young people to participate in the higher sections of management have been withdrawn from the State.

I now refer to a matter in which a local authority carried out all its requirements under the Local Government Act. Some 18 months after it had carried out its obligations, a judgment with costs was awarded

against it. The particular case I refer to involved the Maryborough City Council when a judgment was given to the Public Trustee on behalf of Mrs Irene Mavis Lamb. I understand the judgment was for an estimated loss incurred by the beneficiaries of the estate over the sale of a property. Who sold the property? None other than the Public Trustee. I have not been able to find the method of sale, but I hope that the new Minister for Justice might be able to provide a little more information than the previous Minister. As a ratepayer of Maryborough I am concerned about how the property was sold. Was it sold by public auction or by public tender? It is very hard to find out.

Earlier the Maryborough City Council had sought to resume the land as a site for a camping reserve on the ocean side of Ocean Beach on Fraser Island. The council felt that it had a responsibility within the management plan for Fraser Island to provide such a facility to enable orderly development and to prevent indiscriminate camping on the shore line with the resultant problems such as littering. The council had rezoned the land for that purpose. I do not believe that had any effect on the actual sale, although the judge thought otherwise.

The Department of Local Government approved the council's action in rezoning it. One might ask why the council wanted to buy that particular piece of land when so much other land was available. I believe that that consideration was put forward by the Lands Department, but it was pointed out that most of the vacant land along the foreshore above the area under the control of the Beach Protection Authority was taken up by mining lease. I asked the then Minister for Mines (Mr Sullivan) what could be done to make some of this land available, and he said he could do nothing about it but the council might talk to the holder of the mining lease and ask for access to the area.

However, the point I wish to make is that a local authority, having complied with the requirements of the Department of Local Government, can then find itself in a position in which costs are awarded against it. I also want to know if the Public Trustee was correct in accepting such a low price in the first place. Was it acting responsibly in the interests of the beneficiaries? Was the sale negotiated by public tender or by agreement? I have received a letter from the former Attorney-General saying that the Public Trustee had no standing or control in respect of the affairs of Mrs Irene Lamb, yet the Public Trustee wrote to the Maryborough City Council saying that it was acting on behalf of the estate of Mr Peter William Lamb.

Mr Burns: They ought to be able to sue the Public Trustee. There are a few other instances of this.

Mr HANSEN: That is right.

Then the Public Trustee acted on Mrs Lamb's behalf and took the council to task, and the ratepayers of Maryborough now find that they have a judgment against them to the tune of \$26,000.

There was never any appeal against the rezoning. It was widely advertised, as is required under the Local Government Act. A number of questions remain unanswered. How did the Public Trustee administer the estate? I intend no offence at all against the people involved. The Public Trustee was handling it and took action against the council. It does seem to me that there are some matters that the Public Trustee must answer. The Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services had a look at the property some time ago. I do not know whether he is actually involved in it. The Department of Local Government certainly is. It must worry the 144 local authorities in Queensland if they can be sued in certain circumstances. I understand that the judge in the case represented a local authority some time ago and obtained a judgment the opposite way. There are questions to be answered and I hope that in the coming session we will receive answers to those questions.

In his Opening Speech, His Excellency touched on a number of matters, but omitted a number of others that I believe are of great concern to the people of Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition listed a few in the amendment he moved. The amendment reads—

“However, it is the opinion of this Legislature that your advisers have failed to immediately initiate both the electoral and government reform in this State as indicated by them during the election campaign”.

The Liberal Party promised all sorts of reform. In a coalition Government, one would think that both parties would have a hand in writing the Governor's speech on the legislation intended for introduction in the coming session of Parliament. The Governor's Opening Speech is usually taken as an indication of the plans of the Government—both parties in coalition—in the coming session. There has been no indication of the type of electoral reform that had previously been indicated by one of the coalition partners. I know that the Premier has said there is nothing wrong with the system, but the Liberals certainly found plenty wrong with it in the lead-up to the election.

Parliament has a responsibility through an all-party public accounts committee to examine the conduct of Government departments. Works over a certain value should be subject to scrutiny by an all-party committee by its examining officers of the Department of Works so that the Parliament itself is better informed and the people who carry out the works know that what they are proposing is open to scrutiny. They

would then have a greater responsibility both to their Minister and to the people, who are the ultimate employers.

In his amendment, the Leader of the Opposition has drawn attention to the fact that there is nothing in the Opening Speech to overcome the problems of unemployment or economic hardship. It is all very well to say that we are participating in a mineral boom, but what of the young people? Those due to leave school are now being encouraged to stay there longer. What is their future? If they do not see a light at the end of the tunnel, how long will they be staying at school? Tradesmen are being sought overseas and sponsored into Australia for positions that young Queenslanders or young Australians could be trained for. I do not differentiate between Queenslanders and Australians, except to say that the Queensland Government has a responsibility to Queenslanders. There is no mention of the steps the Government intends to take to meet the challenge of growing unemployment, particularly juvenile unemployment. The Opposition must raise these matters.

I believe that the people of Queensland are worrying about what will happen in the field of health, and I understand that Health Ministers are to meet shortly. However, whenever I read papers from the South dealing with the subject of health, it seems to me that the Commonwealth is trying to duck its responsibility. It appears that any State wishing to retain its own hospital system as Queensland has done, despite Commonwealth interference on a number of occasions, will do so at its own cost, and I do not believe that that should be so. Health is a national responsibility. Those who are in a position to pay should pay, and those who are not in a position to pay should not have the problem of deciding whether they can afford to seek treatment.

I support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition and seconded by the honourable member for Brisbane Central.

Debate, on motion of Mr Wharton, adjourned.

SITTING DAYS

SESSIONAL ORDER

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—

“That during this session, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for the dispatch of business at 11 o'clock a.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in each week, and that on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and after 1 o'clock p.m. on Wednesdays, Government business shall take precedence of all other business.”

Mr CASEY (Mackay—Leader of the Opposition) (5.17 p.m.): Although Sessional Orders identical with this one have been

placed on the Business Paper for a considerable number of years, they have never been debated by the Parliament and have never been discussed in any way. Again, it is part of the activity that has occurred under the coalition Government. Instead of having a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee, we simply pass, year after year, a Sessional Order that is seemingly to play some part in the operations of this Assembly.

However, a close analysis of the proposed Sessional Order shows clearly that it is intended to restrict the activities of the Parliament. It is one of those procedures that has made the Queensland Parliament the laughing-stock of all other Parliaments in Australia. It confines discussion to only those matters that the Government brings forward.

One of the claims by members of the Opposition in this Assembly and, indeed, by many members of the Liberal Party last year till election-time—of course, they have ducked for cover since—has been that there is insufficient time in this Chamber for the initiation of debate on matters that are of concern to the people of Queensland rather than of concern to the Parliament. I therefore move the following amendment to the motion—

“Omit the words—

‘and after 1 o'clock p.m. on Wednesdays.’”

My intent in moving the amendment is simply to give back-bench members, the ordinary members of the Parliament, an opportunity to bring matters before the Parliament. Without trying to go back too far, I should like to trace briefly for honourable members the history of this type of Sessional Order. The first such Sessional Order was introduced on 1 July 1925. At that time, Parliament met at 10 a.m., and the Sessional Order brought the time back to 9.30 and Government business was to be dealt with on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and after 2 p.m. on Thursdays. That was introduced after the Standing Orders Committee had reviewed the procedures of the House, and it meant that for some three hours each week, leaving aside question-time, members had the opportunity to raise other business that was of concern to the people of Queensland and to members of this Assembly. At that time, there were rarely more than six questions each day. A Labor Government was in office—a very good Labor Government—and the Opposition did not have much to complain about. The situation is entirely different today, of course.

Sometimes fewer than six questions were asked. Each week virtually three hours of debating time could be devoted to motions put forward by members, to motions suggested by people in the community and to matters of public interest within the community. It was debating time, not just an opportunity for members to speak for 10 minutes. It was normal debating time, and

private members had an opportunity to do what their constituents sent them to Parliament to do, that is, raise matters on the floor of the House. There was appreciable time to discuss any motion on what were then known as private members' days. At 2 p.m. the House reverted to Government business.

That practice was followed for more than 25 years until 1951. However, the starting time was altered in 1948 to 10.30 a.m. That cut down the time a little, but none the less there was still about two hours debating time. In 1951, because of the heavy workload, a further Sessional Order was put forward in October on lines similar to this one. That meant the House would sit on Fridays, and that on Thursdays Government business would take precedence. At the time members of Parliament did not buck the system because they recognised that a big work-load had to be cleared. They were prepared to sit the extra day to clear the Bills that the Government placed before the House. In those times we had a longer debate on the Estimates.

Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, the number of questions had risen to an average of 10 to 14 a day. In the next year, Parliament reverted to the old practice, which continued through to 1966. In all, for over 40 years, that practice continued until the ninth year of the coalition Government, when the system was changed. There can be no doubt that the National Party-controlled Government deliberately restricted the rights of back-bench members in 1966. Perhaps the members of the day did not fully recognise what they were supporting. Perhaps they didn't fully recognise the restrictions that would later be placed on members by a Government similar to the one that we have now. The Sessional Order was changed from 2 p.m. on Thursdays back to 1 p.m., which meant that virtually there was no time other than on Thursdays until 1 p.m., which was usually devoted to questions, when members could raise any matter.

On 27 August 1970, a new Sessional Order was introduced similar to the one that we accepted this morning. The Opposition accepted it—has no grouch with it—in relation to matters of public interest. That merely gives honourable members an opportunity to raise issues of importance to their electorates; it does not give Parliament an opportunity to fully debate matters that may be raised by members concerning their electorates. It does not give us an opportunity to debate matters such as the necessity for a public accounts committee. It does not give Parliament an opportunity to debate motions such as those that were struck off the list when Parliament was prorogued last year relating to the detailed activities of this Government. Ministers' overseas visits were very much in question when we rose last year. At that time there was a motion on the Business Paper for that matter to be debated. At no time was an opportunity

given to this Parliament to carry out its proper role and its proper function of scrutineering the activities of the Government for and on behalf of the people of Queensland.

The amendment I have moved today will give that opportunity once more. It will put us on the footing that members had in 1925. We hear talk about the good old days, the times that have gone and should be well forgotten, but I, for one, certainly do not forget what was the practice at the instigation of this Parliament in 1859, through to 1925, and what was tied into the procedure of Parliament until 1966. For 107 years the members of this Parliament enjoyed the opportunity of bringing forward matters of concern to the people of Queensland. The Parliament afforded to members the opportunity to debate matters. That opportunity went by the board on a practical basis in 1966 and was completely annihilated in 1971. On 29 July 1971 a Sessional Order, such as the one that the Leader of the House is endeavouring to have carried today, was first introduced.

Members could say that the matter could be referred to the Standing Orders Committee. It does not need to be, because the Standing Orders provide the opportunity—I think on alternate days—for other than Government business to be debated in this Parliament. That has not happened in the last 10 to 15 years under this Government because of the type of Sessional Order that has been introduced. That opportunity has not been made available to members.

The Labor Party believes unquestionably that there should be time for members to raise matters for debate in this House, that there should be an opportunity to conduct business other than Government business. I need go no further than refer to the Westminster Parliament where the opportunity is given for private members' days, on which Bills, motions or anything else can be initiated by the members themselves for and on behalf of their constituents or sections of the community throughout the United Kingdom.

That is what we are seeking by moving this amendment. We seek to delete the last line and a half of the motion so that, on Wednesday afternoons, the opportunity is given for members of the Parliament to raise matters for and on behalf of the people of Queensland and for the Parliament to debate matters such as the establishment of a public accounts committee.

We should be given the opportunity to move motions arising out of the petitions that are read and received in this Parliament only to be buried in the archives. Parliament does not get the opportunity to discuss them at all. Petitions that are read and received in this Parliament deal with matters of interest to the community and Parliament must have the right to debate them.

Surely we must have the opportunity to debate matters that are of public interest and to put forward to the Government different points of view. This is the place where matters should be debated publicly and openly rather than in party back rooms. This is the place where members should be able to bring matters forward on behalf of the public.

What we are seeking to do is to give back to the back-benchers in this Parliament the rights they enjoyed from 1859 until 1966 when they were denied them by procedure and, since 1971, by Sessional Order.

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (5.29 p.m.): I second the amendment moved so ably by the Leader of the Opposition. It comes to the real crux of this Parliament. Is it the Government's Parliament? Is it Cabinet's Parliament? Is it a Parliament to be run by the Executive? Or is it a Parliament in which the ordinary members can, from time to time, raise matters that they feel are important and ask for a decision of the House? Is it a Parliament in which the ordinary members can discuss matters so that the attitudes of both sides of the House are placed on record?

In case anybody thinks that private members' Bills are not important, let me point out that one of the most successful private members' initiatives was the Commonwealth Electoral (Compulsory Voting) Bill in 1924. It was proposed by Mr E. A. Mann, M.P., and Senator H. J. M. Payne. It introduced compulsory voting in Federal elections. It was a private member's initiative. That could not happen in Queensland to-day.

In the eight or nine years that I have been in this Parliament there has been no opportunity for the discussion of private members' Bills or general business that is not controlled and run by the Government. That is a fact of life. No-one can argue about that. It is also a fact of life that in many other Parliaments throughout the world private members' Bills and general business are discussed, and this is especially so in Westminster, which is the Mother Parliament.

In the House of Commons private members' Bills have precedence over Government business on 10 Fridays in each session, to be appointed by the House. We are not asking much, because we are seeking only Wednesday afternoons—if we ever sit on Wednesday afternoons. It is fairly clear that if the Government does not want a private member to move a resolution or have a private member's Bill debated, it need never sit on a Wednesday afternoon. But we are placing on record our opposition to the changes proposed in the Standing Orders that have been around for some time.

Let me continue discussing the relevant House of Commons Standing Order, which provides—

“(b) Private Members' notices of motions and private Members' bills shall have precedence in that order over government business on ten Fridays in each session to be appointed by the House; and

“(c) On four days other than Fridays in each session to be appointed by the House, private Members' notices of motion shall have precedence until seven o'clock.”

That is laid down in the Standing Orders of the House of Commons.

The Queensland Standing Order relating to the precedence of general business, Standing Order 37, gets wiped out every year by the Sessional Order moved by the Leader of the House. Standing Order 37 reads—

“Private Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day take Precedence Alternately

37. Except on days on which Government business is appointed to take precedence, Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day, not being Government Business, shall respectively, unless otherwise ordered, have precedence on alternate sitting-days of the House; but so that if there are two days in a week in which Government Business has not precedence the relative order of precedence of Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day on such days in the following week shall be reversed.”

So if we follow Standing Orders, we are entitled to debate business other than Government business on alternate sitting days. We talk about the Standing Orders of this Parliament being bad, but perhaps they are not so bad after all. Perhaps it is the Sessional Orders of which we should be critical, the Sessional Orders that continually override the old Standing Orders that were tried and tested over the years.

These Sessional Orders that are moved at the beginning of each session are, indeed, a form of guillotine used by the Government to reduce the time we speak, to lay down certain rules in regard to question-time and to say that members cannot debate general business or private members' motions. Why can we not debate them?

Is it not true that in the days when I was Leader of the Opposition I placed on the Business Paper items relating to the right to march in the streets? Only the other day I saw one of the most telling cartoons I have ever seen. It portrayed Joh on the street corner selling right-to-march permits because for once in his life he had a Right-wing group wanting to march instead of a Left-wing group. In this State the right to march seems in some way to be conditional upon which side one supports.

Surely we are entitled to ask for a change in the system. Surely we are entitled to ask this when Liberal Party members tell me that the only reason they support the

Premier's attitude on the right to march is because they cannot win in the joint-party room. Surely we are entitled to ask for a vote on the floor of this Parliament so that all of those pretending Liberals, all of those fellows who tell me that they believe in these various rights and freedoms and in doing something about the historic buildings around town, would be forced to put their money where their mouths are. I do not think many of them would show up if a debate was held on a Wednesday afternoon. I look back to 25 September last year, the day before this Parliament rose prior to the election, and I found that under the heading "General Business—Notices of Motion" on the Business Paper there were 10 notices. Most of them disappeared down the sink. The Parliament was prorogued, and they were never debated.

Mr Warburton: They were all very important.

Mr BURNS: Yes, they were all very important. They related to overseas loans raised by the Queensland Government, the official Government aircraft, the form of expenses of Ministers, the amount of overtime paid in each Government department and the amounts paid to public relations agencies, barristers, etc. We should be entitled to debate all these matters.

There is at present on the Business paper under our leader's name a motion relating to the appointment of a Public Accounts Committee. We are assured that there are 23 members of the Liberal Party who support the establishment of such a committee. There are 25 members of the Labor Party who support it, so why can we not debate the establishment of such a committee and carry some resolution about it? The Government is not bound to take any action upon such a resolution, but most certainly the people of this State are entitled to hear the views of their elected representatives.

We are one of the few Parliaments that treat members in this way. I shall quote what was said by the President of the Victorian Upper House. It is one of the Houses that I should not be quoting as a House of electoral reform. This is what he said at a CPA conference—

"A feature of our debates has always been that every Wednesday is private members' business day. In fact our sessional orders say just that. On Tuesdays and Thursdays government business takes precedence but on Wednesdays private members' business takes precedence over government business. This always happens and I cannot recall a time when it has not happened this way."

I then asked what happens with private members' Bills. I was told that the Victorian Legislative Assembly had 25 private members' Bills on its books.

We would not be game to try another one in this State. It cost us some \$1,200 or \$1,500. After spending that money and

carrying out what is required under the Standing Orders, we were prevented from presenting that Bill through some smart shenanigans between one Clerk and the next and one set of rulings and another set.

Mr Ahern: You did not understand what a private member's Bill was all about.

Mr BURNS: With due respect, the Minister is one of the greatest shams in this Parliament. He spoke for years about parliamentary reform. He sold his soul to Joh in order to get into the ministry. He has forgotten about parliamentary reform from the day he left the backbenches. Since he has become a Minister, we have seen no new initiatives come out of Cabinet on the issues that he spoke about for years. He was one of the smarties who manipulated the rules of this Parliament to suit the Premier's will at that time. Don't kid us; don't pretend any more; be clear about it. The Minister sold his soul. He is down there with Joh now and he is going to toe the party line. He toes it, and good luck to him. But I ask him not to come into the House and start pretending to me that he is interested in parliamentary reform. He was interested in parliamentary reform while he was a backbencher, but he lost his interest in it the day he became a Cabinet Minister. I ask the Minister to stop pretending.

I can go on with what other Houses of Parliament have done. For example, even in the Fijian Parliament—a Parliament that started years after ours—there is a Business Committee. It is a unique committee. It comprises the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Whips and the Leader of the House. They sit down before the session commences and plan the business of the Parliament.

Why should not we, as members of Parliament, know when this House is going to finish its business? Why should we come into this Parliament at this time of the year and have no idea when the House is going to adjourn? When one wanders around the House everybody asks, "Do you know when we are going to get up?" One replies, "No, no idea at all." Nobody knows. The gardener has a better idea than we have. Miss Glennie is generally the first to know what is happening in this Parliament. The members are the last to know. The Government does not know.

We get a Business Paper every day. The Leader of the House has to hop up in the House each day and move that Orders of the day Nos 1 to 9 be postponed because the Government wants to deal with No. 11. It forgets about No. 10. It goes back to No. 1 and then jumps to No. 3. The Government cannot put the business on the Business Paper in the order that it wants it dealt with. We do not know when the Parliament is going to open or close its session.

Why should not a program be laid out before the Parliament starts? Why should not it be stated that the Parliament will open

on such and such a day in March, that it will sit for three days a week, that it will sit certain nights, and that it will finish its business at the end of June or the end of July, as the case may be? Why cannot the Government do that? Any business in this community can do that, but the Queensland Parliament cannot. It all goes back to the people who are running the Queensland Parliament. They cannot provide a proper timetable.

I again ask: Why cannot an ordinary member of this Parliament be treated the same as a member of the Westminster Parliament or the Parliament in Canberra, or one of the Upper or Lower Houses in New South Wales or Victoria, or the Parliaments in India, Fiji, Jamaica, any of the West Indian countries, Guyana or Canada? Why does the Liberal and National Party Government continue to have to move the suspension of Standing Orders to prevent private members' business or general business being raised by those who are elected by the members of the community? It is because the Government has something to hide or it is scared of the matters being raised in the Parliament. It is a timid, tired, lazy Government that refuses to allow general business and to permit a member to have a say on the issues that he feels are important to the people he represents.

Mr WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (5.40 p.m.): When one travels around the various parts of the electorates and talks to various groups, one often hears that those groups try to run their organisations on parliamentary procedures. They often ask us questions as to how we do things or how it should be done.

Every member here knows that when he attends such a meeting certain procedures set down on the agenda are gone through and finally one gets down to general business. It is possibly the most important part of any discussion in any organisation. Yet in this Assembly, which is supposed to be the example, the one to be followed by so many organisations, we really do not have such a period as general business.

If one looks at authorities that people use for the drafting of rules for conducting organisations, one finds a book by Joske, a member of Parliament who made the point, as did Renton, that the procedures that organisations should follow should be those based on Parliamentary practice. But that is false. It is totally untrue, because, as I made the point just a moment ago, we do not have an opportunity to discuss general business. In theory we do, because if one looks at the Business Paper for the day one sees that it reads "Government Business—Notices of Motion", then "Government Business—Orders of the Day", and at the end one comes to "General Business—Notices of Motion". The people of Queensland ought to be told that that is a farce, that there is no opportunity for discussing general business in this Parliament unless one has the numbers.

The member for Lytton raised the other alternatives open to the Opposition or to other

members. Some time ago the Opposition endeavoured to move a private members' Bill. There was confusion, with two different views given by two different Clerks. It was not that the Opposition did not know what to do. In fact, I have here a document before me given by a Clerk as to how to go about it. I wish to read this so it is reported in "Hansard". It states—

"PRIVATE BILL PROCEDURE USING STANDING ORDERS

"(1) Notice of intention containing general objects to be published once a week for 4 consecutive weeks in Government Gazette and in one or more Brisbane papers.

"(2) Bill to be initiated on petition to Parliament accompanied by a printed copy of Bill and evidence of advertisements. This is to be done within 3 months of the advertisements.

"(3) A Notice of Motion for leave to introduce the Bill to be given after the petition has been received. The Bill to be brought in within 30 days from presentation of the Petition.

"(4) After leave given—"

and that is dependent upon leave being given, which is once more the numbers game—

"and before 1st reading, sufficient copies of Bill (at promoters own expense) to be delivered to the Clerk for distribution. Bill to be in same format as a Public Bill. Receipt for \$50 deposit being paid into Consolidated Revenue to be also produced.

"(5) After 1st reading, Notice of Motion for referral to Select Committee required.

"(6) After favourable report by Select Committee, Bill to be placed on business paper for 2nd reading and further stages to be taken as are Public Bills."

Mr Deputy Speaker, as one who has been here a long time, you would appreciate that these rules make it virtually impossible for an individual member of Parliament ever to bring a matter before the House. What we are trying to do today is to make time available within any parliamentary week for a general business session for private members' matters to be brought forward. Surely that is not too much to ask.

If any member endeavours to follow the rules that I have just read, it costs around \$1,000, it takes about six to seven months, and there are all the technicalities of printing Bills, advertisements and paying money into Consolidated Revenue through The Clerk of Parliament.

Yet we tell the people that we are a democracy, that we give the people the right to speak out. I do not believe we have that right to speak, and that is because of the way that this Government runs the Parliament.

This Parliament has Standing Rules and Orders that are supposed to allow members

to bring forward matters of importance, but they are obstructed. Members, regardless of their political persuasion, regardless of their party, are prevented from pursuing issues of vital importance to their constituents.

There must be a change, so why cannot we change it by setting aside one afternoon a week for general business discussion to allow these matters that have been brought forward, not only by the Opposition but also in the past by Government members, to be debated? Otherwise, we know what happens; they simply lapse at the end of the session.

Something has to be done. There have to be some changes brought about so that this Parliament works effectively. I suggest that it will not be brought about by a committee on the Standing Rules and Orders. It will discuss some aspects and it will make some recommendations—but it will be a long, long time before anything is done. We can change it right here and now. We can bring about the changes at this very moment by allowing Wednesday afternoons to be devoted to general business for all members.

It is time we threw aside some of our ideological approaches and said, "Let's look after the Parliament for the people." We are obstructing ourselves and obstructing this Parliament. It is ridiculous to suggest that if a member wants to bring forward a private matter he must pursue it by a private Bill in the way I have just set out. It is costly and time-consuming, and there is no guarantee that it will be debated. That is the whole joke of it. We could go through all of these procedures—have the advertisements, print the Bill and have it referred to a select committee, which on the numbers game would be made up of a majority of Government members who would bring forward a negative decision—and the Bill would not proceed. There have to be changes, and the solution being put forward by the Opposition is the obvious one.

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House) (5.46 p.m.), in reply: I am sure I do not need to make much comment on the amendment—

Mr Hooper: Because you can't.

Mr WHARTON: I was most interested in the debate and what the Leader of the Opposition said.

Sir William Knox: What did the member for Archerfield say?

Mr WHARTON: Nothing, as usual; nor did any other member of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition's speech was a lot of huff and puff about nothing. That is typical of what we have seen of him in all the time he has been in the Parliament while I have been here. He has never done anything. He has led a tired-looking team over there that has done nothing. There were two speakers in support of him. This is supposed to be a great issue—

Mr Casey: Mr Wharton—

Mr WHARTON: The Leader of the Opposition has had his say. Let him hold his horses.

Mr Casey: Why don't you answer the question instead of being personally abusive?

Mr WHARTON: I have answered the question. I am replying to his speech, which greatly intrigued me. He said nothing in it in the whole time that he spoke. That is the interesting point: in all debates in matters he has raised in this House—and he has raised many—he has not suggested a forward-looking policy of any kind. He is always looking back. He went back to 1886 or some other time, and talked about some old-hat privilege that was enjoyed when the Labor Party was in power. They did not use it to any advantage for the people of the State—and that is what we are about as a Government. We are trying to do something for the people of the State. It is something that Labor hasn't done. It wouldn't know how to.

The speech the Leader of the Opposition made today means nothing. He loves to take up a lot of time in the House. I know it is important for him to do this today, because he will not be here next week. He will be away on a Qantas flight, flying around the world. He will forget about Queensland. Never mind Queensland! The Government will look after Queensland. He need not worry about that. He will be flying around the world. He called, "Not formal" to the notice of motion. He said it would not be talked about. Maybe it will. He has had his time. He talked about this and that and everything else. In the Address-in-Reply debate all he did was condemn people. He put forward nothing positive, nothing good and nothing in the best interests of Queensland. He is always a knocker. Let us have that knocking put aside and let us have some progress.

The member for Lytton complained that he could not introduce a private member's Bill. We had a private member's Bill here last session when the member for Merthyr introduced one. It can be done. We have debates during which they can complain—and that is a real wailing wall for the ALP. On the motion for the adjournment of the House on Tuesdays they can talk for five minutes, during which time they can make their point. There are plenty of debates in which they can make their point. They should have no problem at all.

Mr Casey: We can't do it by motion.

Mr WHARTON: If the Opposition would only put forward something positive, I am sure that the Government would listen to it.

This Government has been a forward-thinking one. We have tried to improve the processes of Parliament. A great deal has been said about debate in the House. We have listened to this debate. We have to

sit here and listen to it. Goodness, it wouldn't stir a possum! The honourable member for Lytton made a great airy-fairy speech and then walked out. We didn't hear any more from him. He did his bit and went.

Sir William Knox: You won't hear him for the rest of the session.

Mr WHARTON: No. However, I was intrigued with what he had to say. He talked about all the matters that we should debate. They are able to debate them. He said he did not even have a program for the House. Here is a copy of the program that all honourable members have. He probably hasn't had time to read it yet. If he has not had time to read the program, he has certainly made a contribution to this House to suit himself.

The honourable member for Rockhampton made a few pertinent comments. He used to be the Opposition's Leader of Business in the House. His was a reasonable contribution, but unfortunately he still thinks in the past. This is a forward-looking Government, trying to help Queensland and trying to get the business done. The Opposition has plenty of opportunity. There are plenty of Bills on the Business Paper. Government members say, "Can't you let us talk more?" ALP members say, "Can't we get home? Can't we get back to work? Can't we get back to our electorates? Can't we get overseas on trips?"

I am sure that honourable members will accept that the proposal has stood the test of time and is a flexible one. I am amenable to change, but changes must be progressive. If honourable members opposite can put up something that is progressive, let them do so. We are not going back to the dark ages and, as the amendment suggests, merely omitting the words "and after 1 o'clock p.m. on Wednesdays".

I oppose the amendment and support the motion.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (Mr Casey's amendment) stand part of the motion—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 40

Ahern
Bjelke-Petersen
Booth
Borbidge
Doumany
Edwards
Elliott
Fitzgerald
Gibbs, I. J.
Glasson
Goleby
Gunn
Harper
Hartwig
Innes
Jennings
Katter
Kaus
Knox
Kyburz
Lane

Lester
Lockwood
McKechnie
Menzel
Moore
Muntz
Nelson
Powell
Prentice
Scassola
Scott-Young
Simpson
Stephan
Tenni
Turner
Warner
Wharton

Tellers:
Gygar
Neal

NOES, 24

Blake
Burns
Casey
D'Arcy
Davis
Eaton
Fouras
Gibbs, R. J.
Hansen
Hooper
Jones
Kruger
Mackenroth

McLean
Milliner
Prest
Smith
Vaughan
Warburton
Wilson
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:
Scott
Shaw

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

[Sitting suspended from 5.58 to 7.15 p.m.]

EXOTIC DISEASES IN ANIMALS BILL

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Ahern, read a first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (7.16 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The Bill is intended to update the compensation provisions of the existing Act and to streamline the present procedures for controlling and eradicating outbreaks of exotic disease as applied under the Stock Act and the Foot and Mouth Disease Regulations.

I feel sure that the Bill will meet with general approval, as debate in the House in recent years has clearly demonstrated that honourable members share a common awareness and concern in relation to our defences against incursions of exotic disease and our preparedness to deal with outbreaks.

This concern was undoubtedly heightened by the recent exotic disease scare in New Zealand, which had some features in common with the Tasmanian incident in 1979. Fortunately for the economic viability of both countries, specimens from each outbreak proved negative on laboratory examination. These incidents have highlighted our good fortune in being free of many of the highly destructive diseases which plague the animal and human populations in other areas of the world.

Initially, of course, this was due to the isolation of our island continent and slow surface transport, subsequently reinforced by tight quarantine requirements as more knowledge was gained of the nature and means of spread of disease.

However, this protection is becoming more tenuous year by year as air communication becomes faster and the volume of passenger and goods traffic increases proportionately.

The risks inherent in this traffic were highlighted during an exotic diseases seminar in Victoria in 1979, where it was pointed out that some 6 t of smuggled foodstuffs are apprehended yearly at Sydney International Airport alone, and this must be accepted as being only the tip of the iceberg.

Apart from foot and mouth disease, those exotic diseases most likely to be introduced in smuggled food products are swine vesicular disease, African swine fever and trichinosis.

The possibility of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease is, of course, the predominant concern on everybody's mind. It could lead to disruption or complete loss of export trade for our livestock industries which were valued nationally at \$1,924m for meat and five animals in 1979-80, and at \$3,500m if wool is included.

Loss of export trade has particularly serious effects in Queensland, which is heavily dependent on overseas markets for disposal of meat and meat products. In this regard, honourable members would be well aware of the hardships inflicted on northern producers because of the limited embargoes imposed on the import of Queensland livestock, meat, wool and hides by overseas countries in the bluetongue episode of 1977. Total embargoes would be disastrous.

It has been estimated that an outbreak of foot and mouth disease would cost Australian producers \$100m a month during an outbreak and for six months after the last case, which is the usual time lapse before importing countries rescind their embargoes. An outbreak could also drastically alter Australia's favoured position on overseas markets, with damaging long-range effects.

Apart from being a disaster for producers, it must be borne in mind that the adverse effects would be felt throughout the entire community, particularly small businesses in country areas and those support industries involved in the processing and marketing of livestock products.

Apart from those previously mentioned, other exotic diseases which would have very adverse effects on animal health and our export trade are rinderpest, sheep pox, Rift Valley fever, African horse sickness, Newcastle disease, vesicular evanthema and vesicular stomatitis. Screw worm fly, present in countries to our north, would involve high eradication costs, but would not necessarily adversely affect exports. Although screw worm fly could enter Australia by island hopping across Torres Strait, the majority of exotic diseases would be introduced with illegally imported animals or by human agency through the smuggling of food stuffs, small animals or birds.

Smuggled birds and animals are likely to carry Newcastle disease and rabies. There is a very high incidence of these two diseases in neighbouring South East Asian countries. The great fear with rabies is that it would prove impossible to control or exterminate if it became established in feral animals in

our extensive pastoral areas. Honourable members would no doubt be aware of the incidents during the last few years involving suspect cases of rabies on Thursday Island and in a dog which passed through the Lytton Quarantine Station. Fortunately both were negative.

Another exotic animal disease with major human consequences is Rift Valley fever, which could be introduced by an infected human rather than an infected animal or material. A major outbreak in Egypt in 1977 resulted in 18 000 human cases with 398 deaths. While similar incidence and deaths would not necessarily occur if the virus gained entry to this country because of better public health services, the overall effects of this disease on both animal and human populations could be very serious indeed.

Apart from the recovery of bluetongue virus in 1977, which has, fortunately, proved to be avirulent and neither very widespread nor active to date, other exotic disease incidents of concern in recent years have involved an outbreak of fowl plague in Victoria in 1976 which was successfully eradicated; the recovery of Newcastle disease virus in smuggled birds apprehended in Cairns in 1977; the confiscation of two batches of smuggled gamecock eggs in Brisbane in 1978 and early 1980; and the recovery of the causal agents of three exotic diseases of horses and of one pig disease in Australian stock in recent years. Perhaps of most importance was the vesicular disease scare in Tasmania in 1979 previously referred to, which provided very valuable lessons in the handling of outbreaks of exotic disease. More than anything else it demonstrated the limitations of animal health authorities in dealing with a major exotic disease emergency on their own, and the necessity for early involvement of outside organisations such as the State Emergency Service, police, Telecom, the Defence Forces and local authorities.

Experience in the above exotic disease incidents and from a number of eradication exercises conducted by my department have clearly indicated the need to amend the legislation in order to deal more efficiently and expeditiously with suspected outbreaks of exotic disease. In particular, the existing provisions of the Stock Act for the declaration of infected and standstill areas are cumbersome and slow and are somewhat deficient in powers to adequately control movements of persons, animals, animal products, vehicles and things in an eradication situation.

Honourable members will appreciate the vital necessity to move quickly to deal with a suspected outbreak of exotic disease. The sooner it can be brought under control the less will be the economic consequences and the better the chances of eradication. In this regard, our dependence on livestock exports demands that eradication be quick, complete and demonstrable.

These needs have been recognised in the Bill by provisions to enable the declaration of a quarantine zone by an inspector immediately he suspects the presence of an exotic disease or pathogen in an area. The quarantine will last for 96 hours unless earlier revoked or extended by the Minister. This will enable early revocation if the first suspicion is not confirmed, or for extension if more time is required to obtain a firm laboratory diagnosis.

In addition, provisions are included to allow the Minister to delegate certain of his powers with a view to ensuring the availability of an authorised person at all times to enable the speedy declaration of an infected, standstill or control zone in relation to a specified exotic disease and a specified class or classes of stock. The term 'zone' is used in order to avoid any confusion with disease control areas declared under the provisions of the Stock Act.

The declaration of zones in relation to specified classes of stock will also minimise interference with normal movements and trade in other classes of livestock not susceptible or known to be carriers of the particular exotic disease involved. For example, an outbreak of Newcastle disease of poultry would not affect other stock movements except those from a known infected holding.

Furthermore, provision is made for the Minister to requisition the use of any land, premises, plant, goods or services of any agency or department of the Crown in right of the State or of any local authority for such time as is considered necessary in order to control or eradicate an outbreak of exotic disease.

The Chief Inspector of Stock is also to be allowed to delegate certain of his powers. This will enable delegation of authority to supervising veterinary officers at the local level, a very necessary measure in a State the size of Queensland. The powers of inspectors under the Stock Act relating to disease control have been adopted in their entirety, as have powers to control suspected outbreaks of exotic disease prescribed by the Foot and Mouth Disease Regulations. The latter include powers for an inspector to order an owner to destroy healthy, suspected or infected animals in an eradication situation. This inclusion in the Act will meet objections from some quarters of such powers being prescribed by regulation.

These provisions are complemented by increased powers granted to inspectors to control the movements of persons, animals, animal products, vehicles and other things into, within and out of declared quarantine, standstill, infected and control zones, including the right to declare places of entry and exit, and to set up road-blocks for the purpose of stopping vehicles for examination. This includes a right to break open any container on premises or a vehicle to search for evidence of contamination with disease.

An important inclusion empowers an inspector to obtain a warrant to search a dwelling-place if the prior consent of the occupier is not forthcoming. Honourable members will appreciate the necessity for this power, in order to search for possible sources of infection such as smuggled food-stuffs, or animal products such as eggs, semen or biological preparations, which may be readily concealed within a dwelling.

In this regard, inspectors appointed under the Bill will include inspectors of stock and Government veterinary officers and any person, including a police officer, member of the State Emergency Service or other officer of my department operating under their control and direction.

An important provision is power to enable an inspector to destroy any animal he suspects, on reasonable grounds, is infected with rabies. This is highly important in view of the highly infective nature of this disease and its horrendous effects on both animals and humans.

Other provisions enable an inspector to search for, trap and destroy vectors of exotic disease and to hunt and destroy undomesticated animals in an infected zone. The problems posed by our large feral populations of buffaloes, goats, cats and dogs and of feral pigs in particular are too well known to require further comment. The services of local authorities and the Armed Forces, with their expertise and sophisticated equipment, would be called upon for assistance in relation to these control aspects of an eradication campaign.

Existing powers whereby an inspector may order an owner to repair any existing yards, pens or enclosures in order to make them stock-proof are expanded by provision to enable him, on the authority of the Minister, to order the owner to erect such enclosures as may be necessary to confine any domesticated animals on his property. These wide-ranging powers, including the power to order an owner to destroy infected, suspected or seemingly healthy animals within an infected zone, are absolutely necessary in order to deal effectively with a suspected outbreak of exotic disease.

The provisions of the existing Foot and Mouth Disease Expenses and Compensation Fund Act have also been subjected to very critical scrutiny and have been found wanting. As the title indicates, that Act was originally introduced with the sole purpose of providing the machinery to compensate producers for losses incurred during an outbreak of foot and mouth disease. However, over the years other exotic diseases have been included under the compensation provisions of the Act, usually after agreement was reached between the Commonwealth and States on cost-sharing arrangements for control and eradication measures.

The diseases at present covered are: African swine fever, bluetongue, foot and mouth.

disease, fowl plague, Newcastle disease, rabies, rinderpest, swine fever, swine vesicular disease, vesicular exanthema and vesicular stomatitis, with provision for inclusion of other exotic diseases by Order in Council. It should be pointed out that screw worm infestation is not included in the list, as Commonwealth/States cost-sharing arrangements have not yet been ratified, although the Australian Agricultural Council has approved such action.

The name of the Act has therefore become a misnomer, and as the subordinate legislation under the Act was also framed to deal solely with foot and mouth disease, there have been problems in extending the regulations to apply to the other exotic diseases. A change of title has therefore been long overdue.

Should an outbreak of an unlisted exotic disease occur, immediate action will be taken to include it under the provisions of the Act by Order in Council, whether or not the Commonwealth/States agreement on cost-sharing applies. Powers are included to enable the Minister to declare official dates of commencement and of termination of an outbreak of exotic disease.

Compensation will apply to any animals or property ordered to be destroyed during that period for the purpose of controlling or eradicating the disease. In addition, compensation will be paid for any animal certified by a Government veterinary officer as having died of the exotic disease during the declared period and within the declared area relating to that disease. Should it be decided that compensation shall not apply to a particular exotic disease not covered by the Commonwealth/States cost-sharing agreement, dates of the outbreak will not be declared. Provision is included in the Bill for the setting up of separate accounts for the various exotic diseases, the legal backing for payments from each account and for their eventual winding-up. In this regard, it may be pointed out that buildings and other improvements in good repair are normally cleansed and disinfected, not destroyed. However, in the Tasmanian incident, some buildings and improvements were so dilapidated and insanitary it was considered the only way of disinfecting the area was to destroy them. To speed settlement of claims, applications for compensation must be lodged within 90 days after destruction, although the Minister of the day is given power to approve applications lodged outside this time limit.

Another important provision enables compensation to be denied, either totally or in part, to any person convicted of an offence which is considered to have contributed to the introduction or spread of exotic disease. The severity of this penalty would be related to the seriousness of the offence.

The value of stock or property is related to market value at the time of death or destruction and the procedures for reaching

agreement on such value have been streamlined. Initially, agreement may be reached between the owner and the Minister or his nominee (usually a local Government veterinary officer). If agreement is not reached at this level, the matter will be referred to a valuer mutually acceptable to both parties. Failing agreement by this means, it would then be referred to a judge of the District Court for decision.

Specific provision is made to exclude compensation for loss of profit, breach of contract or award, loss of production or other consequential loss whatever and to ensure that, where compensation is paid under the Act, owners are not eligible to claim further compensation under any other Act. The exclusion of compensation for losses other than animals and property ordered to be destroyed is in line with the uniform legislation of all States and the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth/States cost-sharing agreement. When a dispute arises as to the right of a claimant to receive compensation, payment may be withheld until the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of the Minister, or he may refer it to a judge of the Brisbane District Court for resolution.

As may be expected in view of the seriousness of offences relating to exotic disease, penalties imposed under the Act are severe, including fines of not more than \$4,000 or imprisonment for up to six months.

Apart from inclusion of the existing legislative provisions of certain sections of the Stock Act and the Foot and Mouth Disease Expenses and Compensation Funds Act, which are to be amended or repealed, the Bill contains updated requirements relating to the liability of corporations, employers and employees; the service of notices; evidentiary and protection clauses; and, of course, the necessary regulation-making powers.

The Bill contains very necessary amendments to modernise and streamline the provisions of legislation for dealing with outbreaks of exotic disease and I commend it to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Blake, adjourned.

SUGAR EXPERIMENT STATIONS ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 74) on Mr Ahern's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr BLAKE (Bundaberg) (7.38 p.m.): In rising to speak to this Bill, I notice that it is the first of five Bills dealing with primary industries on the Business Paper for today.

I note also that these Bills were introduced on the previous sitting day of this Parliament.

I know it is the claim of the Government that primary industries Bills are formulated after considerable debate and consultation with the industry. I do not doubt that for one moment. However, when we come to study a Bill we find that large sections of various industries claim they had no part in that consultative process. Bearing in mind that these five are now on the Business Paper to be dealt with one sitting day after being introduced, I recall that Kenneth Wiltshire, the senior lecturer in government at the Queensland University, commented in "The Courier-Mail" on 4 March this year that this place was the George Street "sausage machine" and referred to the number of Bills churned out.

In fairness to the Minister, I must say that he has indicated to me that he will not be bringing in one of the Bills; so that reduces the number to four. That will be a help, because there is no way we could do justice to these Bills in the time allowed for studying them and bringing them forward.

The Opposition has no intention of trying to complicate the Bill. Basically, it is a simple and sensible machinery Bill. First, it seeks to put beyond legal doubt the right of members of cane pest and disease control boards to receive fees and allowances. It has been the practice within the industry for many years for fees and allowances to be paid to these people, and there is no question or argument about their moral right to receive them. However, it appears that doubt has been cast on the legality of the practice, and the purpose of the Bill is to remove any legal doubt.

The Opposition has no objection to that. In view of the great work that cane pest and disease control boards do in the industry, the less we have to say about a machinery measure that is necessary to correct anomalies in reimbursements, the better.

The second part of the Bill, which is to amend the Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act, is also a commonsense measure. It has been the law that a crop lien stays in force for only one year on the one crop. That situation is similar to the one which arises when mortgages are taken out for security purposes. I can remember a time when people used to look at certain mercantile documents, and so on, to see whether a person had a mortgage on his property, or whether or not he was in debt.

Anyone familiar with farm financing, or, indeed, other forms of financing, would know that releasing a mortgage and then taking out another one later if further security is needed is a waste of time and

money. It is a common practice for a person who takes out a mortgage for security on his property to allow it to stand, even if he is a millionaire. The trouble and the cost involved in taking out another mortgage to do the same job are unnecessary and costly. It is not good business practice. One could draw a similar analogy in relation to crop liens.

There have been times during the last four years when many districts in Queensland have suffered above-average drought stress in circumstances in which industries such as the sugar industry have been expanded, and the need for financial accommodation has probably been extended more than it would have been under normal circumstances. An accepted way of raising finance is to take out a crop lien, and it is good common sense to agree with the provision that a crop lien can be extended to more than one crop and for more than one year. That provision has the approval of the Opposition.

The Bill provides that a specification must be made as to the duration of the lien when it is taken out. If that were not so, the uninitiated, who usually depend on legal advice in such matters, could overlook the provision and a shrewd lender might extend the lien beyond the crops to which it pertained. The lien could be virtually opened. The fact that it can be extended beyond one year, with the requirement that the duration of the lien be specified, meets with the approval of the Opposition. The point need not be laboured further other than to say that it is certainly an improvement on the present position in terms of crop liens for raising finance for production purposes.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (7.46 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for his support of the legislation. It is sensible legislation which has been the subject of consultation with the sugar industry. In fact, it is before the House today on the initiative of the sugar industry. I think the honourable member recognised that when he indicated the Opposition's support.

He commenced his speech tonight with a mild complaint about the fact that the legislation was introduced only last Thursday. I appreciate the honourable member's problem. It is only fair to say that the pieces of legislation which we are proceeding with tonight are not extensive or complex. They are really fairly simple to comprehend. It is only honest to say, too, that having discussed a matter earlier with the honourable member today, and his indicating to me that he was not yet ready to debate the hen quotas legislation, we readily agreed to withdraw that legislation to enable further time for consultation. I feel there is no real problem

in that regard. The business of the House must proceed. The legislation is sensible and worthy of the support of the House.

Motion (Mr Ahern) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Akers (Pine Rivers) in the chair
Clauses 1 to 8, as read, agreed to.
Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Ahern, by leave, read a third time.

CANNED FRUITS MARKETING BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 75) on Mr Ahern's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr BLAKE (Bundaberg) (7.50 p.m.): There is no need for us to get overly excited about this Bill at this stage because it applies to the type of canned fruit that is not produced in relevant quantities in Queensland, with perhaps the exception of pears. Even in that regard we do not look like coming within the provisions of the Bill for some time.

It is quite understandable—to me, it is very understandable—that the Commonwealth has agreed to all aspects of this scheme with a view to stabilising the canned fruits industry. In fact, the Bill provides that canned fruits include only apricots, peaches or pears or mixtures of those fruits in excess of 55 per cent of the pack. That is why, as yet, we are dealing only with complementary legislation which has been passed by the other States and the Commonwealth.

Mr Kruger interjected.

Mr BLAKE: It is alleged that that is so, but I am not prepared to allege anything of that nature in this Chamber.

The set-up under the Australian Canned Fruits Corporation is designed to give stability within the canned fruits industry. The organisational set-up reminds me very much of the sugar industry organisation which contributes to the stability of that industry. The body controls the sale of canned fruits throughout what is referred to as the equalisation market, just as the sugar industry tailors its production in keeping with what will be considered reasonably profitable markets.

Mrs Kyburz: And occasionally over-produces.

Mr BLAKE: The sugar industry does, occasionally, but it must be realised that beet sugar is produced in the cooler climate and cane sugar is produced in the tropical climate. The variety and range of climatic

conditions are so great that it is humanly impossible to control production with exactitude. The results we achieve are far better than they would be if control was not attempted in the sugar industry. We would be much worse off if there were not wise control of the industry. This is what the canned fruits industry is attempting to achieve.

It stands to reason that the Australian Canned Fruits Corporation could not have any effective regulation of production of canned fruits if it did not have certain powers of entry, inspection and control. Although the people who do not generally submit readily to regulation and control might fret about some of the provisions in the Bill, the Opposition does not consider that they are anything but necessary to obtain that stabilisation of production within reasonably profitable markets.

It is a two or even three-stage market, as exists in the sugar industry. The first is the Australian market, which is quite predictable. The second is the export market within a reasonably expected price range. The third is the residue of market, which might be called production completely at growers' risk. It is desirable in any industry, and it is applicable to this Bill, that responsible people reap the rewards of responsible production and the benefits of responsible restraints in their own industry.

The Commonwealth and other State Governments concerned are particularly anxious that Queensland enact this legislation, and so be seen to be participating in the scheme. As I have explained, and as the Minister explained in his introductory remarks, the Bill does not have a great deal of relevance to our fruit-producing industry at the moment, but I think it has a great deal of relevance to our sense of responsibility in that we are prepared to pass legislation complementary to Commonwealth and other State legislation relating to another primary industry product, because without that we could not have effective organisation of the fruit industry, nor could we keep the production of canned fruit within a range in which people in the industry could reasonably expect a satisfactory return. The Opposition sees nothing of any consequence in the Bill to which it is opposed on principle or in fact, and I will conclude my remarks at that point.

Mr McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (7.56 p.m.): I support the Bill. If any area were going to be adversely affected by this Bill it would be my electorate. I have sought a great deal of advice on its ramifications, and I am pleased to note that there is unanimity between the Government and the Opposition, and that there are few problems with the Bill as far as producers in my electorate are concerned.

But the Bill does raise another issue, and that is the need for co-operation between the States to ensure the viability of the

deciduous fruit-growing industry. I am afraid the other States do not have a very good record in that they have used just about every device they can to try to prevent access of Queensland fruit to certain southern markets. With the exception of New South Wales, it is very difficult for us to sell our deciduous fruit in the southern States.

We would dearly love to be able to stabilise the deciduous fruit-growing industry in Queensland but, of course, that is not possible without agreement from the other States. The other States are the major beneficiaries under this Bill in that they have most of the capacity to can apricots, peaches and pears. The industry is in quite a mess, and they have sought our co-operation to try to straighten it out. Of course, if we can help stabilise the canning industry in those areas then hopefully some benefit will flow on to the fresh fruit industry in Queensland. But when we realise that the other States have done everything they can to prevent access to their markets I think we, as a wise Government, should seek some quid pro quo if we are prepared to help them out in this matter. I have discussed this matter with the fruit industry in my area, and I have been informed that cold store fruit and CA fruit that comes onto our market late in the season is having a very detrimental effect on that industry. The quid pro quo that we seek is that before the legislation is proclaimed the other States should agree to help us by agreeing to our introducing legislation to provide a cut-off date for the late entry of traditional cold store deciduous fruit and CA fruit into Queensland. I do not think there would be any problem with this, although some people have mentioned to me privately that section 92 may be a problem.

Honourable members will be aware that New South Wales has a cut-off date for immature fruit. If fruit can be deemed to be immature, I think that legally there should be no problem in deeming fruit to be over-ripe. Queensland consumers are entitled to have fresh fruit if it is available. Whilst some CA fruit in January and February—I am talking about the previous season's fruit—may make good eating, the fact of the matter is that the majority of the fruit is not good, and the consumer does not have the expertise, on just looking at an apple or pear or whatever it might be, to know whether it is CA fruit or fruit fresh from the trees in Stanthorpe. So this legislation will be good not only for the farmer but also for the consumer.

I want the Minister to know that our industry supports what he is trying to do with the Bill presently before the House. The people engaged in the industry have accepted his invitation to prepare a case on the matter of controlled atmosphere fruit that I have brought to his attention. I thank him very much for agreeing to consider

this matter. I hope that he will find ways and means to do what the industry wants. I support the Bill.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (8.1 p.m.), in reply: I thank the two speakers for their support of the legislation. As the honourable member for Bundaberg has rightly indicated, this is complementary legislation between the States and the Commonwealth. It is designed to bring stability to an industry that has gone through troubled times.

It is particularly appropriate that legislation such as this should apply to this industry. What is not often understood about the fruit industry, particularly this section of it, is that it is so inflexible. The people engaged in it cannot change their minds very often on the crops they will produce. It takes up to eight years to bring a tree into production. Obviously those trees cannot be pulled out and other types of trees planted to meet new market demand at every ebb and flow of the market, as it were. Also, the canning side of the industry has such an immense capital commitment that it is quite impossible to be shifting it around, closing it and opening it at other times.

The industry is vital to Australia, and it is important to us, for a number of reasons. It is therefore important that the problems that confront the industry be solved co-operatively, and that is the purpose of this legislation. I am pleased that it has the support of the two honourable members who have participated in the debate. It certainly has the support of the Government.

The honourable member for Carnarvon has brought another matter to my attention in this debate. It relates not to the legislation but to a very important issue in his electorate. He has brought the matter to my attention on a number of occasions, and I can now say to him that I have in my hand correspondence from the Committee of Direction of Fruit Marketing directly relating to the problems that he has raised. As he has brought them to my attention, and in view of their seriousness to the growers in his electorate, I will be having a very close look at this matter and will provide him with a decision on it as soon as possible.

I thank honourable members for their support of the legislation.

Motion (Mr Ahern) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Akers (Pine Rivers) in the chair; Hon. M. J. Ahern (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—Powers of Corporation—

Mrs KYBURZ (8.5 p.m.): Speaking to clause 6 of this Bill gives me the opportunity to express some of my concerns about

the legislation to the Minister. I realise that this equalisation scheme is probably extremely important to the industry as a whole. However, it is quite obvious that the costs of canned fruit will be augmented considerably by the implementation of this legislation throughout Australia. During preliminary discussions I heard some members quote a price increase of up to 10c a tin. When such an increase is considered on, say, a tin of apricots, which now costs between 62c and 70c, that is quite a hefty increase.

Mr Kruger: There is a lot of syrup in those cans, too.

Mrs KYBURZ: I will get to that.

The price increase is quite high, particularly when one considers the cost in western areas, which is outside of my current knowledge, but I would imagine that it would be at least 10c to 15c a can higher than city prices. Having related that to the equalisation scheme, I think it is very important that we find out how consumers will be asked to pay for this. The Minister is giving me a questioning look. He will have his chance when he replies.

I realise that the legislation is totally complementary and Queensland is simply following suit. However, the corporation has rather wide powers, and if it is to control the canned fruit industry in Australia it obviously needs them. Clause 6 (1) (c) provides—

“manage and control all matters connected with, or arising out of, the handling, storage, protection, transfer, shipment or sale of canned fruits”.

I am concerned about the sugar content of canned fruits. I was disgusted to see the latest advertising kick of the Sugar Board which is trying to dupe the public into thinking that there is nothing wrong with eating sugar, sugar, sugar. I think it is an absolutely disgusting campaign, particularly as I think it is based on false allegations. I want to know if this corporation will try to dupe the public by saying that canned fruit, which is canned with a sugar-based syrup, is in fact “harmless”.

Personally I buy only fruit that is canned in its own syrup. I think it is extremely important that the average Australian consumer realise that there are now two ways in which fruits are canned. Obviously each is different.

I think it is very important in clause 6 (1) (e) that the corporation considers in its marketing strategy ways in which great emphasis can be given to the vitamin content in canned fruit. It is becoming extremely important in our society for people to read the labels on tins. I find it irksome and difficult when going through a supermarket, particularly at a busy time, to stop to read labels for the fine print. I would like to see this corporation give consideration to an overall strategy for the labelling of

canned fruit. If there were an overall strategy, if the sugar content were clearly labelled and if the shelf-life of the product were clearly stated, I think it would help everybody, especially those in western areas who do not know if a product has been in a city warehouse for three or four months and then has sat on a shelf in Quilpie or Birdsville for another three or four months.

I think that the powers of the corporation relating to those matters that I have discussed are almost limitless, because it is quite obvious, under clause 6 (1) (d), that the corporation will attempt to promote the overall sale and consumption of canned fruit, which obviously means that it will try to increase the consumption of canned fruit in every household.

My concern about that clause is that I believe we should be pushing the consumption of fresh fruit more than the consumption of canned fruit. I listened very carefully to what the honourable member for Carnarvon had to say. I raised this matter with him. He agreed with me that it is important to push the consumption of fresh fruit. However, there are many areas where fresh fruit is not available, and there are seasons when fresh fruit is not available. Obviously, if one has to turn to canned fruit, it should be a second choice. I would think it extremely sad to be promoting the sale and consumption of canned fruit above fresh fruit at any time.

I take this opportunity to express my concern to the Minister about those matters relating to the sugar content of canned fruit and also about the cost of each and every can.

Mr AHERN: I think the points raised by the honourable member for Salisbury would have been more appropriately raised during the second-reading debate.

The powers of the corporation which are described in clause 6 of the legislation are the normal powers of a corporation associated with the acquisition and disposal of a product. That is what is actually going to happen here. There will be acquisition and disposal by the corporation, and there have to be completely adequate and comprehensive powers laid down to enable that to occur. This is patterned on a number of other corporations operating now in the Federal and State arenas. It is no different from the types of powers described there. I think they are not inappropriate powers. They are necessary powers in an operation of this nature.

The honourable member's principal concern was that it would result in an increase in the price of canned fruits to the housewife. Obviously, that is something that could flow from the operations of this corporation. At present a lot of canned fruit that comes under these headings is being marketed unprofitably. If as a result farmers are able to operate profitably, then I welcome it. That is the intention of the

legislation. After all, there are tribunals operating throughout the land—arbitration commissions and industrial tribunals—to which unions make representations for adequate living returns for their endeavours. This is the sort of thing which is not normally available to primary industry. Frankly, it is not intended to increase the price on the domestic market directly. What it is intended to do is to shrink the supply to meet the equalisation market—the profitable market, which is the domestic market plus certain of the preferred export markets. Therefore, although that is not the primary intention, it might happen. If it does happen, it will enable those producers to operate more profitably, which is what other tribunals offer to wage earners throughout the nation.

The honourable member made some reference to the marketing program of the Sugar Board. It has no relevance to this clause, of course, Mr Akers, and I do not want to embarrass you in this respect. I think the campaign by the Sugar Board has been unfairly dealt with by its critics. Surely television advertisements which were saying to the housewives in the community, "It's light and low and it isn't sugar" when in fact it was sugar were misleading and denigrating to sucrose sugar in an unfair sort of way. Something which is actually lactose sugar is no different in carbohydrate terms from sucrose sugar and ought not to be promoted that way. That is the damaging sort of thing that the Sugar Board campaign was aimed at. It was a response to an unfair advertising campaign by the competitors of sucrose sugar.

It is true that many people in our community regard carbohydrate as an enemy. However, it is essential that young, growing people have an adequate supply of carbohydrate, which is essential to life. It is supplied adequately by sucrose sugar.

The program being run by the Sugar Board is thoroughly reasonable. It has been a response to criticism, and it is only fair that the industry should defend itself. Frankly, that is all that it has done.

The honourable member asked whether we could include a provision relating to labelling. That is not reasonable. It is the subject of another Bill that will be coming before the House this session. I understand that another Minister is preparing legislation, so it might be more appropriate to deal with it then.

The honourable member—I think facetiously—suggested that the Canned Fruits Corporation ought to be promoting fresh fruit. I do not think that is on. People should be entitled to promote the products that they produce, and they should also encourage other people to promote their products. That is what the promotion campaign is about. It has been financed by the canned fruit industry. If that industry wants to promote its product in a free community, then it should be allowed to do so.

Mr Simpson: There should be adequate labelling.

Mr AHERN: As the honourable member interjects, there should be adequate labelling. I have not denied that. I said that it will be dealt with by another Minister when the relevant Bill is introduced. It should not be included in this legislation.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 24, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on the motion of Mr Ahern, by leave, read a third time.

DAIRY PRODUCTS STABILISATION ACTS REPEAL BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 76) on Mr Ahern's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr BLAKE (Bundaberg) (8.18 p.m.): Members younger than I am might not have lived through this period, but those who are a little longer in the tooth would have experienced Queensland's transition from being the largest exporter of butter to obtaining most of its requirements from interstate. The Queensland Dairy Products Stabilisation Board has been reconstituted every three years since 1933 to support the operation of a voluntary equalisation scheme for butter and cheese in the various States. Under the present circumstances these functions are no longer necessary. Forgetting Queensland, even Australia's self-sufficiency in butter for the domestic market is in doubt. Since 1977, the Commonwealth legislation has been in force and has provided compulsory equalisation of dairy products.

The scheme is operated on behalf of the Commonwealth by the Australian Dairy Corporation. From what the Minister said in his introductory remarks, the State board suggested that the funds standing to its credit, amounting to some \$3,000, be credited to the newly formed Queensland Dairy Products Manufacturers Co-operative Association. In view of the present irrelevance, if I might say, of the previous State Dairy Products Stabilisation Board and its operations, the Opposition certainly has no objection to those funds being transferred to that organisation.

We note that it is intended to dissolve the board because it has outlived its usefulness, and the money standing to its credit will be transferred. We do not object to its dissolution. That fate awaits any organisation that has outlived its usefulness. When a person outlives his usefulness, he, too, is

likely to become defunct. The State Dairy Products Stabilisation Board will be defunct when the Bill's provisions are put into effect. The Opposition agrees with the intent of the Bill.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (8.21 p.m.): I join the debate with no desire to criticise the Bill. It is quite obvious that the Minister had to do something, because the objects of the State Dairy Products Stabilisation Board had been taken over by another board. The board was established to carry out the provisions of the old equalisation scheme. It did a very good job for dairymen at the time. Even at this stage it might still have been the best means of dealing with the problems, but certain decisions have been made to put all control in the hands of the corporation. On that basis I believe it should be wound up. In the last three years it has been obvious that it was merely carrying out a winding-up operation.

My chief purpose in speaking tonight is to pay tribute to the people who devised the equalisation scheme, such as Sir Christopher Sheehy and, in more recent times, Jack Clark. I must also compliment Keith Donaldson on being a very good chairman. Those men played a great role in the industry. They were men of great integrity and sincerity, people whom we could ill afford to do without. They certainly acted for the benefit of all concerned. They set up an authority that largely stabilised the disbursement of available money to the producers.

Earlier in the evening the Opposition spokesman (Mr Blake) said that he believed in regulatory restraint so that those who produce a product should gain benefits from it. This is one time that I am in complete agreement with the Opposition spokesman. That is the correct way to proceed. Most people today have an award or some other system that regulates the amount they are paid to ensure that they get a fair go. I see nothing wrong with producers anywhere—and particularly primary producers—being covered in the same way. I have always agreed with that system. Although the present system has been under attack recently by the media because of certain things which, it is claimed, went wrong initially—and that might be true—the procedures have nevertheless been carried out as we would want them to be.

As to the disbursement of the \$3,000, I believe the Minister has acted wisely. He could not have acted in any better way. The money will be used to advantage by the new organisation.

There is no point in speaking further. I thought it wise and right to remember the people who set up this organisation and the machinery to stabilise the dairy industry, to pay a brief tribute to them and to let them know that those who know about it still remember it.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (8.25 p.m.), in reply: I should like to thank both honourable members for their support of the legislation and their participation in the debate on it. As the honourable member for Bundaberg indicated, it is essentially housekeeping legislation to wind up the old arrangements and to channel them appropriately into the new arrangements. That is the sole purpose of the Bill.

I thank also the honourable member for Warwick for his recognition of those who contributed to the initial stabilisation arrangements. Those who were associated with them value highly the tribute paid by the honourable member, because he has made a lifetime contribution to the dairy industry, including his contribution as a member of many of the dairy industry boards. No-one in the House has a better grasp of dairy industry affairs than the honourable member for Warwick. I thank him for his sentiments and support of the legislation.

I commend the motion to the House.

Motion (Mr Ahern) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Akers (Pine Rivers) in the chair

Clauses 1 to 5, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Ahern, by leave, read a third time.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS' CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 77) on Mr Ahern's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr BLAKE (Bundaberg) (8.29 p.m.): The Opposition considers this to be a very important Bill and considers also that its presentation is very long overdue. It is Labor policy to encourage the establishment of primary producer co-operative associations. In fact, it was a Labor Government that originally introduced the Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act.

We do not hesitate to support this Bill in principle. It is intended to allow fishermen to form co-operatives under the Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act and to give fishermen and the fishing industry access to the facilities and institutions available to other primary producers and primary industries. It is heartening to see that at

long last the fishing industry is returning to the Primary Industries portfolio, from which it should never have been removed. Perhaps it would not have been removed had not the Government at the time wished to increase the size of Cabinet by two and it did some juggling for the benefit of the National Party.

A Government Member: We wouldn't do that.

Mr BLAKE: I heard somebody opposite say that they would not do that, but I suggest that in that regard the Government is very suspect on its performance.

The fishing industry has long been recognised by the Opposition as a bona fide primary industry. Under most administrations elsewhere the fishing industry is recognised as a genuine primary industry. It suffers from the same vagaries of the weather and the seasons as do other primary industries. Indeed, it suffers the same market vagaries as do all other primary industries. Take, for instance, the recent collapse of the prawn market in Japan. At that time the Fish Board was labelled as a failure because of its losses, but proprietary seafood processors throughout Australia for the most part suffered similar losses following the collapse of markets. The seasonal vagaries I referred to also affect the operations of both the Fish Board and the seafood processors. I was once a professional prawner, so I know what happens.

Since the recent floods good catches of prawns have been flowing to the consumer at a more reasonable price. Just as the wet season lifts the production of other primary industries, the fishing industry is now reaping the benefits of recent rain. It has to cope with the problems of seasonal vagaries the same as any other primary industry.

Mr Burns: Droughts.

Mr BLAKE: Droughts certainly affect the fishing industry. If there is no run-off there is usually a lousy return to the fishermen, but I believe this Bill will do something towards rectifying that situation. The fishing industry has received none of the assistance for or recognition of other primary industries, and I think that has been unfair. That unfairness is illustrated by the very poor financial state of many in the industry, particularly since OPEC oil price rises have been passed on to them. I suppose members would say I was drifting into the realms of fantasy if I said that it would be a reasonable response for the Government to think about paying drought relief to fishermen. Members might ask how that could be done. Some basis would have to be worked out upon which such relief would be paid, and this could perhaps be done by recording the production of a certain operator for five years at a certain income level in order to establish himself as an efficient operator. Then if as a result of drought or some other cause—I was going to say

flood, but that is not likely to militate against him—such as bad seasons, lack of fish-shoaling or prawn-shoaling he ran into financial difficulties, I see no reason why in ordinary circumstances he should not be considered for some financial relief similar to the drought relief provided to other primary producers.

Such a system would probably have another beneficial effect. I have read the report of the Government-appointed committee on the operations of the Fish Board. Everybody knows that black-marketing is a matter of great concern within the fishing industry. If we had a system under which aid could be worked out on an efficient operator's performance, that would induce fishermen to put their produce through the accepted channels so that they could prove their record of production. If the smart operator who was engaged in black-marketing ran into trouble, he would have no record of performance that would stand him in good stead. I do not think that it is a flight of fantasy to say that we should extend help to fishermen as well as to other deserving primary production operators when they are subject to the vagaries of the season.

Mrs Kyburz: They don't put money into pasture improvements?

Mr BLAKE: They may not, but quite often they lose a lot of money through the loss of gear over the side when they are operating on new grounds or doing a bit of exploration. In other areas of primary production people throw money around and have to wait a long time to get a return. When timber treatment or water conservation is involved, people have to outlay a lot of money before they get a return. Good fishing operators do not paddle around in the small established area. They, too, run risks. They go into what is called "tiger country". It is those adventurous types who find the new fishing grounds and prawn beds which help to make this such a significant industry in Queensland in terms of the millions of dollars that it produces.

Mr Vaughan: A risky business.

Mr BLAKE: It is a very risky business. Fishermen have thousands of dollars tied up in equipment. If they drop a trawl over in deep water and get it hooked up, it would probably cost them just as much as it would cost a farmer to throw a few tonnes of superphosphate around his cow paddock.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: The member for Salisbury has never been caught up like that.

Mr BLAKE: I do not think that anybody has thrown her overboard yet.

The co-operative movement has served primary industries very well. I refer to the very important sugar industry and the dairy industry that we dealt with in a previous debate tonight. I believe that it can provide an important avenue for fishermen to better

share in the development of the fishing industry. According to the Minister, legal opinion is to the effect that the current Act provides only for the formation of co-operative associations that have agricultural or grazing objects specifically related to activities on the land. The world at large has long realised the importance and potential of food from the sea, and many administrations around the world have long ago fully credentialled, in legislation, fishing as a primary industry. In administering its shadow portfolios the Opposition has included fishing in Primary Industries; it has never left that area in terms of importance.

The Opposition fully supports the Bill, which provides for extending the same co-operative principles to the fishing industry as currently apply to all rural industries. However, for every action that we take there is a reaction. Whilst we support the Bill and the principles contained in it, there are areas of concern arising from the action that will take place. One of those is the effect on the orderly marketing of fish products. The Minister, when introducing this Bill, said—

“Such co-operatives should be able to act as agents for the board—”

and we agree with that—

“participate in marketing, engage in wholesaling and retailing activities—”

and we agree with that, too—

“and supply services and information to members in the normal manner which applies in other primary industries.”

I take it he meant that literally: that they would share in wholesaling and retailing activities and not that they would simply be eligible to receive the information and services that apply in a normal manner to primary industries. It is desirable that the co-operatives be able to wholesale and retail, but we have to look at the overall set-up of what will occur in terms of the effect on the Fish Board.

I know that the Government-appointed committee's report on the Queensland Fish Board said that it should take a more aggressive role in retailing to make it more competitive. I can see the thinking that prompted that statement. At the present time, with a glut of prawns on the market, the Fish Board is pursuing a much more aggressive retailing role. In fact, in Bundaberg queues of people over 100 yards long are waiting to buy prawns retail from the Fish Board. They are buying prawns at \$4.80 a kilogram or less, which is much lower than the normal price, and thus the public is benefiting.

However, I have had complaints from licensed buyers and dealers who run retail seafood outlets who say that they have to pay exactly the same price for those prawns as the public pays across the retail counter at the Fish Board. A couple of licensed buyers have alleged that during a recent glut of bay prawns the excess was transported to Bundaberg where the dealers had

to pay the same price as the public paid across the counter at the Fish Board. That proves what I say: for every action there is a reaction.

When this legislation becomes operative, what will be the fate of the Fish Board? The co-operatives will do their own little thing, the Fish Board will attempt to be more aggressive in retailing and presumably the dealers will have to pay the same retail price as the public. They then have to try to sell the produce at a profit, and we all know that cannot be done. I wonder whether the implementation of this Bill will end up being the death-knell of the Fish Board. I wonder if there will be enough room in the market for everybody, and whether the Fish Board will be the first to go when all these people start retailing.

If the Government says that that is good old free enterprise and that is the way it should operate, that that is the way the Government operates in our free enterprise society, then I take Government members back to 1929 when a Labor Government was defeated and the new anti-Labor Government abolished the Fish Board. The public and the fishermen ended up being exploited. In times of glut, instead of receiving, say, 10d a lb. the fishermen were told that they would get 3d or 4d, but the benefit did not flow on to the public. The great rip-off was in the hands of the private merchants in the fish trade. I think it was in 1932 that a Labor Government was returned to power, and after a short time the Fish Board was reconstituted. That proves that in those days the Fish Board had the function of providing stability to the industry—to the fishermen and the consumers alike.

The Fish Board was reconstituted by a Labor Government in 1933 or thereabouts by public demand. It was not reconstituted by any socialistic urge on the part of the Labor Party but by proven public demand, and in the public interest. I wonder what will happen when everybody goes into retailing? What effect will that have on the Fish Board? I am not saying for a moment that fishermen who join together in a co-operative sense should not be able to retail their product. What I am saying is that there will be actions and reactions in the retailing of fish products. The need for a great deal of rationalisation will become evident in the very near future.

The Minister for Primary Industries now has fisheries in his court. I hope that some thought has been given to the eventual result of stimulated activity on the retail market for fish products. The question that we have to resolve is whether or not we just let nature take its course in a so-called free-enterprise society. If that is the decision, I strongly recommend that those entrusted with the management of Fish Board legislation look back to the lessons of history that were well evidenced in the early 1930s.

The Opposition approves of and supports bringing fishermen and the fishing industry within the ambit of the Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act and applying to them the same co-operative principles as currently apply to our other rural industries. In fact, the only criticism we have of the Bill is that it is long overdue.

Mr GOLEBY (Redlands) (8.47 p.m.): I compliment the Minister on the efforts and progress he has made since taking over this portfolio. The fishing industry will reap great advantage from the Minister's producing this legislation under the auspices of the Department of Primary Industries. As a back-bencher who has been closely associated with the fishing industry in recent times and involved in the transition period, I can assure the House that the fishing industry, speaking generally, has really welcomed the change and appreciates that it is at last being recognised as an important industry.

The establishment of co-operatives is a step in the right direction. I am sure that, as the industry unfolds in its new role under the Minister's direction, many of the principles that have been adopted in co-operatives throughout this State—and I would particularly mention how the COD has successfully operated over many years for the fruit and vegetable industry—will be adopted within the co-operative operations of the Fish Board in one way or another.

The fishing industry is one of the most difficult of primary industries to be involved in. In common with all other primary industries, there is a constant battle with the elements. There are the problems of feast or famine, as the seasons come and go. Those members from coastal areas who have a number of fishermen in their electorates know the problems that these men have had over the last two years because of the very poor wet seasons.

It is also very interesting to note that the recent rains that have fallen in south-eastern Queensland, in which I am particularly interested, have made a tremendous difference to catches, particularly for prawners in Moreton Bay. As the previous speaker said, more prawns have been offered for sale in this part of the State than we have had for many years. It is great to think that the public has the opportunity to buy prawns at a reasonable price and that the market is being cleared from day to day. Speaking generally, that has been so in the past few weeks.

I must make it very clear also that the fishing industry is no different from any other primary industry in that there is no room for the inefficient operator. Fishing is a very competitive business. Costs are high, and at times the elements make things altogether too difficult. In the final result, it is only the efficient operator who is going to survive.

As has been found in the fruit and vegetable industry, direct selling has no place if the industry is to be stabilised. That is why those now operating the black market within the fishing industry have to be brought into line and penalised heavily if they persist. Each of us who has a coastal electorate appreciates the fact that black marketing goes on. Many cafes, restaurants and other outlets buy direct from the fisherman, through the back door. That must stop. If direct selling to the retail outlets continues, the market will collapse.

Those of us who were associated with the fruit and vegetable industry for many years saw what happened when back-door selling took place. Generally speaking, this is non-existent today in the fruit and vegetable industry. The large chain stores buy direct from the markets, and that is the right place to buy. If one takes competition away from the market or the co-operative, the industry will fall apart. I hope that every effort is made to stamp out the present black marketeers within the industry.

Many of the problems associated with distribution in the fishing industry are the result of the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the board and its administrators in advertising their product. Distribution is a problem that the board must face in a realistic manner if the catches from our coastline are to be sold over the length and breadth of the State. Anyone who has a commodity to sell quickly realises that he must advertise in the right way if he is to build his sales-promotion campaign.

The Cleveland depot of the Fish Board has been through difficult times in the past, and it is going through difficult times at present. It has the opportunity of becoming one of the major retail outlets in this part of Queensland. I hope that the wisdom of the Minister and his officers will ensure that the depot remains open, not only to receive fish, and in particular crabs, from that area but also to become a very important distributor servicing the southern suburbs of Brisbane. Many people go to the Cleveland area for the sole purpose of buying fresh fish, crabs and prawns.

This time of the year is the peak of the sand-crab season. One of the big problems facing the crabbing industry at present is that New South Wales regulations permit the marketing of any crab, whether male or female, undersized or otherwise. Anyone who has been south recently would have seen Queensland crabs, no matter what their size, being sold in fish shops in New South Wales. If the crabbing industry in this State is to be protected and promoted along the lines of conservation, and if crabs are to be farmed in a responsible manner, the Minister and officers of his department will urgently meet officers of the New South Wales Department in an endeavour to bring in a regulation that will protect the Queensland sand and

mud crabs that are popular on so many tables and in so many restaurants on the east coast of Australia.

Speaking of the crabbing industry, I remind the House that a new crab, the spanner crab, has been marketed in large quantities this year for the first time. My information is that there is a large source of supply of spanner crabs. Therefore, the Minister must act responsibly and immediately and, through investigation, set a standard by which these crabs can be marketed. A legal size must be established. If the market is to be exploited in a responsible way, the establishment of a canning industry will have to be considered. Research to date indicates that there are enormous numbers of spanner crabs off the east coast between Brunswick Heads, in New South Wales, and Bustard Head, in Queensland.

In referring to the sale of prawns and fish generally from retail outlets controlled by the Board, the Opposition spokesman said that the wholesale price to the reseller and the general public was the same. I can only say that that has not been my experience. In recent times I have made a close study of the operations of the Fish Board. I established that there are definitely two prices in the areas I investigated—one for retail sales and another for wholesale purchasers who resell to the public.

That is as it ought to be. We cannot expect a wholesaler who goes to the board to buy and runs a shop or a van to compete unless he buys at wholesale prices. Naturally those who buy in 1, 2 or 3 kg lots have to pay retail prices. Retail sales through the board, in recent times, have clearly indicated to me and those associated closely with the industry that this is the best way for the board to clear its stock of fish products. We cannot expect private-enterprise retail outlets to do all the buying. The board, in playing its role properly, will keep the industry honest and give the public an alternative in the knowledge that fresh fish can be purchased.

Dr SCOTT-YOUNG (Townsville) (8.57 p.m.): After many centuries our basic primary industry of fishing is now being recognised. For years fish have been harvested unscientifically and, in most cases, that is still being done. To my knowledge, this is the first attempt to bring the industry under the cover of some industry arrangement that should give some flavour of success to those who are in it, and give a reasonably steady market to the consumers.

In my area we have had a lot of trouble with financing the fishing fleet. When the Minister is formulating the various regulations and amendments that will undoubtedly follow, I ask him to consider the training and education of fishermen. I refer not only to education in finance, but also to education in fishing so that the fishermen of tomorrow will be knowledgeable in fish

breeding habitats and the problems associated with breeding, and also the problems associated with seasonal variations, so that they will not trawl, fish or trap in areas where they should be doing everything possible to preserve next year's harvest. At the same time, they should be taught to look after their own finances.

When it became known that prawns were plentiful in the North, some people sold their houses and farms to buy expensive trawlers. They then found themselves in the hands of blood-sucking financiers. Some of them were paying 23 per cent on borrowed money. No fisherman can keep that up. After working day and night, they could pay off only the interest. Some hundreds of boats along our coastline are being repossessed. The Department of Primary Industries should look very closely at the financing of trawlers and, as one honourable member said, the usury that is being practised at the expense of fishermen.

This measure is a great advance. The Government should be congratulated on a very bright, enterprising move whereby this industry will have some standing and protection.

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (9 p.m.): Like the honourable member for Townsville I should like to raise the matter of the financing of fishermen. Now that we are recognising fishing as a primary industry, fishermen are entitled to the same treatment as is given to other people in the primary industry field. I adopt the point made by Mr Blake about drought relief, flood relief and all the other forms of assistance given to primary producers and the farming community.

The Colmslie fish market is in the Lytton area. I see the major problem with fishermen in that area as a lack of finance. Most of them are ordinary, average fellows who now need a trawler and equipment running into hundreds of thousands of dollars. Years ago, most of our fishermen were fishing creeks and rivers. They outfitted themselves with a 12-ft or 15-ft boat, a couple of dinghies and a few nets, which required a limited amount of capital.

We need a complete review of the method of financing fishermen. I have written to the Minister concerning one fellow who owns a boat worth \$50,000 and a house worth \$30,000, but has no money to go to sea. He needs \$5,000 or \$10,000 in cash to go to sea, and he is forced into the hands of the finance company down the road and, as the honourable member for Townsville said, has to pay interest at the rate of 20 per cent. That 20 per cent, plus the price of fuel and the chance he takes of getting or not getting fish when he goes to sea make it almost impossible for him to operate. He has about \$80,000 in capital but we cannot seem to find any method of helping him other than sending him to the finance sharks. Not all of the sharks that the fisherman has to face are

in the water; quite a few of them are sitting in the finance companies down the road or are waiting on the banks for the fisherman to come in.

As the honourable member for Bundaberg said, fishermen are their own worst enemies. They want to bypass the board and sell to the public. It is a great tourist idea to sell a few mullet to the public on the beach. But the plain fact of the matter is that without a Fish Board to rationalise the industry and take most of the catch regularly the fishermen would be in trouble.

We know the history. In 1929-1932, while the Labor Government was not in power, the Tories closed down the Fish Board, and in 1935, after the Labor Government again came to power, it assisted the fishing industry to set up a new board. There was not much Government money then. I do not believe that there has been any real Government funding of the fishing industry by the board. All the Government has done is to guarantee the loans. The original guarantee was about \$80,000 and it grew over the years. Later fishermen made a substantial decision in relation to financing Colmslie and its facilities.

The fishing industry through the board is worth about \$23m a year. It is not a small industry. It employs a large number of people. The girls who work in the prawn-processing section of the industry are not paid sufficiently. Their wages are lousy. In many ways the board itself has used the indifference of the union representing those girls to bludge upon them in many ways. Peeling prawns is a lousy job, especially on piece-work rates. The sort of money they are being paid is far below what they are entitled to.

The board is important. For fishermen to come in with a small catch of mackerel or fancy or mixed fish and sell it to the local storekeeper sounds quite good. They do not have to go through the board and pay handling charges and all of the other charges levied by the board. During the mullet season a fisherman might turn up with a half a tonne of mullet on a Friday night. He might go to some of the private enterprise people and say, "I have a half tonne of mullet. Will you take it?" He would be told, "I am sorry, but my freezers are full. Instead of giving you 30c or 50c a kg, I will give you half that."

Mr Blake: That is exactly what happens.

Mr BURNS: That is what happened in those days.

The fisherman has half a tonne of mullet and nowhere to store it for the week-end. He has nowhere to sell it. He can hardly go from door to door around the fish shops trying to flog it in small quantities. He has to go to the big fellows who have him by the throat.

The Fish Board takes fish on a Friday night and stores it for the fishermen over

the week-end. It provides auction facilities for him on the Monday morning. Without that service, the fisherman is in the hands of the sharks in the fishing industry. As I said, there are more sharks than those in the sea and the finance companies. Some of the operators and buyers set themselves up outside the board. They are now starting to form cartels, and when the auction starts they decide that only one member of it will bid. He will keep the price down, and when the auctioneer says, "How much do you want?", he says, "I'll take the lot." He squeezes out the small hawkers who have been the life-blood of the industry. He prevents their picking up what is left on the floor. The cartel is squeezing them out. One has only to stand on the floor for a while to see what is happening. When I left the Air Force in 1957 I hawked fish for a while. I worked under the old system where one bought fish off the floor in the old fish market at South Brisbane at a price that was laid down. I have also bought at auction under the new system. If one watches the new system operating one can see people manipulating the price and thus manipulating the fishermen themselves.

A lot of things can be done to help fishermen. For instance, the Boating and Fisheries Patrol people and others associated with the industry should provide some form of protection against those persons who are raiding and stealing crab-pots in Moreton Bay. Just consider the cost to someone trying to set himself up in the crabbing industry. The other day a fellow from Victoria Point rammed a boat because it was the only way to stop a young fellow stealing his pots. When fishermen go to the police or the Boating and Fisheries Patrol they get little or no assistance. People are fishing illegally in most parts of the Bay and nothing is done about it, but licensed crabbers or fishermen who have offended some of the Boating and Fisheries Patrol officers are being hounded from one place to another. That is a fact of life; it is something that everybody in the industry is aware of.

The facilities in places such as Wynnum Creek for the handling of the record catches of mullet are a disgrace. Six to eight boats are tied up to the wharf one beside the other. If one boat caught fire the whole of the Wynnum fishing fleet would be wiped out. The facilities that were built for unloading and handling fish at Colmslie are nowhere near the necessary standard if we want to develop a successful fishing industry.

We will have to be prepared not only to lend fishermen money to build boats but also to help them improve their knowledge of offshore work. All areas of the Bay will have to be surveyed. We will have to consider gill netting for thread fin salmon and other fish in the Gulf, and then work out how to bring that fish south. More importantly, if we are going to help fishermen we have to be able to put fish that looks fresh and is properly presented into the fish shops. It is not

good enough to have fishermen loading 30 or 40 tonnes of mullet into dinghies, dragging them in, putting them in boxes, throwing a bit of ice on top of them, throwing them into the cold room for the week-end and then having them put into a fish shop window on the Monday morning and expecting the housewife to buy them. Housewives can buy fish fingers brought in from overseas; flathead from New Zealand and flake and other smoked fish from South Africa. That sort of competition is killing the local fresh fish market. If we are to promote the fresh fish market then obviously we have to help the fisherman to present his product in a way that is attractive to the housewife. It seems to me that that is a job for the new Minister responsible for the industry. It is a great industry, and one of the most decentralised in the State. It brings a tremendous amount of money to small centres right along the coast. In the past it was one of the few industries in which the little man with not much money was able to obtain a licence and go into business on his own.

I am worried that some fishermen seem to think that we should restrict the number in the industry. I believe that there is a need for control, but some of the controls that are now being introduced seem to be too difficult to police. The regulation requiring a lad to have had two or three years' experience as a deck-hand before he can obtain a master fisherman's licence seems to me to be rather crazy because, as the Minister knows, most of those young fellows don't keep papers. If one tries to get hold of the skipper of the "Mary K" or the "Lisa D" sailing out of Southport one will find that he is either in Cairns, the Gulf, Mullumbimby, Darwin or Western Australia. By the time a lad goes through the paperwork to prove that he has had two, three or four years' experience he gives up in disgust. There are some lads who have had tons of experience who want to get a master fisherman's licence and then borrow money to buy a boat of their own. We have to find some way to make it easier to do the paperwork or the investigation that is presently needed before the issue of a master fisherman's licence.

More important than anything else is our original submission that now that the fishing industry is regarded as a primary industry it should be treated in the same way with finance as are other primary industries.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (9.10 p.m.), in reply: I thank those honourable members who have participated in the debate, particularly the honourable member for Bundaberg, for their support of the legislation. I think that was the consensus of honourable members who have taken part in the debate.

I listened to what honourable members said about the complex problems confronting the industry at the moment. I was rather humbled by the assertion that appears to have been made unanimously tonight that

the good old DPI is going to solve everything; that the fisheries department is now completely under the umbrella of the Department of Primary Industries and that therefore everything will be all right. The problems facing the industry are rather intimidating. They are immense. Without any doubt there is the rather complex problem of over-fishing. Obviously far too many fishermen are in the prawn-trawling industry, and that is a most difficult problem. Apparently there is unanimity here tonight that we are the best people to tackle the complex problems, and I thank honourable members for that. I hope that they will have a similar opinion in a year's time.

It is correct to say that the way we are approaching the problem is to simply say that the fishing industry is a \$60m industry. It is an industry of vital importance to Queensland from the point of view of decentralisation and employment. For a number of good, sound social reasons it is an industry that we need and want to see grow strong in the future. The Department of Primary Industries will treat it in exactly the same way as it has treated other primary industries down the years, and as we treat them now. That is the philosophy that we are pursuing, and there is a tremendous amount of goodwill in the industry for our efforts to do just that. I hope it will bear the fruit that is expected of it.

We have commenced the process. This is the first piece of legislation, but there will be others. It will give us, as a department, the opportunity to treat this industry, as far as co-operatives are concerned, in the same way as we treat, say, the peanut industry. When honourable members are pondering what we are attempting to do with this piece of legislation, I would ask them to look at the operation of co-operatives in other orderly marketing situations. I refer particularly, say, to the peanut industry. That is what we are talking about; that is what this legislation is all about. The idea is very clearly that co-operatives will be working in close association with the board; they will not be replacing the board's operations.

There is no chance at all of this legislation's sounding the death-knell of the Fish Board; indeed, we hope the contrary is the case. We hope that it will reinforce the board. There is no intention at all on my part or on the part of the Department of Primary Industries to weaken the board. We want to see it grow strong. That is what we are on about at the present time. We are in the midst of a very significant reorganisation of the legislation covering fish marketing in Queensland, and I will be reporting separately on that to the House in, I hope, this session. We hope that stability will come out of the organisation and that the present problems facing the Fish Board will be overcome.

I wish to talk about some of the other matters that will be coming before the House by way of legislation or policy statements to

indicate that we are fair dinkum in recognising the fishing industry as one of our great primary industries. We have already guaranteed half a million dollars to the Agricultural Bank for carry-on loans for fishermen similar to the way in which finance has been provided for loans to primary producers in the drought-stricken areas of the State. The difference is that for drought-stricken areas the Federal Government considers the finance as part of the national disaster arrangements whereby, after the trigger point of \$4m, the Federal Government pays 75 per cent of the commitment. In relation to this particular matter the Federal Government, on application from this Government, has refused to consider it in that light, but we are still carrying that money as our commitment, through the Agricultural Bank, to the fishing industry. There is one clear indication in terms of dollars that we are prepared to assist this industry.

I have recently announced Cabinet approval for my bringing forward legislation to enable fishermen to qualify for debt reconstruction assistance through the Rural Reconstruction Board, and honourable members have referred to this tonight. The honourable member for Lytton made reference to it when he said that he wrote to me but had no success.

The facts are that the principal need of this industry at this time is for debt reconstruction finance. In this respect Queensland has a problem which far outweighs the problem in other States of Australia. In fact, the problem of debt reconstruction that exists here would be greater than the same problems in all the other States of Australia put together. This week my officers have been in Canberra at a Federal conference talking with Federal Ministers about such problems. In the meantime I have been instructed to prepare legislation to enable debt reconstruction to take place. This is the principal need.

In some parts of Queensland the average debt of trawler operators is \$110,000. With interest rates running to 25 per cent and more with redemption over five years, and in some cases less, is it any wonder that the principal need of this industry is in the area of debt reconstruction? At this time finance companies have at least 100 trawlers tied up in this State. This is a high priority for me as I approach the intimidating problems of this industry and try to do something about them.

The co-operatives, which we will assist by means of this Bill, will have the advice of my departmental officers who help co-operatives through the Registrar of Primary Producer Co-operatives. Those officers will be coming forward freely to give advice to co-operatives operating under this legislation. The Fish Board has access to the wide expertise of our marketing branch. In future, that will be continued and expanded.

I have also tried to involve the Fisheries Service branch within the structure of my department, in such a way that the industry will be able to take full advantage of the range of services that are available to all other primary industries, including marketing services, botany and so on. The co-operatives will not operate in isolation; they will be able to take full advantage of the wide range of services offered by the Department of Primary Industries. I believe that will help to improve the industry.

We have established consultative machinery to enable the Government to seek and hear the views of industry in relation to matters that come before it. This is being done in much the same way as we treat the sugar industry, the grain-growing industry and so on. As I say, we are in the process of constructing similar consultative machinery to enable that sort of thing to occur.

In summary, this industry will be treated just as we treat other primary industries in this State. We already have a lot to show to indicate our good intentions in this regard. This is but one piece of clear evidence that we are sincere in our endeavours.

I thank the honourable member for Redlands for his assistance to me during this difficult time as we have approached this industry's problems. He has a close association with fishermen and with the industry generally.

He has talked about the marketing expertise of the Queensland Fish Board. Honourable members will know that we have appointed a new general manager. It is our intention to update and upgrade the marketing strategies of the Fish Board to enable it to be more successful in the future. What we need is a strong Fish Board that will create an orderly and stable market. There is no doubt that during the coming months there will be some difficulties while these policies distil out. I know that there will be problems, but we would hope by the end of the year to have the industry operating efficiently.

The honourable member referred to crabs and said that I ought to negotiate with the New South Wales officers. I will take his suggestion on board. Honourable members might be interested to know that today officers of the Fisheries and Boating Patrol, which does not operate within my department but co-operatively with the department, have apprehended people in possession of 700 undersized crabs on the Gold Coast. A prosecution is being prepared.

The honourable member also sought information in respect of spanner crabs. He might be interested to know that we are looking at the whole matter of the spanner crab industry. That includes not just sizes but likely yields and methods of extracting meat. They are all under study by the board and our officers.

The honourable member for Lytton referred to financing. As I indicated to him, I believe that the problem is primarily one of financing. We have the matter under serious consideration and are trying to give this industry as quickly as possible access to things that peanut growers are able to obtain. But it is early days; I have had the portfolio for only a short period. This is something we are moving towards as quickly as possible within the constraints of finance, which appears to be a big problem.

I acknowledge also the contribution of the honourable member for Townsville and thank him for his assistance. As a result of his representations, we have liberalised some of the guide-lines for financing. This is a problem that he brought to my attention. On his suggestion, we changed those guide-lines. There is an initiative in respect of training for this industry, which naturally enough is being resisted by some sections of it. However, I believe that it is important for us to persist with it. I thank him and all other honourable members for their contributions and their support for the legislation before the House.

Motion (Mr Ahern) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Powell (Isis) in the chair
Clauses 1 to 8, as read, agreed to.
Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Ahern, by leave, read a third time.

SECURITIES INDUSTRY (RELEASE OF SURETIES) BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 73) on Mr Doumany's motion—

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

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (9.26 p.m.): The Bill now before the House contains a basic amendment to the original Act brought down in 1971. Honourable members would be aware that the Securities Industry Act of 1971 resulted from the initial boom in the stock and share market in the early 1960s, which was highlighted by the explosion in the price of Poseidon shares. As a consequence of that boom, the Federal Parliament also passed legislation then.

Although the Bill was initially introduced to provide for controls on the stock exchange, one of its heartening features was the inclusion of a specific provision, for the first time, for the licensing of dealers on the stock exchange and their employees, and

also for the licensing of investment advisers and their employees. Honourable members would be well aware of the racketeering that took place in that particular market prior to the introduction of that legislation.

The Bill could possibly open the way for a wide-ranging debate on a number of issues. Members could speak about certain amendments to the Companies Act and about the need for co-operation by the Queensland Parliament in passing legislation to complement legislation passed by the Federal Parliament.

Honourable members are aware of the continuing debate that has raged in the Federal Parliament over the intention to introduce legislation fully covering securities and exchanges. It goes without saying that one of the reasons why that legislation was held up was the lack of co-operation by the Queensland Government on many occasions. One would hope that, under the new Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, co-operation from this State will now be forthcoming at meetings of State Attorneys-General.

After much difficulty and following certain representations from various companies, Federal Parliament has passed the relevant legislation. In a later session of this Parliament, the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General will introduce legislation that will go hand-in-glove with the Federal legislation. This will ensure a far better system of operation from the point of view of both the Brisbane Stock Exchange and the dealers. It will also ensure that adequate legislation is available to cover all facets of share dealing.

This Bill merely makes adjustments that have become necessary following the repeal in 1976 of the Securities Industries Act of 1971. Dealers who were licensed on the stock exchange were required at that time to lodge a substantial bond or surety with the exchange, namely, an amount of approximately \$10,000.

When the Act was repealed it meant that several Queensland licensees under the 1971 Act who were unable to register in other States and pay bonds faced a difficulty because of the lack of legislation covering the refund of the bonds. This legislation makes provision for the refunding of those bonds. Other associated measures ensure that members of the public are protected against any future claims, and other provisions ensure that the dealer, too, is protected.

The Opposition supports the legislation. We have nothing to oppose in it, and I am quite happy to have recommended to the Opposition that we accept the Bill in toto.

Hon. S. S. DOUMANY (Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.30 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Wolston for his contribution and for the support he has given the Bill.

I assure him that Queensland will take a responsible position, as it has in the past, in discussions with the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General. Very substantial legislation in respect of securities and companies will be forthcoming in this session and the Budget session this year. No doubt it will bring about an orderly arrangement right through the nation for the control of the securities industry.

This Bill is a simple measure that tidies up an anomaly which has affected certain dealers since the repeal of the 1971 Act some five years ago. By tidying up that anomaly we are preparing the way for the change-over to new arrangements that will take place very shortly. I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion (Mr Doumany) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Powell (Isis) in the chair

Clauses 1 to 9, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Doumany, by leave, read a third time.

OATHS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 72) on Mr Doumany's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (9.35 p.m.): This is a procedural matter and I indicate at the outset that the Opposition is prepared to accept the proposed amendment. It involves, as honourable members would recall, the discovery, following the amendment to the Supreme Court Act 1867-1980, which was discussed in the Chamber last year and provided for the appointment of masters of the Supreme Court, prior to the appointment of the two masters, Lee and Weld, that there were no existing provisions by which they could take the oath of office or the oath of allegiance as required to be taken by judges of the Supreme Court and District Courts and members of the Land Court and Industrial Commission. With that in mind, the Opposition is quite happy to accept the proposed amendment.

A number of brief comments are pertinent. I would not like to be misinterpreted as being critical of the two people who have been appointed as masters. They have an excellent reputation within the legal profession. But I think that the time has come when appointments to the bench and even as masters should be brought before this Parliament for discussion before the appointments are made.

I lean very much in favour of the American system. No doubt other honourable members have been confronted with the problems that have confronted me. There is sometimes great criticism of decisions brought down by our justices. Some of their interpretations are open to public conjecture about their honesty, etc. It would not do any harm for such appointments to be discussed in this Parliament. The people concerned need not be brought before Parliament but their names should be put before Parliament and their appointments discussed. We could even adopt the American system under which a public inquiry is conducted into the background of such people. Particularly in regard to the illicit traffic in drugs and associated problems, there are times when members of the legal profession come in for criticism by the public. The Minister should take note of the fact that the appointment of the two masters was made to take some of the burden off an already clogged and overworked legal system.

Quite often members of Parliament are contacted by people in their electorates who have had the misfortune of having to lose work and wages because they have had to attend a sittings of the court to deal with minor matters which could easily be attended to at a night sitting of the court. I implore the Minister to take note of that need because of the problems within the justice system at the present time.

There is a dire need for the appointment of more stipendiary magistrates. One of the overall problems is that the legal system in Queensland is bogged down in its own technicalities because of the way in which the law is written. If the Minister wants an example of the need for the appointment of more people to the bench to relieve the work-load, he need only look at an article in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" of Thursday, 26 February 1981. It refers to the problems being experienced in Townsville where there is a dire need for more staff and better facilities.

As I have indicated, the Opposition is quite happy to accept the proposed amendment.

Hon. S. S. DOUMANY (Kurilpa—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.40 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Wolston for his comments and for his support of the Bill. I will reply to a couple of matters that he has raised.

First of all, with regard to the appointment of members of the judiciary, I think we should keep in mind that we do have an appeal mechanism within our legal system so that if judgments are disputed there is recourse to a court of appeal. There are therefore safeguards which protect litigants against judgments that they might violently disagree with.

I believe that we have had a continuing appraisal of our system on an objective basis. I know that it is going on at the moment and that it will continue in the future. Part of that objective appraisal includes the situation in Townsville to which the honourable member refers, where there has been fairly strong evidence of a need for additional resources in the Magistrates Court. Indeed, I have given very strong consideration to that matter, and a submission will be prepared very shortly seeking the appointment of a further magistrate to that court. In fact, I was in Townsville over the week-end discussing the matter with local people, so I recognise the need. We are certainly looking at the court network in Queensland at present in preparation for the compilation of the Estimates for the coming year.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion (Mr Doumany) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Powell (Isis) in the chair

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Doumany, by leave, read a third time.

EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 71) on Mr Doumany's motion—

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

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (9.44 p.m.): Again this is a procedural matter and the Opposition is quite happy to accept it, although there is one section of the Bill on which I require some clarification. I realise that the Bill has to be totally correct because it has already been introduced in New South Wales, and with Frank Walker as Attorney-General the legislation would have to be highly commendable.

Perhaps in his reply the Minister could clarify what he meant in his introductory remarks when he said—

“The final point I would like to make to the honourable members is that the introduction of this legislation will not allow the taking or receiving of evidence by a person appointed by a court of another State or Territory in or for the use in criminal proceedings.”

I was wondering if the Minister could give me some idea of what is meant by that paragraph.

This is merely a procedural matter to overcome the inability of courts in the States and Territories to take and receive evidence in other States and, for that purpose, to

administer oaths. Certain problems are being experienced at the present time. This small Bill will alleviate those problems, and the Opposition is quite happy to accept it.

Hon. S. S. DOUMANY (Kurilpa—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) 9.45 p.m.), in reply: Again I thank the honourable member for Wolston for his contribution in support of this Bill.

The matter that he has raised about the exclusion of the use of this device in criminal proceedings is basically related to the right of counsel to cross-examine in person people actually appearing in court. As a matter of interest, this Bill is tied to what the other States are doing. As the honourable member has mentioned, New South Wales and the other States have enacted similar legislation.

The Bill is specifically designed to facilitate the receipt of specialist information from expert witnesses, such as doctors and engineers. It is certainly not meant to intrude upon the propriety of criminal proceedings, in which witnesses should appear in the court.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion (Mr Doumany) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Powell (Isis) in the chair

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Doumany, by leave, read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—

“That the House do now adjourn.”

EFFECT ON QUEENSLAND EMPLOYMENT OF THE IMPORTATION OF TINNED HAMS

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (9.48 p.m.): During the last election campaign the National Party produced tea towels which carried the words “Nationals for Free Enterprise”. I looked at the back of one of the tea towels and saw the words “100 per cent cotton—Made in Hong Kong”. I remember the sacking of the Liberal member for Yeronga (Mr Norm Lee) after the election and his “Buy Queensland Made” promotion. It worries me that the National Party seems to be more interested in promoting jobs in Hong Kong, Rumania or Yugoslavia than in Murarrie, Lytton or Cannon Hill.

A \$500,000 development at the Australian Bacon Company at Murarrie with which the Leader of the House was associated for some time, has lain idle for 10 months as

a result of the dumping in Queensland of tinned ham from Rumania, Yugoslavia and Hungary. The primary producers, co-operatives and workers engaged in this industry have received no assistance from this Government or the National Country Party at the Federal level.

In 1977-78, 13 tonnes of tinned hams were imported into Australia. In 1979-80, there were 479 tonnes. In 1980-81 over 1 000 tonnes of canned pig meat will be brought into the country at a price that is really dumping. In fact, it has been shown to be dumping. An investigation found that the tinned ham was being dumped on the market here. Even after that was learnt, the Government did nothing about it.

As I have said, the import figures have grown alarmingly. Investigations reveal that stores are paying \$1.22 f.o.b. a pound for a can of imported ham and retailing it for \$1.90. The canning companies in Queensland are paying \$1.60 a kilogram for pig meat which, after processing, retails at \$3.25. How can our own industries compete with the imported prices?

I will now tell the Government what this has caused. At Easter of 1980, KR Darling Downs found the traditional outlets such as chain stores no longer required hams. Investigations revealed that they were stocked with Yugo hams from Yugoslavia and a Rumanian brand of ham. If the Government checks with anybody from KR Darling Downs it will find that about 30 employees lost their jobs. As I said, the Australian Bacon Company Limited of Adelaide and its company at Murrarrie, where over half a million dollars was spent on an extension of a canning plant that was to employ 50 or 60 people, has had that plant vacant for ten months and the employees have lost their jobs.

Plumrose is a Danish company and Mayfair is Canadian. Those companies are now saying that if there is no protection they will import their hams from overseas. If they do that we will find Yugoslavian hams, Hungarian hams, Rumanian hams, Canadian hams and Danish hams all putting our workers out of employment.

When I was in Rumania a couple of years ago I saw details of the millions of dollars worth of coal that that country was buying from here. We have to start to ask ourselves about this boom. Are we to help the Rumanian worker or the Utah people make a quid out of our coal and in return have them demand that jobs in this country be done away with as we take their tinned hams and other products? That has happened in the shoe industry and the clothing industry, and now it is happening in the rural industries that Government members profess to represent.

It is about time we started to hear something from the National Party on this particular issue, because it is the ordinary working people who are the first to feel the pinch. Local companies will be the next ones to feel the pinch. Plumrose and Mayfair

control the marketing of 60 per cent of the hams in this country. They have said that if they import hams another 400 jobs will go. As honourable members know, Mayfair is in Queensland and Australian Bacon, or Queensland Bacon as it used to be known, and KR Darling Downs are well-known firms here.

I want some action and some protection. I no longer want the sort of slogan we had from Mr Lee. I do not want any of the talk about what is going to be done about Queensland jobs or any of the arguments between the Premier and Deputy Premier over who is right or who is wrong. I want no more of this rubbish of using a National Party tea towel that is made in Hong Kong. That sort of thing is being used to promote overseas free enterprise here. I want no more of the rubbish that they stand for Queensland. I ask honourable members to have a look at this tea towel. On the back it says it is 100 per cent made in Hong Kong. I have it here for everyone to see. That is a fair example of what the National Party stands for in this State: Hong Kong jobs, Rumanian jobs, Yugoslavian jobs, Hungarian jobs, Canadian jobs, Danish jobs and little work for our people. I say let us protect our own now before it is too late.

Mr Blake: And what is the slogan? "The Nationals stand for free enterprise".

Mr BURNS: Yes, Hong Kong free enterprise.

CIGUATERA POISONING

Mrs KYBURZ (Salisbury) (9.53 p.m.): I wish to raise a problem which I believe is becoming more and more prevalent throughout the State, the incidence of ciguatera poisoning caused by eating poisonous fish. I think it is time that both this and the Federal Government considered setting aside funds for a comprehensive survey of the incidence of ciguatera poisoning throughout Queensland.

At the present time it is not a reportable disease and I believe it should be, because comprehensive figures are needed about how many people are suffering at any one time from ciguatera poisoning. No funds are allocated by this Government or the Federal Government for research into the causes of ciguatera poisoning and its relationship to the crown of thorns starfish on the Great Barrier Reef.

In researching this particular matter the Parliamentary Library was able to give me quite a few articles relating to ciguatera poisoning and also articles relating to research in both Hawaii and Japan. One very telling article which rather upset me because of some of the facts contained in it was written by a Dr Noel Gillespie, who obviously has tried very hard to put his case for an increase in funds. The most important thing about ciguatera poisoning is that, although it is known to be endemic in North Queensland, this type of fish

poisoning was virtually unheard of in the south of the State until recently. In January there was a very bad outbreak in Sunnybank. Obviously, it would be reassuring to be able to give some guarantee about the safety of reef fish. However, after reading the accumulation of information in the Parliamentary Library, it is obvious to me that any person who eats fish from the Great Barrier Reef runs the risk of ciguatera poisoning. The toxin is odourless, tasteless and impossible to detect by any simple test. Many of the articles give advice about the sorts of fish that one should be very wary of. One article states that because it has no obvious effect on fish flesh it is impossible to detect. Therefore, connoisseurs of reef fish should take these simple precautions:

- Never eat large portions of large fish, and in fact try to avoid eating large fish at all (a rather difficult one);
- Never eat repeated meals from the same fish (which means never eat part of a fish and freeze the rest), particularly if the tingling warning signs are apparent after eating the first meal;
- Never eat the viscera of reef-dwelling fish (which means the internal organs);
- Do not be lulled into thinking ciguatera occurs only at certain times of the year—there are seasonal variations but no guaranteed safe period; and
- Never eat the flesh of red bass, china-man fish, barracuda or moray eel.

Those tips to avoid poisoning given by a doctor of our own Fisheries Department signal the fact that the time for action on ciguatera poisoning is now. It is an extremely important consequence of the fact that we are now getting an increase in the fishing industry in total and also an increase in the tourism industry on the reef.

One of the other findings of Japanese and American scientists in Hawaii shows that the poison is directly linked with damage to coral. That is why I mentioned the crown-of-thorns starfish. It is extremely important that the damage to the Great Barrier Reef by the crown of thorns starfish be examined in the light of the high incidence of ciguatera poisoning. This research indicates that the growing pollution, excess predation and thoughtless treatment by some tourist industries are also known causes. Ciguatera toxin is now known to be in the Byron Bay area and as far north as the coast at Darwin. In fact, the toxin has been traced to a tiny organism called the *dinoflagellate* which grows an algae living on dead coral. That is why coral is so very important. Dead coral is in fact the key. It is time that this Government, as the responsible Government for the Great Barrier Reef, set aside funds for the extremely important research into ciguatera poisoning. It is especially important as so many people now are eating fish from the Great Barrier Reef. They need to be told of the dangers.

(Time expired.)

DRIVER-TRAINING COURSE, GYMPIE

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (9.59 p.m.): I take this opportunity to highlight a project that has been operating in the Gympie area for almost 12 months and to point out what the local community is prepared to do for itself and for the young people when they take their place on the roads. At times we tend to ignore them or to abuse them and not to give them too much help. However, if we can do anything at all to eliminate one road accident—if we can do any small thing that will help to alleviate loss of life on our roads—we are beginning to play our part in one of the great problems in Australia today. If we take constructive steps to help our young people in their formative years, that training will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

We can tell them of the driving hazards and other hazards that they can expect to meet on the road. We can tell them of the hazards that they can expect from the vehicles they are actually driving—perhaps “aiming” would be more correct—and the limits of their machines. That will be a great help.

In my electorate, we have opened a driver-training complex that covers many hectares. At that complex, almost all aspects of road usage are dealt with, including driving on gravel roads, bitumen roads, level crossings in town areas and grades in hilly country.

Children must be taught to deal with such situations. They are taught by the instructors to think ahead—a couple of minutes if they are driving slowly, or a chain or two if they are driving fast. They are taught to think ahead so that they know what their next move will be and what a driver who is coming in the opposite direction might do, or what a pedestrian might do. The instructors have gone out of their way to get advice elsewhere. At their own expense, they went to Shepparton, in Victoria, and returned with expertise and advice. What can be done in Victoria can be done in Queensland, and we can do it much better.

The course has been implemented in high schools, and a couple of schools in particular have taken advantage of it. However, if the course can be introduced into pre-schools, where children can use tricycles, and into primary schools, where they can use push bikes or motorised pedal cars, training can be continued throughout their schooling.

Assistance, advice and encouragement are needed. This is a new field. Although advice has been forthcoming, further advice is required. Finance is necessary.

Mr Davis: I'll go up.

Mr STEPHAN: I don't think the honourable member would be very much help in this particular situation. We are looking for finance, and any finance that the honourable member is able to contribute would be appreciated. We would welcome it greatly.

An administration block is required; in fact, it is already on the drawing board. Any finance forthcoming from the Government would be an encouragement to continue. At present, the project does not come under any particular portfolio. We are currently trying to rectify that defect.

Progress is slow, as is the case with all new projects. We have spent a couple of hundred thousand dollars through the combined Rotary clubs in the Gympie area, but a further \$200,000 is required. That is the type of finance, the type of assistance and encouragement that we want. The plans have been drawn. We know what we require.

(Time expired.)

HORNIBROOK HIGHWAY

Mr KRUGER (Murrumba) (10.4 p.m.): I raise tonight the question of the future of the Hornibrook Highway, the viaduct that connects the electorate of Murrumba to the electorate of Sandgate. This bridge or viaduct is commonly used as a political football on the Redcliffe peninsula. The Minister has spoken about it but has completely neglected it since he made promises that it would be re-opened after the opening of the Houghton Highway. I quote from "The Courier-Mail" of 6 October 1980—

"The State Government might be spending \$100,000 to turn the old Hornibrook Highway bridge into the world's longest fishing jetty, a Redcliffe City Council alderman said yesterday.

"The works committee chairman, Alderman Charlish, said the Main Roads Department had started repairs on four different sections of the bridge at an estimated cost of \$100,155."

Why would this bridge have to be repaired in four different sections? The quotation continues—

"This included the removal of road surface and timber kerbing, the replacement of faulty decking and piers. 'It's a lot of money to spend on a glorified fishing pier,' he said.

"It seems a terrible waste of money as the only people who will be using it are the anglers."

That bridge was to be reopened after the Houghton Highway was opened so that the people could use it.

What was the advantage in undertaking the construction of the Deagon bypass as a four-lane trafficway? The Deagon bypass was opened only in the last year or so to service the four lanes across Hayes Inlet. The trafficway was quite expensive and was built to cope with the future four lanes over the inlet.

On the other side of the inlet the Redcliffe City Council is planning to upgrade Elizabeth Avenue as a four-lane highway. Work is also being undertaken on Snook Street to connect with Elizabeth Avenue. It is creating quite a deal of concern for

the people in that area. If there is no need for four lanes across Hayes Inlet, there is no need for the work on the approaches on the northern and southern sides. This seems to me to be one of the political footballs that was used as a gimmick before the election.

I have here another Press cutting headed—
"Highway job impossible. Hinze sees three options."

The article continues—

"Redcliffe City Council will meet Main Roads Department officers to discuss options for the reopening of the Hornibrook Highway.

"Main Roads Minister Russ Hinze offered to arrange the meeting in a letter to council last week."

It is a big deal to offer to have a meeting after the by-election is over. The article continues—

"Mr Hinze said the options as he saw them were:

"Complete restoration of the Hornibrook Highway at a cost of more than \$1 million, probably at the expense or deferment of permanent works in Anzac and Oxley Avenues, and in the knowledge that the capacity of the Houghton Highway would be sufficient for many years;

"To repair the bridge to a structurally sound condition to allow its use for local, low-speed leisure-oriented traffic, and to continue proposed strengthening works without adversely affecting other works on the Peninsula;

"To accept that the Houghton Highway had capacity for many years to come . . ."

If the Houghton Highway is sufficient for many years to come, why were the other works undertaken? On this occasion, the Minister has changed his mind on the deal. He said that the highway would be reopened. The new highway was built so that it could be named the Houghton Highway, but the Minister has neglected to go ahead with his scheme to upgrade, reconstruct and resurface the old bridge. At present anglers alone benefit from it, although at both ends of the bridge signs state that anglers are not allowed on it.

I also point out that that bridge, which is usually referred to in matters pertaining to the Redcliffe Peninsula, has two-thirds of its length in the Murrumba electorate and one-third in the Sandgate electorate. The promises made were just another political gimmick.

I have here another article from "The Redcliffe Herald" of 28 January 1981, headed, "Old Bridge Talks on." It reads—

"Accusations that Main Roads Minister Mr Russ Hinze has reneged on the Government's promise to restore the Hornibrook Bridge are rife following this paper's front page article last week.

"State member for Murrumba, Mr Joe Kruger, is suggesting 'prominent people' on the Peninsula do not want the bridge restored."

It seems to me that these people on the Peninsula are falling into line because they are scared of the Minister.

The people of Redcliffe should stand up for their rights and insist that the Minister carry out his promise to have this bridge resurfaced and reconstructed for traffic. If that is not done, the money spent on the approaches has been wasted. If the \$1m needed to restore the bridge was to be spent on a bridge in the Gold Coast area, the Minister would not think that it was very much money at all.

(Time expired.)

NATIONAL PARTY INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS POLICY

Mr McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (10.9 p.m.): I want to speak briefly tonight about industrial relations. It appears that the community is really worried about the havoc that strikes are causing in this country and, indeed, in the whole western world.

Much has been said about the so-called policy of the National Party on industrial relations, and opponents of the National Party often speak about the Essential Services Act and so on. That legislation was prompted by exceptional circumstances. As yet it has not been used.

I urge the Government to introduce the National Party's policy on industrial relations because I believe it is full of common sense. I should like to read some of it so that it may be included in "Hansard", and to explain the grievance-handling policy of the National Party. It reads—

"The belief that all employers and employees have a responsibility to the community for the prompt settlement of industrial issues causing disharmony with a minimum of disruption and a commitment at all times to the maintenance of vital and essential services.

"The belief that a system of financial sanctions and other forms of disadvantages should be imposed on employer and employee organisations who fail to accept arbitrated decisions of industrial tribunals and for failure to abide by industrial agreements.

"Total rejection of violence, intimidation, victimization or coercion of employees or employers in the course of industrial activity or in the furtherance of industrial demands.

"The holding of Court controlled secret ballots involving compulsory voting for the election of office-bearers of employees and employer organisations.

"The holding of Court controlled secret ballots, preferably at the work-place, involving compulsory voting, prior to strike

action or lock-out, or the imposition of bans, work limitations or other similar actions.

"The mandatory introduction, after consultation between the parties involved under the auspices of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, of a Grievance Handling Procedure to all State Awards and Industrial Agreements such procedure to conform as nearly as possible to a model designed to channel industrial disharmony through mandatory conciliatory and arbitration steps within given time limits and based upon the peculiar needs of each industry.

"The belief that it is contrary to the interests of employees, employers and the community for strikes and lock-outs to be tolerated before negotiation and conciliation have proceeded as far as possible without satisfaction and that strikes and lock-outs should not be tolerated after the relevant Industrial Tribunal has delivered an arbitrated decision upon the matter in dispute.

"The belief that strikes and lock-outs should be prohibited in those industries which provide vital or essential services until at least fourteen (14) days after a grievance or dispute has arisen."

What the people of Queensland are looking for is a sensible approach to industrial relations by both employers and employees. Industrial relations will not work until both sides want them to work. Despite the earlier interjections from the Opposition, I am not one who believes that all strikes are caused by unionists. In some cases the employers cause the strikes, and I acknowledge that, so the Opposition should not try to hang that one on me. At the moment, most strikes are caused by irresponsible union leaders, and I call on the ordinary union members who do not go to union meetings to do so.

Mr Yewdale interjected.

Mr McKECHNIE: But the ALP does not follow it up with action. The ALP could exert great influence on the union movement by encouraging the decent unionists to go to union meetings. At the moment, the ordinary decent unionist is often frightened to go to meetings which are controlled by Left-wing militants. There are decent union movements, such as the State Public Service Union, whose members do attend meetings because they are not scared of victimisation. It is time that the ALP exerted its influence in the union movement to remove the fear of victimisation that is held by ordinary unionists. It is also time that the Government and the employers generally spoke to unionists more. I mention, for instance, the recent railway strike. I know that Government spokesmen have appeared on television.

(Time expired.)

ROAD DAMAGE CAUSED BY VEHICLES OF OIL
EXPLORATION COMPANIES

Mr NEAL (Balonne) (10.15 p.m.): The matter I wish to raise tonight relates to the damage that is being done to shire roads in some areas of my electorate by the vehicles of oil exploration and oil transport companies. My remarks probably apply also to the companies exploring for coal and other minerals in other areas, but I refer particularly to the damage being done to the shire roads in my area.

It must be clearly understood that those roads are maintained by the local authorities through the rates they collect from landholders. Of course, we do not want to stand in the way of oil exploration. It is in the interests of Australia as a whole that we carry out as much oil exploration as we possibly can in order to try to arrive at a situation of self-sufficiency.

These roads have never been what one might call highways, but they have served the purpose for which they were required, and the money collected by way of rates in the past has been reasonably adequate to keep them in fairly good condition. Unfortunately, the heavy vehicles used in oil exploration are cutting the roads to pieces. One in particular that runs south from Surat to the Silver Springs area where gas and oil have been found is being cut up by the heavy transports used to cart the drilling rigs and associated heavy equipment. The roads in this area were built over what one might term fairly good road-making country. It is red soil, and with a bit of rain on top it firms up into a good road and is very trafficable after it has been graded, particularly for normal use by small school buses, landholders' cars and stock and produce transports, but these heavy trucks are literally turning them into bulldust up to a foot thick and making them virtually impassable for normal traffic. The councils have no chance of keeping them in a reasonable state of repair so that normal traffic can use them. They certainly were not built to carry heavy transports.

Mr Davis: What is your answer?

Mr NEAL: The honourable member will hear it in a moment.

A problem has arisen with the carting of condensate from the Silver Springs field. The condensate comes out of the well with the gas and is held in storage, and because there is an insufficient amount to warrant the building of a pipeline, naturally the only way it can be transported out of the area is to use massive road-train tankers. As I said, they are literally carving these roads into bulldust. At the moment there is no alternative, but if we get prolonged wet weather—as far as the farmers are concerned we have had none of that for the past two or three years so these trucks have had an open go—the situation would be reached

where the storages would be filled and the wells, including gas production, would have to be turned off to Brisbane.

Unfortunately, the local authorities receive no assistance for the maintenance of these roads. I do not believe that this is just a local authority problem, or even a State problem, but a national problem, and I would like to think that the Federal Government would take a good look at it. In the past we have had a special category of beef roads, and I think that in the same manner some special assistance should be given to the shire councils to maintain these roads. The ratepayers have been paying for their upkeep ever since they purchased their properties. At least in the past the landholders have had some sort of a road, but today they have nothing. The condition of the roads has caused a tremendous amount of damage to landholders' cars.

(Time expired.)

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.19 p.m.