

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 1981**

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## THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 1981

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—

- State Fire Services Council for 1980-81
- Rural Fires Board of Queensland for 1980-81
- Queensland National Fitness Council for Sport and Physical Recreation for 1980-81
- Noise Abatement Authority for 1980-81

The following papers were laid on the table:—

#### Orders in Council under—

- Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977-1978
- Harbours Act 1955-1980
- Metropolitan Transit Authority Act 1976-1979

Twentieth Report of the Totalisator Administration Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1981

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### Queensland Film Corporation; "Holiday World" Television Series

Hon. J. A. ELLIOTT (Cunningham—Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts) (11.3 a.m.): On Tuesday, 13 October, the honourable member for Lytton made attacks on two members of my department, well knowing that they, as public servants, cannot defend themselves. He referred to the Deputy Co-ordinator of the Department of The Arts, National Parks and Sport, Mr Allen Callaghan, and to the Director of Sport, Mr Stan Wilcox. In his usual careless handling of the truth, the member for Lytton implied that Mr Callaghan had been appointed to a position in my department and then became the Director of the Queensland Film Corporation.

The member for Lytton went on to say—

"He (Mr Callaghan) is such a good operator that when a television series called 'Holiday World' was being made, a plastic island was set up in Melbourne. He could not even convince the producers to make the picture on an island off the Queensland coast. If honourable members do not believe that they can check it out. They can send the Melbourne man back to have a look."

Firstly, Mr Callaghan is chairman of the Queensland Film Corporation as part of his duties as deputy co-ordinator. He does not receive any additional salary or allowances. Since he became chairman, four feature films and the television series "Silent Reach" have been shot in Queensland, and four more feature films are scheduled.

Mr Burns: I will show you a photo of the plastic island.

Mr ELLIOTT: The honourable member would do better to keep to bit parts, such as playing barman, as he is fairly well known for that.

The series to which the member for Lytton referred was called "Holiday Island" and was made for the Channel 0/10 network. The Queensland Film Corporation was approached to invest in the series on the basis that it would be filmed entirely in studios in Melbourne. The corporation declined the proposal because there would be no benefit to Queensland.

I was parliamentary representative on the corporation at that time, and the Queensland Film Corporation had doubts about the viability of the series. The corporation's judgment was vindicated when it was cancelled after a few episodes.

I would also point out that both Mr Callaghan and Mr Wilcox were permanent members of the Public Service when they were appointed and still are eligible to apply for any position.

## Steaming Coal

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Mines and Energy) (11.6 a.m.): I am taking this opportunity to answer the totally inaccurate statement made by the honourable member for Nudgee in the House yesterday. His continual complaint that Queensland is underselling its steaming-coal resources is becoming somewhat boring.

Never has Blair Athol Coal Pty Ltd released pricing details of the contract to supply 72 million tonnes of fuel coal over 15 years to the Electric Power Development Company Ltd and Japan Coal Development Company Ltd; nor does the State Government expect it to release these details.

The ALP shows an abysmal ignorance of the fiercely competitive world steaming-coal market and Queensland's ability to obtain a share of that market.

It is primarily the concern of the company at what price it sells its coal. It is strictly a business deal in the free-enterprise society, endorsed by this Government but not by the Opposition.

The companies are developing the coal reserves to make a profit. They make their profits through their ability to sell coal in the world market and by remaining competitive. The world is not just sitting back waiting for production to begin at Blair Athol. Overseas buyers can sign contracts in many countries, including the USSR and China. We cannot control the price of the free market.

Far from being a "sell-out" as the honourable member suggested, the contract on an energy adjusted basis provides the highest f.o.b. price ever negotiated anywhere in the world for a long-term agreement of this nature.

Mr Vaughan showed his complete ignorance on mining matters yesterday when he asked what the term "energy adjusted" meant. For his sake, and that of other members of the Opposition who are quick to criticise without knowing the facts, I inform him that "energy adjusted" means that different prices are paid according to the thermal value. In other words, payment is made for the energy received from the coal, not for the actual tonnage. My advice to the honourable member would be to refrain from making statements about matters pertaining to mining and energy until he fully understands these simple terms and definitions.

Queensland's known reserves of steaming coal have more than doubled in the last decade to 7 000 million tonnes. The Queensland Government has first call on all steaming-coal deposits and will continue to ensure that adequate reserves are retained for domestic power-generation needs.

The expansion of the Blair Athol mine to meet export commitments would mean jobs for 450 workers during the construction phase and provide direct employment for a workforce of 370 when the mine reaches full production. The contract provides for deliveries to commence in 1984 at the rate of 3 million tonnes per annum, rising to 5 million tonnes per annum in subsequent years.

Finally, for the honourable member to suggest that the Blair Athol contract be renegotiated with Government involvement is to spell out clearly the ALP's intention to nationalise the mining industry should it ever return to power. Governments should never become involved in such operations. They merely create the right economic climate for free enterprise to succeed. Indeed, this policy has been successful.

One only has to remember back to the pre-1957 days when the mining industry was struggling to survive, let alone making a profit. Under free enterprise, the mining industry has flourished. That policy has seen the value of the State's mineral production escalate from a mere \$108m 20 years ago to \$1,813m last year. Queensland is now a decentralised State, the economy is healthy and its people enjoy many more benefits as a result.

One wonders what the ALP would do with the mining industry when it cannot even control the affairs of its own party.

## Allegations by Member for Archerfield About Illegal Gambling Casinos

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police) (11.10 a.m.): On Tuesday of this week, the honourable member for Archerfield used the protection offered by this House to cast a slur on the integrity of all members present and senior officers of the Queensland Police Force.

The honourable member's allegations of the existence of illegal gambling casinos, a Queensland mafia controlled by a body of godfathers, and his comparison of the Fortitude Valley area to Kings Cross in Sydney, are a malicious exaggeration and cannot go unchallenged.

The accusations attracted considerable media attention and gave the impression that police had ignored the existence and operation of large-scale illegal gaming and vice in the Valley area. Quite simply, that is not true.

Yesterday, in this House, I provided the honourable member for Archerfield with a unique opportunity to restore his credibility. The honourable member has become infamous for his wild and unfounded allegations and for his apparent interest in prostitution, illegal gaming and violence, for reasons best known to himself. Approximately 24 hours ago I called on the honourable member to provide to this House any evidence he had to substantiate his alarming accusations. I also provided the honourable member with an opportunity of discussing his particular claims with the Commissioner of Police and his senior officers.

I have to inform the House that not one single scrap of evidence has been produced by the honourable member to back up that very serious matter. The honourable member for Archerfield contacted the Commissioner of Police yesterday afternoon and again bluntly refused to provide detail of his allegations.

One would have thought that the unique opportunities made available to the honourable member opposite to assist police in their inquiries would have been taken advantage of. It is now quite obvious, Mr Speaker, that the honourable member for Archerfield does not have any evidence to back up his claims.

Following my ministerial statement to Parliament yesterday, the honourable member for Archerfield virtually sprinted up to the "Press" room on level 6 of this building in a last-ditch bid to save his credibility. He made various panicky statements to the effect that it was not his responsibility to produce evidence. Again last night, on the television program "Today Tonight", the interviewer, John Barton, made a complete fool of the honourable member. He said that he is not the prosecutor. All the viewers watching the program would be able to make up their own mind about the statements made by the honourable member.

I remind the House that earlier that same member had named a number of people as representatives of the mafia organisation in Queensland. In effect, the honourable member for Archerfield has tried, convicted and sentenced several people by abusing the protection offered by this House.

Mr Speaker, the honourable member for Archerfield, to add some icing to the cake, casually threw in some lines about protectionism to mafia godfathers by politicians and senior police officers. Again he has abused the privilege of this place to cast a general shadow over all members and senior officers of the Queensland Police Force.

The Queensland Police Union has issued a statement publicly condemning the honourable member for Archerfield and calling on him to withdraw his remarks and apologise. The statement reads:—

"The Queensland Police Union today publicly condemned accusations against senior police officers made by Opposition frontbencher, Mr Kevin Hooper. Police Union General President, Mr Collin Chant, said today police throughout the State were incensed by Mr Hooper's abuse of Parliamentary privilege.

'It's obvious that Mr Hooper's credibility has been shot to ribbons,' he said.

'If Mr Hooper can name names of senior police officers involved in alleged mafia operations he should do so.

'Obviously he can't.

'The accusations made by the member for Archerfield under the protection of Parliament has cast a shadow on the integrity and public standing of every senior Queensland police officer.

'The Queensland Police Union calls on Mr Hooper to publicly withdraw his remarks and apologise.'"

Allow me to make the following points perfectly clear to all honourable members:—

Firstly, allegations of illegal casino operations in Brisbane are a gross and malicious exaggeration. It would be naive not to recognise that some illegal gaming activities take place in a city the size of Brisbane.

The Licensing Squad has taken action against at least one premises in the Valley recently, but there is absolutely no evidence from police investigations to substantiate claims of illegal casino operations.

Secondly, there is no evidence to support allegations of the existence of a Queensland mafia. Certain individuals referred to by the honourable member for Archerfield are known to police as minor offenders, and any suggestion that they are behind a mafia organisation in this State is, in the opinion of senior Queensland police, ludicrous.

Thirdly, no evidence exists whatsoever linking members of this House and senior Queensland police with protectionism organisation. The honourable member for Archerfield, in a flagrant abuse of the protection and privileges afforded to him by this House, has insulted the Italian community, cast aspersions on all members of this House and senior officers of the Queensland Police Force and failed to produce in any shape or form one scrap of evidence to back up his allegations.

His claims that, in order to protect his informant, he will not produce any evidence, quite simply are rubbish. The honourable member for Archerfield does not have any informant, but simply has jumped at an opportunity to grab the headlines. I have no doubt that, by way of personal explanation or public statement, the honourable member opposite will attempt to further slur the integrity of all members present and that of senior Queensland police in an effort to save his own hide.

I repeat that the Queensland Police Department does not deny the existence of some illegal gaming in certain areas of Brisbane. But illegal two-up and card games are a long way down the track from a highly sophisticated illegal casino operation run by the mafia under the protection of members of this House or senior Queensland police officers.

My office this morning has received dozens of telephone calls from members of the Italian community who are incensed by the member for Archerfield's allegations. Almost every caller claimed that the accusations made by the honourable member had irreparably damaged the reputation of the hard-working Italian community in this State.

The honourable member's accusations deserve to be censured by this House. I am not going to place the honourable members opposite in the invidious position of having to defend their colleague in these circumstances. I do not intend to embarrass them to that extent. The honourable member for Archerfield this week has confirmed what many of us have known for years.

#### Queensland Fish Board

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.19 a.m.): Honourable members are aware of the considerable problems that have confronted the Queensland Fish Board in recent years. Poor seasons, massive competition from imported seafoods, increased black-marketing and the impact of inflation and high interest rates, have all taken their toll on the board's ability to operate under its present structure.

Despite this situation, both the catching sector of the industry and the buying sector require a system which ensures an adequate means of marketing seafood products and ready access to such products for buyers and consumers.

The fundamental reasons for the existence of the Queensland Fish Board are to ensure adequate supplies of seafood for the domestic market and to provide for fishermen an outlet where no such outlet would otherwise exist.

Following prior consultation with me, the Queensland Fish Board has now decided on a course of action which will represent a major change in its operation. The recently reconstituted board held its first meeting last Monday. Decisions have been taken so that the board can carry out its basic functions without placing an intolerable cost burden on the industry.

The outcome of the reorganisation will be that the board maintains a strategic market presence in key centres along the coast. The main focus of its activities will be the Brisbane metropolitan fish board at Colmslie. Essentially the board will be required to operate on a commercial trading basis in competition with bona fide private marketing agencies in the industry.

The basic thrust of the board's reorganisation will be:

- to convert its present trading loss situation into a trading profit situation;
- to repay outstanding debts principally through the realisation of assets;
- to take whatever administrative action necessary to allow the board to trade competitively; and
- to provide fishermen with the realistic services they need and for which they are prepared to pay.

The elimination of trading losses will require the abandonment of certain board operations and services. Foremost is the board's decision to move out of the export market, in particular for prawns and scallops, except in cases of custom-processing when market forces are favourable. To this end, the board will cease buying for the export market from Monday, 19 October.

This means that the board will cease its own processing operations and relinquish its processing facilities at Townsville, Colmslie and Tin Can Bay. Negotiations have already commenced with a view to the sale or lease of such facilities. Considerable interest in the board's processing plants has already been shown by a number of commercial organisations. The board is well aware of the commercial value of these properties.

The Colmslie Fish Market will continue to operate under board control, but some modernisation will be necessary to provide an improved service to buyers and fishermen. In order to reverse existing trading losses, the board will no longer maintain a separate retail capacity in its own right. The board will also close its Service Department to fishermen.

As honourable members will recognise, the most severe problem crippling the Queensland Fish Board is a debt structure which has become intolerable in the present climate of high interest rates. The board has rightly come to the conclusion that past deficiencies can be reversed only by a realisation of a significant proportion of its assets.

It is the board's wish and the Government's wish that wherever local fishermen desire and have the financial capacity, they be given the opportunity to take over local facilities, but only on commercial terms. It would be a happy situation for local fishermen's co-operatives to be able to take over local facilities on concessional terms. However, the financial realities of the situation make this impossible if the board is to repay its debts and is to maintain a strategic presence in Queensland. Even if all the board's assets were sold, concessional arrangements could not be made.

At its meeting on Monday, the board decided to enter into immediate negotiations to sell, on commercial terms, its freehold market facilities at Townsville (Flinders Street), Rockhampton, Bundaberg (residence), Maryborough, Tin Can Bay, Tewantin, Wynnum and Southport (Labrador). In addition the board is proceeding to negotiate the transfer of its leases at Cairns, Innisfail, Bowen, Rosslyn Bay and Sandgate. In each case, the opportunity will be given to local QCFO branches and to local fishermen's co-operatives now being formed, to indicate a positive interest in purchasing such facilities. It will, however, be necessary for them to respond within specified time periods ranging from two to six weeks. They will also need to demonstrate a realistic financial capacity to enter into negotiations. At the same time, indications of interest will be sought from the private sector by placing the properties on the market so that no time will be lost if local fishermen's interest is not forthcoming. It is the board's wish that local fishermen take over local operations if they so desire, but this can be effected only if local interest on commercial terms can be generated quickly.

In centres such as Townsville, Cairns, Maryborough, Wynnum and Southport, the board will endeavour to make alternative, less costly, arrangements in order to give fishermen access to a board facility. Details will depend on future developments.

At Port Douglas, Townsville, Mackay and Gladstone, where local co-operatives are being formed, proposals have already been submitted to the board for consideration. Negotiations on these are proceeding. Private enterprise has also expressed substantial interest in certain facilities.

Of the board's 22 existing freehold and leasehold facilities, four, Weipa, Mooloolaba, Scarborough and Southport Spit, are to remain substantially unaltered at this time.

With this very substantial re-organisation of board operations, it follows that an equally substantial re-organisation of staff will be necessary. In summary, the board's existing permanent staff of 98 will be reduced to 45. The first of these retrenchments will commence on Monday, 26 October. The reduction will be across the board involving staff in all categories. For example, senior staff numbers will be reduced from six to three. Office staff will be reduced from 26 to 13. Branch markets staff will be reduced from 30 to 19. Staff of the Colmslie Market and the engineering, processing and service sections will be reduced from 36 to 10. The board regrets the personal trauma which will be experienced by loyal and dedicated officers being retrenched. Unfortunately, the financial and business realities of the situation must be faced and staff numbers must be reduced. In such instances staff will receive their full statutory entitlements including superannuation entitlements on retrenchment.

In financial terms, the board's re-organisation is expected to realise a total of \$6,600,000, made up of \$4,500,000 from the realisation of assets, \$1,000,000 from the realisation of seafood stocks and \$1,100,000 from collection of debts.

An important part of the board's financial position is the valuation of stock. At the present time, the board's total stock valuation is \$1,400,000, made up of \$1,000,000 for seafood products and \$400,000 for other items. The board continues to value seafood stock in the light of market circumstances, and hence the present value of \$1,000,000 can be considered realistic.

Amounts realised will be applied to the repayment of board term loans of \$1,500,000 outstanding against properties being realised, repayment of overdraft of \$2,500,000 and repayment of creditors of \$750,000.

Provisions must be made to meet demands on the board's guarantees to fishermen of some \$600,000 and to accommodate the present monthly loss situation of around \$100,000 which may well continue in the short term until the effects of the re-organisation become apparent. Provision must be made for the payment of statutory entitlements and superannuation benefits to staff being retrenched. This will amount to some \$200,000.

Overall, it is expected that the re-organisation will result in a surplus of only \$450,000, which demonstrates just how serious the financial position of the board has become. Recognising the intangibles involved, this financial result must at this stage be treated as a break-even situation.

In summary, the recently reconstructed Queensland Fish Board has acted positively and effectively. Many of the actions taken are not new in concept. They are based on a thorough analysis of the situation. Much information has been derived from the two reports of the committee appointed by Cabinet in 1980-81 to investigate the Queensland Fish Board.

I have taken this opportunity to report to the House the course of action which the Queensland Fish Board, with the concurrence of the Government, is now taking. I offer no apology for the nature or extent of these actions. It is absolutely clear that if a workable system of organised marketing for seafood is to be maintained in Queensland, and this is the expressed wish of most fishermen, then this sort of positive, business-like action is necessary. Half measures will help nobody.

It is my intention to introduce into Parliament as soon as possible new legislation concerning fishing industry organisation and marketing. One of the prime purposes of this legislation will be to create a situation which will allow the Queensland Fish Board to concentrate on operating in a trading capacity in the same manner as other commodity marketing boards in Queensland.

Given the continuing support of fishermen and effective leadership and management by the board, there is no reason why the Queensland Fish Board cannot play an important part in the marketing of seafood in Queensland in fair and open competition with private enterprise.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (11.28 a.m.), by leave: This morning the Minister for Mines and Energy (Mr Gibbs) made a ministerial statement in reply to the speech that I made in the Matters of Public Interest debate yesterday about the sale of 72 million tonnes of Blair Athol steaming coal under a 15-year contract. I was motivated to make the speech by an article that appeared on page 1 of "The Courier-Mail" of Saturday, 18 July this year, under the heading "Japan signs up in \$2,700m coal deal".

I proceeded to make an investigation because I was concerned that the figures given in the article worked out at a price of \$37.50 a tonne, when the Queensland Coal Board was saying at that time that the price of steaming coal was more than \$40 a tonne. Having regard to the fact that this contract is for 15 years, that it will not commence until 1984 and that Blair Athol steaming coal is of a very high quality, I was concerned about the matter, and I made that speech yesterday in order to get from the Government an explanation of the real contract price.

This morning the Minister said that never has Blair Athol Coal Pty Ltd released the price.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I rise to a point of order. I do not believe this is a personal explanation; it is another speech.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no valid point of order.

Mr VAUGHAN: The Minister for Mines and Energy said that never had Blair Athol Coal Pty Ltd released pricing details. That is true, as far as I am able to understand. I had discussions with representatives of Blair Athol Coal Pty Ltd and it produced a copy of the telex in which everything was mentioned except the price.

Mr Lester: Kick the Clermont people; that's the ALP!

Mr VAUGHAN: No. I am trying to protect the people of the State.

I was motivated to make my speech yesterday because in the Queensland Government Mining Journal of August 1981 on page 353—perhaps the Minister is not aware of this—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Nudgee is now introducing new material. He is making a personal explanation.

Mr VAUGHAN: No. I am sorry, but to finish off—

Mr SPEAKER: I ask the honourable member to clarify the issue.

Mr VAUGHAN: I wanted to explain my reasons for making that speech yesterday.

The article in the Queensland Government Mining Journal states—

"Blair Athol sells 72 million tonnes to Japanese power stations

Under a \$2700 million contract signed last month, steaming coal from the Blair Athol deposit, near Clermont, Central Queensland, will begin flowing to power stations in Japan during the second quarter of 1984."

That is in a publication from the Minister's own department. I will table it so that the Minister can peruse it. I was guided by that. The Minister says that the price was not published but the Government obtained the highest price. I do not think that is so; the Minister owes the House and the people of the State a better explanation than he has so far given.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I rise to a point of order. This morning I pointed out to the honourable member that he was ignorant of the method of selling coal. I hope he reads my statement so that he may learn something.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I want to know why the Minister is speaking again without asking the leave of the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Brisbane Central will resume his seat.

Mr VAUGHAN: I will finish by saying that I appreciate that the Minister for Mines and Energy is a relatively new Minister and has quite a bit to learn. However, as the Opposition Mines and Energy spokesman, I have been very cautious in my handling of this matter.

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

Mr HOOPER (Archerfield) (11:33 a.m.), by leave: This morning in a ministerial statement the Minister for Police made another attack on me following the speech I made in the House on Tuesday concerning illegal gambling and prostitution in the State.

I point out that Parliament is not the place for me to act as the Crown Prosecutor for the Government. I have made detailed information available in my speech, which one would normally expect could instigate a police investigation. That members of Parliament should be forced to divulge confidential information and produce the names of their confidants before a police investigation can be held is completely unheard of.

The grandstanding of the Minister for Police in demanding documentary evidence is a fair political tactic. After all, it has been used quite effectively in New South Wales against the member for South Coast (Mr Hatton). The Minister for Police knows as well as I do that I cannot, and I will not, supply him, let alone the Commissioner of Police (Mr Lewis), with the names of my confidants. One has only to recall the recent Mr Asia drug trial in which it transpired that a corrupt narcotics agent leaked the names of the couriers who were prepared to testify against the syndicate. What was their fate? A shallow grave in Victoria and a handless body in the bush outside Port MacQuarie!

I will not endanger the positions or the lives of my informants, including the senior police officer, to get the Government off the hook of vice and corruption on which it finds itself.

#### PETITIONS

The Clerk-Assistant announced the receipt of the following petitions—

##### Information Office and Ombudsman for Disabled Persons

From Mr Miller (16 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will establish an office to co-ordinate information required by the disabled and provide an ombudsman to protect their interests and welfare.

##### Education Funding

From Mr Shaw (180 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will restore education funding to the 1975-76 level, that is, 25.6 per cent of the State Budget.

##### Declaration of Coppabella as Division of Nebo Shire

From Mr Randell (62 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will move to have halted the submissions by the Nebo Shire Council to have Coppabella declared as a division of the Shire of Nebo.

Petitions received.

#### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

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

##### 1. Land Rights for Torres Strait Islanders

Mr Casey asked the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs—

With reference to the report of the Torres Strait Advisory Council which the Premier refused to receive personally from the council delegation in Brisbane in August, which report described how that council at a two-day meeting at the Tamwoy Town Hall on 17 and 18 August unanimously recommended—(a) that Torres Strait Islanders be given inalienable freehold title to all land presently designated reserve land, (b) that a land trust be established to transfer such lands from the Queensland Government, (c) that a statutory body be established to take over the present role of the

Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement, and as the far-reaching ramifications of the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement, and as the far-reaching ramifications of these resolutions represent the ultimate desires of Torres Strait Islanders as per the survey conducted by the Torres Strait Advisory Council and as such information was transmitted personally to his department's director on Thursday Island at that time, what action has he taken as the responsible Minister to discuss these matters personally with the Torres Strait Advisory Council, whose people are not in the least bit interested in demonstrating at next year's Commonwealth Games, but only in the welfare of future generations of Torres Strait Islanders?

*Answer:—*

I am not aware of any official delegation from the Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council seeking an interview with the Premier in August and being refused. I am also unaware of any such suggested information being delivered to the director under the alleged circumstances. In fact, there were no such occurrences in August, but the Premier did receive the Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council members at short notice and at their request last June. I was present then and the talks were in an atmosphere of goodwill and with agreement that the Government would carefully consider a submission to be presented at some later date by the councillors.

Subsequently, in September, three Torres Strait Islanders arrived in Brisbane. Without notice, they visited the offices of the Premier and myself. Unfortunately, we were both absent in other parts of the State and I was disappointed to have missed them. However, the report foreshadowed, when we met in June, was left with my staff, and the honourable member can rest assured it is being carefully considered.

I fully realise that Torres Strait Islanders are not interested in being part of any radical or violent demonstration. Indeed, this is neither their style nor nature, and unlike other so-called activists in the cause of Aboriginal advancement already mentioned in this House, true Torres Strait Islanders have no desire to embarrass their own country in the international arena.

I am astounded, of course, at the hypocrisy of the Opposition's attitude to freehold land as, when the Labor Party was in Government, its members did not believe in freehold for anybody; not even their own supporters. Opposition members are now jumping on the bandwagon in this regard, by demanding land rights for Aboriginals.

This Government is determined that the traditional rights of use and occupancy enjoyed by the Islanders will continue uninterrupted for their and their children's benefit.

2. Cost of Production and Distribution of Annual Reports, Departments of Local Government, Main Roads and Police

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

- (1) What annual reports are produced by departments and authorities under his aegis?
- (2) What was the cost of producing these publications for 1980-81?
- (3) Are other regular publications issued by his departments and the authorities?
- (4) If so, what are they and what is the cost of (a) production and (b) distribution of each?

*Answer:—*

Department of Local Government

- (1) Nil.
- (2) Nil.
- (3) Yes.

## (4) Local Government Bulletins

(a) 8c per page; and (b) 24c per bulletin, the distribution being 280 at a total cost of approximately \$1,700 per year.

## Main Roads Department

(1) Annual Report of the Commissioner of Main Roads made in accordance with section 41 of the Main Roads Act 1920-1976.

(2) Costs are not known at this stage for 1980-81.

(3) Yes.

## (4) (i) "Queensland Roads" Journal

(a) In 1980-81 the cost of printing was \$9,022; and (b) the cost of distribution was \$554.

(ii) Pamphlet entitled "Guide to Queensland Roads" containing updated maps and information on travelling times, distances, rest areas and road surfaces—

(a) \$15,206; and (b) Nil.

## Police Department

(1) Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police; Annual Report of the Police Superannuation Board; and Annual Report of the State Emergency Service.

(2) Costs for 1980-81 have not yet been determined. However, 1979-80 costs were as follows: \$12,138.47; \$344.07; and \$2,701.75 respectively.

(3) There are other regular publications printed.

(4) These other regular publications are distributed within the Police Department but these issues are for internal use and not for public digestion.

## 3. South African External Fire-fighting Device

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

With reference to a newly developed South African external fire-fighting device for use on high-rise buildings and his investigations into its suitability for use in Queensland, is any information on this unit available at this time?

*Answer:—*

The State Fire Services Council is now awaiting advice from the Chief Officer of the Frankfurt Fire Brigade in West Germany on the high-rise rescue cabin. I understand the Chief Officer addressed the Institution of Fire Engineers in Canberra last year on this invention.

Fire authorities in Queensland are well aware of the fact that there is presently no conventional fire-fighting tender anywhere in the world capable of rescuing people from a building higher than 15 storeys.

However, Queensland does have a very stringent Fire Safety Act which has set a high standard of internal safety for the evacuation of all modern high-rise buildings in an emergency. These standards include the pressurisation of stairwells to minimise the danger of smoke and heat to persons in an evacuation and the installation of smoke-stop and fire-resisting doors.

I am keenly awaiting the results of investigations into the rescue cabin, which I understand is capable of rescuing 12 people at a time from buildings of any height. The rescue cabin, which moves on the external walls of a building, is raised and lowered by means of a winch attached to the top storey. I understand that this system is in use in Frankfurt. I am grateful to the honourable member for his continuing interest in the matter of high-rise fire safety on the Gold Coast.

4. Extension of Trading Hours

Mr Kaus asked the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations—

With reference to the public statements by the Hon. the Premier and the Hon. the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, wherein they made it clear that this Government does not support any further extension of trading hours in Queensland, will he assure honourable members and the tens of thousands of Queenslanders who depend on small business for their livelihood that the Government will exercise its right to seek to appear before, and clearly state to, the Industrial Commission its objection to the latest application for a variation of trading hours, made on behalf of the Queensland Housewives Association and listed for hearing by the commission in November?

*Answer:—*

I understand the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission has set aside 5 and 6 November 1981 to hear argument from all interested organisations in support of and against the application of the Queensland Housewives Association Limited to extend trading hours.

The commission is an independent trading hours tribunal. In making its trading hours orders, the commission has regard to the matters set out in section 96D (4) of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, including the consumer and public interest.

I propose to convey to the commission through the normal channels the Government policy on this issue.

5. Chimney, Townsville Hospital

Mr Smith asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the development of the Townsville General Hospital and in particular to the construction and erection of the highly controversial chimney—

(1) Is he aware that the main contractor, Jennings, has sought an injunction against Evans Deakin Industries, the subcontractor, for supply and erection of the chimney?

(2) Has the main contractor been successful in obtaining an injunction against Evans Deakin?

(3) When will the erection of the chimney now be completed and how far behind the original schedule is the new projected completion dated?

(4) Will the Queensland Government, as a significant shareholder in Evans Deakin Industries, take action to ensure the company does not suffer a disastrous financial loss as a result of its participation in this major Government project?

(5) Who will meet the cost of any cancellation of the contract with Evans Deakin Industries?

(6) Did the reason for the main contractor's action in taking out an injunction against Evans Deakin result from re-examination of the design of the structure, recognition of departures from Australian Design Standards in the construction, delays in delivery brought about by unforeseen construction and erection difficulties or the failure of Evans Deakin Industries to obtain a building permit from the Townsville City Council?

*Answer:—*

(1) Yes.

(2 to 6) The matter is presently the subject of consideration by the board, head contractor and subcontractor with their legal advisers and I am therefore not prepared to make comment on the questions raised.

## 6. Proposed Summary Offences Act

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

With reference to the public disquiet concerning reports in the Press that it is proposed to replace the Vagrants, Gaming and Other Offences Act with a Summary Offences Act and the undesirable nature of some of the new legislation's reported provisions, what is the correct position and the status or lack of status of the proposals reported in the Press?

*Answer:—*

I am not sure as to which Press articles the honourable member alludes. However, I would like to emphasise that since the document relating to the proposed Summary Offences Act was submitted to Cabinet, it has been reviewed twice and many significant and substantial amendments have been made. Many bear no resemblance to original considerations contained in Press articles, particularly an article appearing in "The Courier-Mail".

As I have previously mentioned in the House, my parliamentary committee will give consideration to any amendments proposed, the joint parties will consider the legislation, and I will bring it before Parliament in a sensible and reasonable way. At present, I intend to bring the legislation before Parliament in this session. I believe it will be possible to bring the Games Protection Bill, too, before the House during this session. My present planning is to recommend that both Bills lie on the table over the Christmas recess, thereby giving honourable members ample time to consider them.

## 7. Licences for Concealable Firearms

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

With reference to a number of armed robberies which have occurred in recent months and the need for shopkeepers to have some means of self-defence—

How long should a businessman ordinarily have to wait before an application for a licence for a concealable firearm is processed by the Police Department?

*Answer:—*

I have been informed that applications for concealable firearms are usually processed within a period of four weeks. However, this time may vary according to the circumstances of the particular application, as it is departmental policy to inquire into the merits of the application together with the suitability of the applicant, before issuing any such licence.

## 8. Pre-school, Emu Park

Mr Hartwig asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

With reference to tenders for a new pre-school at Emu Park which were called early this year and then cancelled by his department because of lack of funds, when can Emu Park expect this much needed pre-school centre?

*Answer:—*

Funds have not been available for this project. However, following a recent visit to Yeppoon by the Honourable the Premier this matter will be considered again.

## 9. Dingo Barrier Fence

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

What is the present situation in relation to proposals for the restoration of the dingo barrier fence?

*Answer:—*

Some time ago Cabinet agreed to fund from Queensland revenue, over a three-year period, the estimated cost of about \$1.13m involved in necessary realignments of the barrier fence in southern Queensland, provided industry organisations and local government agreed to meet the full cost of maintenance of the shortened barrier fence. Indications are that such industry organisations and local government are not prepared to meet this full cost and a number of local authorities are also resisting any suggestion that they should be required to raise substantially higher funds under the Barrier Fences Act.

I have had further discussions with the Honourable the Deputy Premier and Treasurer in the hope that the Government may be able to see its way clear to fund annually from consolidated revenue 33½ per cent of the maintenance cost as recommended by the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board.

I am still hopeful that the board's recommendations may ultimately be approved.

10.

#### Kangaroo Pet Food Industry

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

What action is State Cabinet taking to assist the Queensland kangaroo pet food industry, which is currently experiencing extreme financial hardship as a result of problems arising from the beef scandal?

*Answer:—*

My department, in consultation with the Treasury, is preparing an urgent report on the question of the provision of financial assistance for the kangaroo pet food industry. I will be submitting the report to Cabinet as soon as it is available.

I have received a copy of a submission and also received a deputation from the Queensland Fauna Dealers. I arranged for Bill Meynink, chairman of the Queensland Meat Industry Organisation and Marketing Authority, to be present at the meeting so that the points raised in the submission could be adequately discussed.

Pet-food processing was also discussed at a recently convened meeting of the Standing Committee on Agriculture. As a result of this, a working party was established and has already met to consider ways and means of establishing uniformity of processing pet food throughout the Commonwealth. Queensland is represented on the working party by a senior and experienced officer, who is aware of the points made in the submission by the Queensland Fauna Dealers. The working party will report back through established channels to the next meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council.

I wish to assure the honourable member that I will keep the matter under review and do what I am able to help restore stability to this important industry.

11.

#### Crown Industrial Estates in Remote Areas

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Commerce and Industry—

(1) What criteria are used in the establishment of Crown industrial estates?

(2) Will consideration be given to the establishment of Crown industrial estates in electorates such as Warrego to allow pioneer industries in remote areas to avail themselves of financial assistance for establishing industries in such areas which will assist employment opportunities and decentralisation?

*Answer:—*

(1) As no doubt the honourable member is aware, the Crown has 49 industrial estates throughout the length and breadth of the State, from Cairns in the north to Stanthorpe in the south and west to Mount Isa. In all instances, the general criteria for the establishment of these Crown industrial estates are:—

(a) a demonstrated need by manufacturing industry requiring land for establishment or expansion in the area;

(b) the willingness of local authorities to participate in the provision of services to estate boundaries; and

(c) the availability of funds within the department's budget to provide the facility.

(2) Provided the basic criteria mentioned in (1) are met, consideration will be given to the establishment of an industrial estate in any part of Queensland, and, naturally, the electorate of Warrego will therefore be included. However, I would like to inform the honourable member that it is not necessary to establish on a Crown industrial estate to be eligible for financial assistance under the provisions of the Industrial Development Act. Financial assistance under that Act is generally given by way of a guarantee issuable under the following criteria:—

(a) the industry seeking assistance must be pioneer, i.e., the first of its kind in the region or one that is fulfilling an unsatisfied demand in that region;

(b) the industry must be viable, i.e., in the commercial considerations of the Industries Assistance Board; and

(c) a suitable security must be offered which must be within the requirements of the Industrial Development Act.

Should the honourable member have a specific industry in mind, I would be happy to discuss the matter with him.

## 12. Co-ordinated Rail/Bus Service, Toowoomba-Gatton-Ipswich

Mr Prest asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Will McCafferty's Coaches be operating a co-ordinated bus service between Toowoomba, Gatton and Ipswich?

(2) When will the service commence?

(3) Will the present rail passenger service be continued?

(4) Have McCafferty's Coaches claimed that their co-ordinated service between Helidon and Toowoomba has been unprofitable?

(5) If so, has the company received a subsidy?

(6) Will they receive a subsidy for the new service and at what rate?

(7) If the proposed bus service terminates at Ipswich, what extra facilities are to be provided such as assistance to the elderly regarding luggage and transference of passengers?

(8) How many bus lines now operate between Brisbane and Toowoomba, what are the names of these companies and do these companies receive Government subsidies?

(9) What will be the proposed timetable of the co-ordinated bus service?

(10) What is the present rail co-ordinated passenger service timetable between Brisbane-Toowoomba and Toowoomba-Brisbane?

*Answer:—*

(1) The Toowoomba-Brisbane co-ordinated service will continue, but the co-ordinating station will be altered from Helidon to Ipswich.

(2) On 8 November 1981, coinciding with alterations to other long-distance passenger services.

(3) The present frequency of the rail passenger service between Toowoomba and Brisbane will be maintained. One additional weekday service will operate from Laidley to Brisbane. From Brisbane there will be two additional services. The same level of weekday services from Gatton to Brisbane will be maintained. There will be an increase of one service from Brisbane to Gatton. Between Helidon and Brisbane there will be four services each way each weekday compared with five services at present.

(4) Yes.

(5 & 6) This service does not qualify for a subsidy under the Urban Passenger Service Proprietors Act, nor will the service via Ipswich.

(7) Portering staff are available at Ipswich to assist.

(8) Greyhound Coaches Pty Ltd operate a service between Toowoomba and Brisbane, while McCafferty's Coaches operate a service between Toowoomba and Coolangatta via Mt Gravatt. Neither service is eligible for a subsidy under the Urban Passenger Service Proprietors Act.

(9 & 10) The details sought are set out in the statements that I now table.

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

13. Bus and Taxi Services, Gladstone

Mr Prest asked the Minister for Transport—

With reference to public transport in Gladstone—

(1) As Gladstone does not have an adequate public transport service and lengthy delays occur awaiting a taxi, will he investigate the need for an adequate bus service and, if necessary, call tenders for a city bus service, thus eliminating congestion on the roads and parking problems in the city?

(2) Will he increase the number of taxi licences for Gladstone and district because of the shortage of cabs caused by the priority given to QAL, the Railway Department and shipping companies over local or public calls and because of the expansion of the area covered by the taxis?

*Answer:—*

(1) J. R. and S. L. Cox currently hold a licence authorising the road carriage of passengers within the city of Gladstone. The question of providing additional bus services at Gladstone has recently been the subject of examination by officers of the Department of Transport, and the above operators have been requested to supply details of their intentions. On receipt of their reply, the matter will receive further consideration.

(2) Earlier this year, applications were invited by public advertisement for six additional cab licences at Gladstone. In response to these advertisements, three applications were received, one licence has been issued and a further two licences will be issued in the near future, subject to the applicants complying with the requirements of the Department of Transport. Applications will again be invited by public advertisement in the near future for the balance of three cab licences for which no applications were received.

14. Water Supply for Iwasaki Tourist Resort

Mr Prest asked the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs—

With reference to a report on 27 March that Cabinet has rejected a scheme which would have involved taxpayers' money to help finance a water-supply system for the Iwasaki tourist resort at Yeppoon and a further report that Iwasaki is to build a massive motel complex on the site—

(1) Has a water system been provided to cope with the tourists and staff at this massive tourist complex?

(2) From where is water being drawn?

(3) What amount of water will be required daily?

(4) What is the cost of providing water to this complex?

(5) Is the Iwasaki tourist complex or are Queensland taxpayers or Yeppoon or Livingstone ratepayers paying for this water system to supply water for the Iwasaki complex?

(6) What charge will be payable individually by each body?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 6) Following the report to which the honourable member refers, an investigation was undertaken of the ground-water resources of the Farnborough resort area.

This investigation has indicated that sufficient water is available from this source to meet the requirements of at least Stage I of the development of the resort complex as defined in clauses 3 and 4 of Schedule F to the Queensland International Tourist Centre Agreement Act 1978. It will be the sole responsibility of the company to develop the well field required to service the initial resort development and to reticulate such supply as required. The investigation indicates quite clearly that water from another source will be necessary in the full development of the resort complex. At this stage, no firm decision has been taken as to the source of such water supply or who might bear the costs involved.

### 15. Workers' Compensation Claims

Mr Bertoni asked the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations—

What is (a) the number of workers compensation claims and (b) the total expenditure over the last three financial years for the following categories:—(i) physiotherapy; (ii) dentists and medical practitioners; (iii) chiropractors and (iv) benevolent institutions?

*Answer:—*

The number of claims and amounts paid are available for three financial years to 30 June 1980. The figures for the year ended 30 June 1981 are not yet available.

	Year	Number of Claims	Amount Paid
			\$
(a) and (c)— Physiotherapy and chiropractors	1977-78	1	108
	1978-79	1	1,183
	1979-80	3	3,173
(b)— Dentists and Medical practitioners	1977-78	21	8,956
	1978-79	30	26,353
	1979-80	27	12,986
(d)— Benevolent Institutions	1977-78	85	70,537
	1978-79	155	96,703
	1979-80	204	103,197

Note: The Workers Compensation Board's computer program does not permit the separation of physiotherapy and chiropractors.

### 16. Remuneration Received by Members of North Queensland Electricity Board

Mr Bertoni asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What is the remuneration, including fees, travel, accommodation and other costs, paid to members of the North Queensland Electricity Board?

(2) What is the total remuneration each member of the board has received over the last six years?

Answer:—

(1) At the present time, the fees payable to members of the North Queensland Electricity Board are—

Chairman—\$4,250 per annum payable monthly; other members—\$3,000 per annum payable monthly; duly appointed deputy of a member—daily allowance of \$50 for each normal working day or part thereof during which he is necessarily absent from his usual place of residence to attend a meeting of the board.

In addition, each member (including the chairman) is reimbursed for the actual out-of-pocket expenses he incurs for fares, accommodation, meals and the like, in attending a meeting of the board. Where a member uses his own vehicle to travel to or from a meeting of the board, a car mileage allowance is paid at the current mileage rates applicable to State public servants.

(2) The honourable member will be aware that the electricity supply industry was reorganised on 1 July 1977. However, appointments of members of the North Queensland Electricity Board took effect from 12 February 1977. The total remuneration each member of the board has received from March 1977 to September 1981 is as follows:—

Current Board Members

	\$
Prof. P. L. Arlett .. .. .	12,017.44
Cr P. A. Black .. .. .	7,225.81
Ald. F. Born .. .. .	17,567.80
Mr L. L. Brosnan .. .. .	12,642.43
Cr D. H. Land .. .. .	7,225.81
Cr R. S. Lord .. .. .	7,225.81
Ald. M. Reynolds .. .. .	12,017.44

Previous Board Members

	\$
Ald. B. Bloom .. .. .	874.98
Cr C. Gordon .. .. .	5,416.62
Cr S. Page .. .. .	5,466.62
Prof. L. Power .. .. .	624.99
Cr F. Tritton .. .. .	5,566.62

Deputies of Members

	\$
Cr A. J. Andrews .. .. .	50.00
Cr H. M. Grant .. .. .	300.00
Ald. F. C. Hurlock .. .. .	150.00
Ald. E. Lindsay .. .. .	100.00
Ald. A. Mooney .. .. .	50.00
Ald. D. L. Parker .. .. .	50.00
Cr J. G. Powley .. .. .	150.00

17.

Sterilisation of Milk Cartons

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to the report in "The Courier-Mail" of 11 September that high levels of bacteria were found to have contaminated milk from three State capitals—

(1) Are the cartons containing pasteurised milk sterilised and, if so, at which stage of the process is sterilisation carried out?

(2) Is the milk pasteurised and packaged in Queensland guaranteed free from bacteria under the existing method of sterilisation?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) Cartons used to package pasteurised milk are made of cardboard which is covered with a layer of plastic. These cartons are supplied to milk plants in sealed bundles as carton blanks. During the milk-packaging process, the carton-filling machine forms the carton and fills and seals it. These cartons are not sterilised during the filling process, but extensive testing by officers of the Dairying and Fisheries Division has indicated that they are not a significant source of contamination in pasteurised milk. Milk pasteurised and packaged in Queensland has to meet the standards prescribed in the Food and Drug Regulations.

The cartons used in the production of sterile milk (or UHT milk) are sterilised during filling and sealing and the milk used is also sterilised at a very high temperature. This milk is bacteria free and has a shelf life of six months. However, it is much more expensive than pasteurised milk.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### Sale of Queensland Fish Board Assets

Mr CASEY: In asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries, I refer to his admission this morning that the Government intends to sell off the Queensland Fish Board, something the dogs have been barking for about two years, and which, incidentally, did cost the former Minister responsible for the fishing industry his seat at the last election. I ask: What moral right does the Government have to sell off assets that have been built up from funds contributed by the fishermen of Queensland? Why does the Government treat fishing differently to dairying, for instance, with which, for some unknown reason, it is linked in the Department of Primary Industries? Why did the Government not take action to implement its own legislation and have all fish in Queensland traded through the Queensland Fish Board in the same way as all wheat goes through the Wheat Board, all sugar goes through the Sugar Board and many other primary industry commodities in Queensland go through their own boards?

Mr AHERN: I have made arrangements for a copy of the ministerial statement I made to the House this morning to be delivered to all honourable members. I ask all honourable members to study what I had to say, because to summarise it and say that the Government has decided to sell the Fish Board is a very unfair statement.

The Queensland Government and the Fish Board are determined that the Queensland Fish Board will remain as an important presence in fish-marketing in Queensland. We are determined that that will happen.

Mr Casey: How will you bust up all its assets?

Mr AHERN: If the honourable member would cease interjecting and listen to the reply it would be helpful.

In relation to the comment made by the honourable member in respect to the assets of the Fish Board belonging to fishermen, I am one who would agree with that comment, but the assets of the Fish Board are now net assets against which liabilities must be balanced. That is the situation that applies, and the net assets of the board will now be mobilised under the revamped arrangements which will operate in the interests of fish-marketing in Queensland. The orderly marketing of fish will continue, and in this respect we have dealt with this board in the same manner as we have dealt with all other boards under the administration of the Department of Primary Industries. All other primary industry boards in Queensland have to pay their way.

Mr Casey: What about the Wheat and Sugar Boards? They pay their way because all wheat and sugar is traded through them.

Mr AHERN: They pay their way because under their respective Acts they are required to do so, and this board has to do the same. It cannot be subsidised by taxpayers because, frankly, no other marketing organisation in Queensland is subsidised by the taxpayers.

The honourable member suggests that we should confine all fish-marketing in Queensland to the Fish Board, and that is an interesting proposition. But the situation has been complicated recently by the development of a large chain of private processors up and down the coast who have been operating under section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution and consigning interstate. This has been extremely difficult to police, and in fact it has not been policed recently. Any attempt to do so would result in massive disruption to the industry in Queensland. That type of policing is now no longer possible. The committee of inquiry appointed by the Government reported that this can no longer be done and that the Fish Board must operate competitively. We have acted so that that will occur. The debt position was so intolerable that it was realised that there was no way the board could become competitive unless there was a realisation of some of its assets. But a market presence will remain and depots will be maintained at strategic centres up and down the coast.

That action was taken now so that that option could be retained. If it was left any longer it would not be possible. Hard decisions have been taken. I have convened a meeting for 8.30 tomorrow morning, when all interested parties will come to my department to discuss the impact of the decision and how we might accommodate the interests of local fishermen with their co-operatives. Absolutely every endeavour will be made to assist fishermen's co-operatives to conduct their affairs in the various ports throughout Queensland. These decisions have not been taken lightly; they have been taken over a long period, and I am convinced that they are in the interests of fishermen.

#### Cairns Section, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

Mr CASEY: My next question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts. I notice that he has gone, too. All the Ministers are clearing out as usual.

Dr EDWARDS: I rise to a point of order. I draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Ministers who have left the Chamber have gone to a meeting of Executive Council. It is important that that constitutional responsibility of Ministers and the Governor be adhered to.

Mr CASEY: I accept the explanation of the Deputy Premier, but I quite clearly and positively say that Parliament is supreme in Queensland over Executive Council, Executive Government or any other committee, and Ministers should be responsible to it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the Leader of the Opposition that this is question-time, and I am not here to listen to lectures from him.

Mr D'Arcy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Woodridge under Standing Order 123A.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I also warn the member for South Brisbane under Standing Order 123A.

Mr CASEY: Mr Speaker, I accept your explanation in this matter.

Mr SPEAKER: I ask the Leader of the Opposition to proceed with his question.

Mr CASEY: Mr Speaker, this is question-time, but it is extremely difficult to ask questions of Ministers when only half of them are present in the House.

Mr SPEAKER: I am aware of that. I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition ask his question.

Mr CASEY: The Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts is not here, so I shall have to place this question on notice. Perhaps the Deputy Premier might like to answer it on his behalf. It refers to the Cairns section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Dr EDWARDS: I inform the Leader of the Opposition that the spokesman for the Queensland Government on the declaration of the marine park is the Minister for Primary Industries. I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition should refer his question to the correct Minister.

Mr CASEY: I shall do so. I would also ask the Deputy Premier if he would mind having the Government's journals altered, because they clearly show that national parks and marine parks are the responsibility of the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. The next 32 minutes are allocated to question-time. If either Government or Opposition members have questions to ask, I suggest that they ask them. If not, they should move out of the Chamber and have their discussions outside. Those types of discussions will not take place in the Chamber.

Mr CASEY: I direct a question to the Minister for Primary Industries, who apparently also looks after marine parks in Queensland. I refer to the proposed declaration of the Cairns section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and ask: Why does the Queensland Government continually fail to reach agreement with the Federal Government on this very necessary proposal to protect the most famous part of Queensland's natural heritage?

Mr AHERN: I am the spokesman for the Queensland Government on such matters in my capacity as the Minister responsible for the administration of fisheries in this State. Frankly, the honourable gentleman should have realised that. Press statements have been made about the matter and I have had discussions on it.

Since I have been the Minister responsible for this matter, the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Council has met only once. There are three new members on the council. At its recent meeting we canvassed a wide range of issues relating to the management of the Capricornia section of the park. We looked at issues that were outstanding relating to the area north of the Capricornia section, particularly the Cairns section.

A variety of issues have to be resolved, particularly in relation to the funding of the Capricornia section. For instance, undertakings have been made that the Commonwealth Government would make available a certain amount of money. However, when I read the Federal Budget, I noted that that amount was not there. Because Queensland will eventually be left holding the baby, the Government needs guarantees.

The ministerial council is working satisfactorily. I am having discussions with the Federal Minister with a view to resolving the outstanding issues and I am optimistic about the outcome. Apparently the honourable member does not understand that the State has a number of important industries that operate in that area, one of which is the sugar industry, a \$1,100m industry involving 7 200 families. The Government wants to be absolutely certain that the restraints that are imposed by the declaration of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park will not make it impossible for the sugar industry to operate, which is what would happen if some of the comments of the conservationists were put into effect. In that respect, guarantees are needed.

Resource development in the State requires port development, and that presents a problem. Guaranteed ingress and egress through shipping lanes is absolutely vital to the State. Tourism is another industry that provides a maximum amount of employment and will continue to provide great opportunities for young people in the years ahead. A balance between the conservation of the Great Barrier Reef and the continued operation of these industries must be achieved.

As I said, matters are proceeding satisfactorily. The Federal Minister and his departmental officers have been helpful, and I am confident about the outcome. The Government has adopted a very even-handed and responsible approach.

### Apprenticeships

Mr McKECHNIE: In directing a question to the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations, I refer to the number of large employers advertising apprenticeship vacancies for 1982. I ask: Is he aware that the number of applications received is down on the previous year? What is the reason for that trend, and should greater publicity be given to the apprenticeship system?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Yes, I am aware that in some cases the number of applicants for apprenticeships has dropped considerably, although the number of vacancies has increased. For instance, this year the Railway Department received 2 000 applications for apprenticeships as against 2 300 the year before. There is a reduction of approximately 40 per cent in the number of applications for apprenticeships with the QEGB.

Mr Davis: You know why, don't you? They gave up trying to apply.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Oh, rubbish! Obviously the honourable member is not informed.

The number of young people seeking work in these areas has also decreased considerably because other opportunities for employment are available. That has been reflected in the number of young people presently seeking work. The figures for May show a very substantial reduction on last year's figures, despite a substantial increase in population. There has been a substantial increase in job opportunities. During the 12 months ended August 1981, approximately 40 000 new jobs were created in this State. That is a record. Taken as a percentage of the work-force, it is one of the highest in the world. The situation in other States of Australia is not as good as that in Queensland. In fact, Tasmania recorded a minus figure in the same period.

Recently in this House I referred to a canvass that I made of employment agencies. I have since received information that not one reply was received to an advertisement last week-end for a stenographer/secretary in my electorate. That position was advertised on four occasions. It offered a salary of approximately \$20 above the award, non-compulsory superannuation, staff discounts, opportunity to learn word-processing and very good working conditions. No application was received.

### Decline in Mud Crab Numbers

Mr RANDELL: I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: Is he aware of the continuing decline in the number of mud crabs in the coastal areas of Queensland? If so, has he taken steps to investigate ways of arresting that decline? If not, in view of the importance of mud crabs to the fishing industry and to the average family fisherman, will he take urgent measures to ensure that the crab population is not allowed to decline any further?

Mr AHERN: The Fisheries Department is conducting an extensive research program into crab fishery in Queensland. A great deal of research material has been gathered. I would be happy to make that information available to honourable members.

The question of review of administrative arrangements in relation to crab and other fisheries will be the subject of a proposed amendment to the Fisheries Act. I expect to be able to present the final draft to Parliament early in the new year. As the honourable member is a member of my committee, I shall look forward to his co-operation.

### Blair Athol Steaming Coal Project

Mr LESTER: I ask the Minister for Mines and Energy: Is the shadow Minister for Mines (Mr Vaughan) trying to sabotage the future of the Blair Athol mine and the security of the people of Clermont by making irrational and derogatory statements about the Blair Athol project? It is about to get off the ground and it will be the largest such project

in Australia. It is something that Clermont people have waited half a century for. Will the Minister assure the people of Clermont that our Government will not allow the ALP to hinder their future at a time when the negotiations have reached a delicate stage?

Mr I. J. GIBBS: The honourable member for Peak Downs shows much greater concern for the people of Clermont than that shown yesterday by the honourable member for Nudgee. Of course, this morning I answered the comments made yesterday by the member for Nudgee. In trying to attack and discredit the Government he has shown his complete ignorance and he has also, either directly or indirectly, attacked Blair Athol Coal Pty Ltd. Such an attack may affect the jobs of from 300 to 400 workers in the Peak Downs electorate. No doubt the people of Clermont will be interested to read the statements made by Opposition members.

I can assure the honourable member for Peak Downs that the interests of the people of Queensland are being looked after in the imposition of royalties and rail freights, which are being fixed at a level well within the guide-lines laid down by the Government. Furthermore, we are creating employment in the operation of the mine.

The honourable member for Nudgee could not possibly be as ignorant as he appears to be. I believe that he is only putting up a front. After all, he has been involved in the electricity industry for quite some time. However, for his information I would liken the difference between the thermal values of various types of coal to that between standard and super petrol. Different thermal values attract different prices. The honourable member for Nudgee has implied that all coal, no matter from which mine it is extracted, is exactly the same. Coal varies in quality, in hardness and in thermal value. Many aspects are taken into consideration in arriving at the value of coal.

I appreciate the concern expressed by the honourable member for Peak Downs for the people of Clermont and Blair Athol. The honourable member for Nudgee is mischievously casting aspersions on coal companies and the Government, and this will have an adverse effect on those companies' employees.

The Blair Athol long-term contract provides for an f.o.b. price that is the highest in the world for that type of coal.

Mr Vaughan: What is the price?

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I do not intend to discuss the business of the company.

I know that the honourable member for Peak Downs is quite capable of making the people of Clermont aware of the attitude of the Opposition towards this project. Its attitude will become well known.

#### Familiarisation Course Organised by the Queensland Confederation of Industry

Mr YEWDAL: I had a question that I wished to direct to the Premier. In his absence, in all sincerity, I was going to direct it to the Minister for Commerce and Industry, but now he has left the House. If the Deputy Premier feels obligated to answer, or would like to answer the question, I will address it to him.

In directing a question to the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, I refer him to a government familiarisation course that was being organised by the Queensland Confederation of Industry for 14 and 15 October 1981. I now ask: Is he aware of the considerable work carried out by the confederation, acknowledgments by Cabinet Ministers, senior departmental officials, Opposition shadow Ministers and other persons indicating willingness to attend and participate in the course and the social arrangements? In the light of the time and cost involved, the interstate visitors expected and other arrangements made, could the Deputy Premier and Treasurer advise Parliament, the Confederation of Industry and the community at large why the Co-ordinator-General, at the request of the Premier, through Cabinet, advised as late as 13 October that all Cabinet Ministers and departmental personnel would not be participating, thereby causing the entire course to be cancelled?

Dr EDWARDS: There has been some misunderstanding both within the Confederation of Industry and the Government on the activity associated with that seminar. We are advised that the person who signed the letter of invitation was not a member of the Confederation of Industry but was the person who had the responsibility of organising the seminar. As a result, we believed that we should have the matter totally clarified so that there could be no misunderstanding about Ministers and, indeed, public servants being used to promote a seminar conducted for the benefit—

Mr Yewdale: Everybody had accepted, and it was cancelled the day before it was due to be held.

Dr EDWARDS: It makes it very difficult to answer a question when continuing interjections are being made by the honourable member who asked the question.

As I said at the outset, there has been some misunderstanding by members of the Confederation of Industry. The letter was signed, as I understand it, by a person who is not a member of the Confederation of Industry. For the information of the honourable member, I point out that the Premier and I have arranged to meet representatives of the Confederation of Industry at 3 p.m. today to discuss the matter and clarify it completely.

As a general principle, I do not think it is fair for an association, whatever association it may be, to expect Ministers or public servants to allow themselves to be used to promote a seminar that is under the auspices of a private organisation, not an industry organisation in general. That was the information conveyed to us. Members of industry requested us to reconsider our position in being associated with a lobby group—if that is the correct way to describe it. The matter will be examined in full by the Government this afternoon in discussions with the Confederation of Industry. We hope to clarify the whole matter then.

#### Casino Licences, Statement by Ministers

Mr YEWDAL: I refer the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police to the headline in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" of 2 October, referring to the Treasurer's saying that Mr Hinze was unwise in his comments about casinos. Is the Minister aware that the Treasurer has described him as an embarrassment because of his comments on the likely successful tenderers for casino licences? Would the Minister tell the House what comments he made to cause such embarrassment to the Treasurer?

Dr EDWARDS: Mr Speaker—

Mr Yewdale: I asked the Minister for Local Government.

Dr EDWARDS: As the Leader of the House I have the right to answer a question on behalf of the Government.

Mr Yewdale interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Dr EDWARDS: The honourable member referred to an alleged statement attributed to me. That statement is not correct.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Dr EDWARDS: As to the reported statement—it was said to me that the Minister for Local Government had made a statement in North Queensland that Townsville was a certainty for a casino. I indicated very clearly to the reporter concerned that I did not believe that the Minister would make such a statement. In fact, on checking with the Minister when I returned, I was assured by him that such a statement was not made. However, when I was assured by the reporter that he felt that the Minister did say that, I said that, if the statement was made, I did not believe it was a wise statement. I think

that everybody else would agree with me. The Government has had an open policy in the consideration of licences for casinos and no Minister has made any comment on the site or on the particular application that should be successful. The Minister has assured me that he did not make that statement and I accept his explanation.

Mr YEWDAL: I have a question for the Minister in charge of consumer affairs, but should I direct it to the Treasurer? I seek your guidance, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

*Whereupon the honourable member proceeded to give notice of a question.*

#### Casino, Central Queensland

Mr HARTWIG: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: In view of recent Press statements and the Government's policy on calling applications for two casinos—obviously one will go to the South Coast and the other to Cairns or Townsville—can he give me any specific reason why the tremendous developing area of Central Queensland has been blatantly disregarded by the Government in relation to casinos?

Dr EDWARDS: The question is very relevant, but the answer is very simple. We received no applications from that area.

#### Electricity Supply, Rannes and Goovigen

Mr HARTWIG: Before asking the Minister for Mines and Energy a question, I thank him for saying that the new power-station will be built in my electorate.

I draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that a large number of properties between the townships of Rannes and Goovigen do not have electricity and that Rannes, which is in the neighbouring electorate, does not have power. The people living in that area have good properties. When I asked the Capricornia Electricity Board to reticulate power to them, I was told that it would not be done until 1985 or 1986. I ask: Will the Minister exert his influence to have these people treated in a better way in regard to the reticulation of electricity?

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I appreciate the honourable member's concern about the lack of electricity connection in some remote and semi-remote areas. It is an enormous job for the electricity industry to connect supply to all areas of the State, but if the honourable member states in writing the areas that are of concern to him, I will undertake to follow the matter through and obtain an answer for him.

#### Refund of Hospital Charges for X-rays and Pathology Tests

Mr HANSEN: In directing a question to the Minister for Health, I refer him to the refusal of health insurance funds to recognise amounts paid to Queensland Government hospitals by private and intermediate patients for X-rays, pathology tests, etc. I think that the Minister is aware of the position. I ask: As hospitals have been instructed to bill such patients, and as it is of grave concern to the patients that the funds refuse to pay, what advice does he have for such patients? In particular, will the practice of charging patients continue?

Mr AUSTIN: It is unfortunate that the Federal Government has not elected to amend its legislation, because in this instance its refusal to do so is preventing people who receive hospital accounts for services such as pathology and radiology from claiming health insurance fund rebates. I have contacted the Federal Minister about the matter, but to date he has refused to amend the legislation to allow a rebate to be paid on an account issued by a hospital.

In hospitals in major provincial towns, however, it is possible for a private radiologist to carry out work in a hospital or have the hospital carry out work on his behalf. The hospital charges the radiologist for the X-rays and the radiologist then receives payment of 40 per cent of the total bill for reading those X-rays. The hospitals

board will issue the account in the name of the doctor and the account then becomes eligible for a health insurance rebate. So the honourable member can see that it is not only a matter of the State Health Department carrying out some procedures; it is also a matter of co-operation between private medical practitioners, hospitals boards, the State Health Department and the Federal Government.

While the circumstances are slightly different, it is possible for the same result to be achieved in regard to pathology. In some country towns, the State hospital is the only place where pathology tests can be carried out, and again it is unfortunate that accounts for such tests are not eligible for health insurance rebates because the Federal Government has refused to amend the Act.

I have made application to the Federal Government to have public hospital laboratories declared suitable laboratories under the Act. Accounts issued by the hospitals boards or by my Director of Pathology and Microbiology in the State Health Department would then come from accredited laboratories and people could then claim a rebate. It is interesting to note that the Commonwealth Government accredits its own laboratories, such as the one operating in Rockhampton and others in centres throughout Queensland. People issued with accounts by those laboratories are eligible for health insurance refunds; yet it is not possible for the State Health Department to carry out such tests in its own laboratories and have its accounts made eligible for refunds.

I have approached the Federal Health Minister in an attempt to have our laboratories classified in the same manner as the Commonwealth laboratories, but I have met with no success. I have some sympathy for the honourable member's problem, and I agree that in some instances it has become difficult for patients to claim.

There has also been some lack of co-operation from the medical profession in certain towns, but in broad terms the profession has co-operated. In relation to radiology in smaller country towns in which a specialist service is not required but in which there may be a general practitioner with a small facility, again it is possible for the hospital to take the X-ray and for the private general practitioner to read it. However, the rebate payable in that instance is not as great as it would be if a specialist radiologist carried out the tests. There are schedules to cover that instance. In those circumstances, it is possible for people to obtain rebates; but, as I said, a great deal depends on co-operation between the private medical practitioner, the hospital and the patient.

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

## SUPPLY

### Committee—Financial Statement—Resumption of Debate

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Miller, Ithaca) in the chair

Debate resumed from 13 October (see p. 2549) on Dr Edwards's motion—

“That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1981-82, a sum not exceeding \$432,010 to defray Contingencies—His Excellency the Governor.”

Mr D'ARCY (Woodridge) (12.36 p.m.): This Budget is one of a long list of Budgets that have been brought down by the Treasurers in this State, but it is surely one of the worst. It exposes many of the myths surrounding the National-Liberal Party Government in this State. I refer to the myths that these people are the money managers and that they have a right to rule; that we are a low-tax State; and that Queensland people will benefit from the resources boom.

This Government is not interested in the ordinary Queenslander; it is interested only in minority groups. It is not really a Government for ordinary Queenslanders; it is a Government for the multinationals and the overseas interests that have established themselves in this State. It has never represented the ordinary Queenslanders. It has made no attempt to get a reasonable return from Queensland's great assets. Instead, it is slugging the ordinary Queenslander. This is happening while the foreign multinationals are ripping huge windfall profits from this State. The Ministers of this Government are inept, and their actions can only be described as being treacherous to the people of Queensland.

This morning the Minister for Mines and Energy acted in an absolutely disgraceful way in trying to answer the points that the shadow Minister for Mines and Energy, the member for Nudgee, made about the Blair Athol coal position. Massive investment is flowing into Queensland. No-one denies that massive development is taking place, particularly in the mineral area. I refer in particular to the development in the Bowen Basin area right through to the Blackwater area. Good quality coal and minerals, which are easily accessible, are being taken out of this State but the people of Queensland are receiving no benefit from it. The custodians of Queensland's mineral resources sit on the other side of the Chamber. We have seen what those Ministers have done in the last 12 months. We have seen the complete and utter ineptitude of the Liberal Treasurer in dealing with matters. He is incompetent. He proved himself to be absolutely incompetent when the last huge mining tender was let at Winchester South. He said, "This will never happen again." Of course, he was referring to the way in which that tender had been let. His department, the Treasury, virtually took no part in evaluating the tenders in that instance.

This Government stands condemned in the eyes of the ordinary Queenslander. At long last the people of Queensland are beginning to realise that this Government is incompetent in dealing with money matters. I shall prove beyond all doubt that we are not a low-tax State. I shall prove that this is the State that slugs the ordinary Queenslander in order to pay for the development of the long-term industrial projects in this State. The ordinary Queenslander is being asked to pay for this massive development through increased electricity charges and increased motor vehicle and boat registration fees.

Instead of obtaining the funds from the windfall profits of mining companies, through such charges the Government asks the ordinary Queenslander to provide the capital investment for projects that will not provide benefits for years to come.

This morning we saw an example of what the Government has done, how it operates and how damned incompetent it is. The Treasurer likes to stand in the Parliament and propound the fallacious argument that the Government saved the jobs of the men at EDI Ltd. For that he stands condemned in the eyes of Queenslanders. Who ever said that the jobs were in jeopardy? Who ever said that if Clyde Industries Ltd or some other company had taken over EDI Ltd more jobs would not have been created? But that is not the point. Whether the Treasurer likes it or not, the Auditor-General has said that in his opinion this supposedly free-enterprise Government acted illegally. That is what his report says—in his opinion.

Dr Edwards: Just as well you added that.

Mr D'ARCY: I said that before the Treasurer tried to get to his feet. He should listen for a change. He is incompetent. He has no idea of what is going on in Queensland. I am sure that he must have written the recent "Nationwide" program. The Opposition does not object to free enterprise, but obviously, when this supposedly free enterprise Government incurs a paper loss of \$2m, the Treasurer has no idea. Today we heard that the Government is selling off the Queensland Fish Board. In the Queensland Government the people can see incompetence, ad hoc decision-making, rushed legislation, lack of understanding and no real long-term economic planning. The people are starting to realise that they are not getting a sufficient return and that they are the bunnies of this conservative Government. The Government is running Queensland for a handful of people who are paying into the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation and, according to "Nationwide", the Liberal Party's coffers.

Mr Davis: The Liberals, too!

Mr D'ARCY: That is right, the Liberals are starting to get it, too. According to the Treasurer, the Liberals are making the decision on the casino licences, so surely they are getting some of the graft.

Mr Davis: I had them on a higher pedestal; I have to be fair.

Mr D'ARCY: But they are now participating in that graft.

Dr EDWARDS: I rise to a point of order. I am quite happy to listen to the ranting and raving of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition but I do not think I should be expected to sit by when he says that my party, indeed the Government, is associated with graft.

First of all, I feel this is against the principles of the Parliament, and I ask that the remark be withdrawn and that the member apologise to me personally as the leader of the Liberal Party.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition if he was referring to the party or the Cabinet?

Mr D'ARCY: I was referring to the party and the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair has no jurisdiction over people outside of the Chamber. The Chair has jurisdiction over members of Parliament but no control over parties. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was referring to the Liberal Party, then I cannot stop him from making those remarks.

Mr D'ARCY: I was speaking about donations. Recently on the "Nationwide" program it was stated that documentation existed of donations to the Liberal Party, whereas previously the donations had been made to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. As the Liberal Party is playing such an important role in the granting of casino licences, it is interesting to note that these donations are forthcoming. That is the point I made.

Dr EDWARDS: I rise to a point of order. With the greatest respect, as the chairman of the committee that is considering casino licences, I object to the honourable member's imputation against my character and integrity. He is implying that that decision-making will be subject to graft. I totally refute that allegation. I ask that that imputation against my character and integrity be withdrawn and that he apologise.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Deputy Premier believes that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has implied that he personally is receiving donations. If the honourable member for Woodridge is implying that, I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr D'ARCY: I am not implying that at all. I said that the other night on the "Nationwide" program it was stated that the Liberal Party was now receiving donations from big business corporations whereas previously those donations went to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation.

Dr EDWARDS: With the greatest respect, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that the decision on casino licences would be affected by donations to the Liberal Party. As chairman of the committee making those decisions, I take that as a reflection upon my character and integrity and the manner in which I carry out my responsibility. I ask again that the honourable member withdraw his remarks and apologise to me for that imputation.

The CHAIRMAN: I find it very difficult to ask the member for Woodridge to withdraw the words referring to the Liberal Party. "Erskine May" states specifically that a member of a Parliament can refer to a party outside the Chamber and the Chair cannot be expected to protect that party. Again, I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to withdraw any imputation that he made against the Treasurer of this State, as chairman of the committee making the decision. Although the honourable member says that the Liberal Party may be receiving donations—

Mr D'ARCY: "Nationwide" said it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also made that point. As chairman of the committee responsible for the casino decision, the Treasurer is entitled to the protection of the Chair. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is quite in order in referring to the Liberal Party; but the Liberal Party does not have a say in the casino decision. The Treasurer, as chairman of the committee, has the final say.

Mr D'ARCY: If I did impute anything to the Treasurer—I might add that I did not intend to—I withdraw it. I pointed out that it was stated on "Nationwide" that large donations were being made to the Liberal Party because the Treasurer is now participating in more decision-making than the Premier. It was also stated that those donations were being made at a time when casino licences were being considered.

Ordinary Queenslanders, particularly those in country areas, are supposed to be represented by all parties and all sections in this Parliament. The increase in rail freights

announced in the Budget must increase inflation. The price of every single item sent to or coming from country areas is significantly increased. Together with the Commonwealth's sales tax slug, it is an imposition upon every ordinary Queenslander.

Mr Davis: And then sales tax is paid on rail freight.

Mr D'ARCY: Of course. It has actually compounded inflation in Queensland. The average Queenslander is shocked by the imposition placed upon him.

It has been amusing, if slightly painful, to listen to the self-praise of the Treasurer and to the orchestrated parroting by Government members of the great and many benefits successive Liberal Treasurers have bestowed on our wonderful State. In fact, the self-praise has been bestowed in such avalanche proportions that I would not be at all surprised if we found some Government members suffocated by hyperbole. Dr Edwards has fallen into the trap of believing his own rhetoric. I intend in this speech to set the record straight and refute some of the outrageous assertions that have emanated from the Government benches in this Supply debate.

The Treasurer's Financial Statement is a very circumspect and uninspiring piece of handiwork and fully conforms with the 19th century economic attitudes of this Government. Nowhere are there initiatives that will truly capitalise on the great opportunities that lie before us in Queensland. Nowhere do we see any evidence of thoughtful innovation that will ensure a fair and equitable return to the people of Queensland from the State's great resources.

Instead of looking at the facts that the Opposition has presented, the Government has preferred to sit back and massage its collective ego in an increasingly frantic manner. As the facts have reached too close to the bone, the Government, and especially the Treasurer, has become increasingly strident, even to the point where the Treasurer took the unprecedented step of replying immediately to the Leader of the Opposition's speech. That is something the Treasurer must overcome tonight when he replies to other speakers in this debate.

Apart from the usual self-congratulatory praise, such as "This is one of the finest budgets in the nation this year"—which is in no way due, of course, to the good economic management of this Government but is due almost entirely to Queensland's natural wealth—all we heard from the Treasurer was a list of unsupported assertions or spurious claims. I shall refute the Treasurer's claims in detail later.

I begin by reiterating Labor's objectives and illustrating the differences between the ALP's approach to pursuing economic development and progress and the conservative parties' approach of largely supporting the status quo and their never-tiring attempt to convince us that what is in their interests is also in the national interest or the interest of the State.

Labor believes in the equitable distribution of income and wealth and in—  
 full employment of the work-force;  
 optimal utilisation of resources;  
 the promotion of economic, social and cultural development;  
 the democratic participation of all sections of the work-force in economic decision-making in the organisations in which they are engaged; and  
 the broadening of the State's economic base.

I am sure the Treasurer also agrees with many of those aims, the difference being that the conservative parties agree to those aims as far as the vested interests of the ruling group in society are concerned but are opposed to any changes that threaten those vested interests, of which they themselves are a part.

The ALP believes all Queenslanders should be the beneficiaries of our natural wealth and resources. This latest Budget of the Treasurer goes no way towards bringing that about. It has been loudly proclaimed by the Treasurer that this Budget is the "direct result of careful and prudent management". I certainly agree with the statement that the Queensland Budget is a fairly soft Budget when compared to those of some of the hard-pressed southern States, which have not got the huge natural resources that Queensland is so fortunate to have. However, "soft" does not mean "good" and it certainly does not mean "careful and prudent".

As predicted, the Treasurer started off with an attack on the Federal Government over the funding for the States. I certainly appreciate the Treasurer's feelings here, for the Grants Commission did recommend a new fiscal equalisation procedure which would have benefited Queensland. Commonwealth/State financial arrangements are in turmoil, because the widely accepted formula established by the Whitlam Labor Government, whereby 39.87 per cent of personal income tax collections were distributed to the States, has been scrapped. In money terms, that means a loss to the States of \$375 million this financial year.

It is ironical and amusing, and to a degree satisfying, to see the Treasurer strongly criticising the Fraser Federal Government for unilaterally abolishing a scheme which was introduced by the Whitlam Labor Government. The Whitlam Government recognised that, for federalism to work, there needed to be certainty in the proportion of Federal receipts allocated to the States.

The distribution of taxation between the Federal and State Governments shows Australia as the most lopsided of all OECD countries. Here the split between the Federal and State Governments is 80:20, whereas in other federal systems the split is Canada, 47:43; West Germany, 32:32. Those last two ratios do not add up to 100; Australia is the only OECD country which does not impose a separate tax for social security contributions.

A significantly higher proportion of total taxation accrues to the Australian Commonwealth than to the Federal Governments of other OECD countries with autonomous State or provincial Governments, such as Austria, Canada, Germany, Switzerland and the United States. Therefore the Australian States are at the financial mercy of the Federal Government. This situation needs to be altered and a stable formula for tax-sharing established. The Whitlam Labor Government had gone a substantial way towards achieving that goal.

Fraser's federalism, which was so highly praised by this Government when it was first put forward, has been exposed for what it is. Even our Treasurer has now seen that all Fraser wanted to do was push the provision of services onto the States and not provide funds for the financing of those services. I am glad the Treasurer has now finally opened his eyes to the gigantic confidence trick of his Liberal colleagues in Canberra and has rather belatedly condemned them. Of course, the ALP has been condemning them for over two years and has been saying all along what the Treasurer has just now discovered.

There certainly needs to be an urgent redress of the balance between Federal and State financial acquisitions. The States need to be able to plan expenditures with a large degree of certainty. In the Commonwealth Grants Commission we have the most sophisticated mechanism for fiscal equalisation operating in any OECD country, yet the Federal Government can ignore its recommendation with impunity, and the States are totally helpless.

As I said before, this Treasurer and other State Treasurers are now ruefully looking back to the Whitlam tax-sharing formula. Certainly it was only a beginning on the road to redress the lopsidedness of Federal/State financial relations, but when compared with the financial provisions of Fraser's federalism it was a giant step forward.

However, when in doubt confront, accuse and try to shift the blame elsewhere. This Government has developed confrontation, whether it be with the Federal Government or the unions, down to a fine art. Constructive suggestions or workable alternative propositions are unheard of. The Premier will go down in history as one of the finest proponents of "confrontationist politics".

When we look at the statistics, the picture is a little more sober, because federal funds for Queensland increased by 27.5 per cent this financial year. In addition, Queensland is the only State to receive a special grant of \$58.5m so that it can continue to upgrade services in the fields of education, health and welfare to the level and quality provided by the other States.

Although the Opposition totally agrees with the argument that the States are not getting a good deal, the Queensland Government is insincere, to say the least, when it blames all our woes on Canberra.

It is in the area of infrastructure financing, proved through the Loan Council, that the crunch for Queensland has come. Queensland requested approval for \$377.8m in 1981-82 for new power-stations, harbour facilities at Hay Point and Gladstone, the Burdekin Falls Dam and the Brisbane rail electrification—all very worth while and necessary projects for developing and stabilising Queensland.

The ALP differs from the Government in the method of financing these necessary works. We agree with the principle of the user pays. In the resources area the users pay very little—and this is confirmed very clearly in the Grants Commission comparisons—and the economic rent attached to those resources is not being returned to the people of Queensland but is being expropriated by the companies.

Economic rent generated in the process of exploiting a natural resource is the income that is earned after the deduction of the supply price of all domestic and foreign factors used within the production process, including factors supplied within the direct investment package, that is, the economic rent is that return which is not attributable to the return required on capital, labour and expertise necessary for the investment.

Economists agree that the developmental impact of resource investments depends critically on the effectiveness of Governments' identifying and taxing resource rents and in using the rents in ways that contribute to the attainment of various national or State objectives. That economic rent can be taxed in numerous ways, such as by royalties, licence fees, railway freights, port charges and road taxes.

I am glad that the continuous criticism of the ALP is at last having an effect. The Government's recently proposed \$149m road tax goes some way to correct the disastrous situation whereby Queensland's resources are handed to the mining companies, gift wrapped.

The way in which the Government denies and hides its methods of imposing taxes through royalties, rail freights and other charges, is more dishonest and despicable than the methods used by any other Government. This Parliament is not even informed what the charges are, nevertheless, it remains patently clear that the terms and conditions imposed by the Queensland Government on mining companies must be amongst the most generous in the world.

I will now outline what the Minister has said we receive from the mining companies. First of all he referred to rail freights.

The amount is kept secret from this Parliament and everyone else because it is a secret agreement with the Government, but it is believed to be at least \$60m. While the amount is kept secret, I point out that one mining company will say that it is paying \$4 a tonne to shift its coal and another will claim that it has been paying \$11 a tonne for years to shift the same amount of coal over the same distance on the same railway service.

Dr Lockwood: It depends on when the contract is entered into.

Mr D'ARCY: I don't think that has any relevance in today's market. We should be looking at agreements that are properly organised and signed so that any company transporting goods on the railways can see if the price is consistent. The companies that entered into the early agreements must be making 10 times as much profit because they will have decapitalised and depreciated, as the honourable member should well know.

Dr Lockwood: I made that point to the Treasurer.

Mr D'ARCY: I know that the honourable member did.

As another benefit from the mining companies the Treasurer referred to the payment of royalties. Last financial year they amounted to \$74m. As a third point he said that the economic infrastructure is paid for by the companies. Often loans are granted to the Queensland Government, which then supplies the infrastructure—the loan to be repaid through user charges. But all the social infrastructure such as schools, and, in some cases, housing, are provided by the Government. The financial outcome for the companies is truly magnificent.

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

Mr D'ARCY: In the fiscal year 1979-80, total mining profits in Queensland amounted to almost \$1,000m. That is gross profit after all State charges, rail freights, etc., except royalties. If rail freight charges are to be regarded as royalties, the gross profit would have been higher by the amount of the freight charges. Out of that \$1,000m profit, the people of

Queensland received a paltry \$74m in royalties—the return designed to capture the economic rent that rightfully belongs to the State and the people of Queensland. Such economic incompetence on the part of this Government amounts to treachery.

Many companies, but not all, are receiving returns well above those required to undertake the investment. It is often stated by the mining industry, and echoed by the ignorant and the uninformed, that the high returns are necessary to compensate for the risks involved. In the next few minutes, I intend to prove that this is not so. The amount of risk attached to investments varies considerably between projects. Offshore oil search carries high risk, while investments in coal projects in Queensland often have no risk at the exploration stage. For instance, the coal deposits at Winchester South were discovered and evaluated by the Department of Mines. I discussed the deposits at Winchester South earlier in my speech.

Dr Edwards: Not very well, though.

Mr D'ARCY: Very well. The Treasury had no say in what the people of Queensland would receive from those deposits. In fact, as I said before, the Treasurer stated that he was actually embarrassed by what happened and said that it would not happen again in Queensland.

Most coal deposits in Queensland have been known for years and the operators of the project evaluate exploitation of the deposit with largely known variables.

Another example of public relations misinformation concerns the taxing of windfall profits and the Australian Mining Industry Council's recent spurious attempt to publicise inter-industry profit comparisons. Such comparisons are totally irrelevant, for a windfall profits tax is not imposed on an industry, as the AMIC would have us believe. It is imposed on a company or a mine if it meets certain minimal criteria regarding above-normal profit comparisons.

As I have said many times before, the economic rent accruing to Queensland can be obtained by the State in numerous ways—royalties, freight rates, etc. As I have shown, royalties and the return to the State from rail freights and port charges are extremely low in Queensland. Let me examine these returns a little more closely and see how they compare with those in other States and countries.

Coal rail freight rates are determined by such factors as distance from mine to port, the amount exported and operating and capital costs. The charges vary from \$10 a tonne for the BHP mine at Gregory and \$11 a tonne for the Capcoal mine at German Creek, which is owned by Shell, to as low as \$4 a tonne for the Peak Downs mine and \$5 a tonne for the Goonyella mine, which are both Utah operations. Of course, these rates are supposed to be secret; at least the Government tries to keep them secret.

Cost is between \$6 and \$7 a tonne, which is low compared to the average charge of \$10 a tonne in New South Wales and of \$18.50 a tonne in Canada. The low cost in Queensland is largely due to the large volumes carried, and to low unit costs. Nobody denies that. The Government should be getting the advantage of this low unit cost, but the company is getting it. Instead of the benefits flowing to the people of Queensland, they are flowing to large, foreign, multinational companies.

The Grants Commission listed the following reasons, many of which are favourable, for Queensland's low cost levels for mineral haulage:—

1. Convenient location of coal deposits in relatively unsettled areas when compared with New South Wales.
2. Convenient access to coastal areas and export ports.
3. Uncomplicated topography compared to New South Wales.
4. Large quantities of coal requiring transport from a relatively small number of mines, which makes feasible the use of every large trains the operating costs per tonne/kilometre of which are very low.
5. The use by Queensland Railways of the most up-to-date and efficient terminal and line-haul equipment.

Mr Fitzgerald: There is only one Opposition member here listening to you.

Mr D'ARCY: Yes, but it is a good speech.

Those are credits to the Queensland Government; but multinational companies, not the people of Queensland, are receiving the advantage of them. All the points that I mentioned, with the exception of the last, mean substantially increased economic rent attached to coal projects in Queensland when compared with those in New South Wales.

In addition, mining costs in Queensland are considerably lower than those in New South Wales, because most of our mines are open-cut while most New South Wales mines are underground and thus more expensive to operate.

Notwithstanding these large comparative and absolute advantages for Queensland coal-mines over those in New South Wales, New South Wales is able to charge substantially higher freight rates and its companies have achieved higher prices for their coal. That has been allowed to happen because of the economic incompetence of the Queensland Government and its absolute failure to manage the State's resources optimally. Rail freights in Queensland do not effectively capture substantial economic rent for the State; they capture it for the companies that pay the low freight rates. If mineral lines are making a profit, that is irrelevant. Given the existing facts and figures, it is obvious that they should be making substantially greater profits.

To spell the matter out from an unbiased source, I shall quote from the report of the Grants Commission. It says—

“A comparison of the carriage of coal in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia reveals that unit costs and rate levels were clearly lowest in Queensland. Rate levels were highest in Western Australia. As a result Western Australia had achieved cost recovery levels which were as high as those in Queensland despite substantially higher unit cost.”

What better indictment is there of the economic management—or, I should say, mismanagement—of this Government? The Western Australian Government has achieved the same cost recovery level as Queensland without the great advantage or large freight volumes.

The people of Queensland are beginning to realise, to their cost, how incompetent this Government really is. Nevertheless, it is pleasing to see that the Government has partially recognised this rip-off and now requires an additional \$149m for road-works in the Bowen Basin. The Opposition has no quarrel with spending money on necessary road-works, but it is doubtful whether a significant resource tax such as this should be totally committed to such a specific proposal as road-works in the Bowen Basin. The road tax should go into consolidated revenue and be allocated according to normal Government priorities. In that way, all the State would benefit from the tax.

The ALP believes that for the people of Queensland and Australia to maximise returns from resource development they need to have greater control of their own resources. Between 1977 and 1979, 179 Australian mining companies, with assets totalling \$213m, were taken over by foreign companies. In the same period, a further 16 mineral companies, worth \$56m, were transferred from Australian to foreign control. In 1963, 36.8 per cent of the mining industry in Australia was foreign-owned. In 1976-77, that figure had risen to 59 per cent.

With large foreign companies controlling such large tracts of Australia's resources, it is to our severe detriment that many also borrow heavily on the Australian capital market. Not only do these foreign companies own our resources, but they are using our money to develop them.

In my recent speech on the Appropriation Bill, I detailed borrowings by foreign companies on the Australian capital market: How foreign companies borrowed over two-thirds of their requirements on the local capital market and that two-thirds of the foreign capital inflow was of a speculative nature. A couple of weeks after my speech the Treasurer rose and used my arguments in response to a pre-arranged question. He used exactly the same arguments as I had used. It is nice to know we are being listened to and our advice heeded.

Foreign investment in the mining sector is naturally very lumpy and the nature of the flows can produce severe problems for Australia's balance of payments. Only yesterday it was reported that the September quarter deficit on the balance of payments was \$1,144m—the worst for six years. Net flows resulting from foreign investment in Australia were

negative from 1972 to 1979, and this is of serious concern to every thinking Australian. In 1980 we had huge capital inflows, but the latest figure shows just how fickle capital flows can be.

We need to effectively increase local control of resources at the development stage. It is ALP policy that the State establish an investment bank that would provide increased equity in resource development from the initial stages. We must look to ownership and control if we want to ensure our future; but the trend has been entirely in the opposite direction.

So far, the great resources of Queensland have enabled this Government to coast along giving the impression that it governs, but it fails miserably when called upon to do so. With regard to managing the resource developments in Queensland, the Grants Commission again brings the lofty claims of the Treasurer and his Queensland Government crashing to earth. The commission's reason for Queensland's relatively favourable position in this area is the "above average revenue raising capacity of mining in Queensland and not any above standard effort on the part of the Queensland Government".

Let us now examine the other claims to glory made by the Treasurer. Education, as I am sure all honourable members would agree, is essential if we are to maximise our growth potential and provide for the encouragement of personal initiative in all aspects of our economic, social and cultural life. The Treasurer announced a 16.9 per cent increase in expenditure on education—a level of increase that will barely keep pace with inflation and population growth and may in fact lead to a decline in real terms.

Mr Borbidge: In New South Wales it was below the inflation rate.

Mr D'ARCY: The honourable member for Surfers Paradise is one of the most incompetent members in this Parliament. We are starting so far behind the Australian average that it is not funny. We are 17 per cent down on that average at the moment. In some areas the figure is 33 per cent or even higher. The honourable member for Surfers Paradise said that the increase in expenditure on education in New South Wales was below the inflation rate. We are receiving \$58m from the Commonwealth to bring the standard of our health, welfare and education services up to the New South Wales standard. I think that the honourable member should shut up because he does not understand what is going on.

The incompetence of the members of the National Party amazes Opposition members. When it comes to economics, they should keep quiet because they do not understand the subject. They have no idea of what their own Government is doing or what is going on in Australia.

Queensland will remain the State which spends least on education, and we will continue to be the poorer for it. I make the point that even with that increased expenditure of 16.9 per cent Queensland will still be spending less per capita than any other State.

Dr Edwards: How many additional teachers will New South Wales employ this year?

Mr D'ARCY: How many teachers does New South Wales employ compared with the number employed in Queensland? The Treasurer wants to turn this Budget debate into psalm-singing praise of himself. I have already told him about his ego-boasting. He speaks absolute rubbish. Queensland spends less on education, welfare and many other things than all other States. I have told the Treasurer how the Government could get its share of the wealth of this great State. Why doesn't he go out and get it? Why doesn't the Government implement the necessary policies to obtain sufficient moneys to provide the social welfare, health and educational benefits that are so badly needed in the State? Queensland has the worst roads in the Commonwealth; the Treasurer knows that as well as I do. Because the Government is incompetent and incapable of spending money where it is needed, people are being killed on the roads.

There should be a strong relationship between the amount spent on education and the quality of education. The small percentage of Queensland children who continue their schooling to the age of 18 years and over shows the honourable member for Surfers Paradise and the Treasurer just what Queensland is doing. The figures I am about to quote were supplied by the Commonwealth Government, and relate to State Schools. In 1980, 75 per cent of Queensland children aged 15 years remained at school. The

Australian average was 86 per cent. That makes a mockery of anything the Treasurer says. The Queensland percentage was 41 per cent for children aged 16 years—one would think the Government was training only National Party members—with a six-State average of 54 per cent. For the age of 17 years the Queensland figure was 17 per cent with a national average of 25 per cent. Queensland's figure for 18 years of age and over was even more disgraceful with 3.9 per cent of people remaining in the education system as compared with the Australian average of 6.8 per cent.

Mr Fitzgerald: Our kids could get jobs.

Mr D'ARCY: There is the comic from Lockyer who got in on ALP preferences. He knows damned well that Queensland children are worse off than those in any other State. Youth unemployment in Queensland is worse than anywhere else in Australia.

The source of that statistical information is the State and Commonwealth Grants Commission Report, Volume II, 1981. Obviously Government members are neither competent nor capable of reading that report. Those statistics show that the percentage of Queensland children who stay on at school is significantly lower than that in the other States. More schools are needed. Queensland employs fewer specialist teachers than any other State. We spend less on education and we have fewer children at school than any other State in any age group. I suggest that has much to do with the quality and perceived relevance of education in Queensland and the amount of money spent on education.

Housing is an area of increasing concern, and I believe the Government should and could be spending much more in this field. My office deals daily with many Housing Commission problems in the Woodridge area of my electorate that have been created by years and years of neglect. It is a pity that the Minister for Works and Housing is not in the Chamber, as he usually is. With the increase in population the housing problem will become worse in the foreseeable future.

The Government could have done something to reduce the cost of buying a first home, but it chose not to act. It could have reduced stamp duty for first-home buyers. Most State Governments have reduced stamp duty for first-home buyers, but not this Government. In the Northern Territory stamp duty is not payable on the purchase of the first home and in South Australia the first \$30,000 is exempt from duty.

In Queensland the stamp duty payable on a \$40,000 first home is \$400; in South Australia it is \$100; in the Northern Territory none is payable. In Queensland, first-home buyers would have to spend at least \$74,000—this is what the Treasurer is talking about—before they would pay less stamp duty than in other States. The Treasurer is a con merchant. He can ask his economic experts to check it out, but they will find that I am correct. The Government chose to do nothing to help first-home buyers.

One could go on and cite other areas of neglect. The quality of our roads is a constant complaint. The 15 per cent increase in rail freights is an unwarranted attack on the living standards of people in country areas.

Mr Davis: 25 per cent in some cases.

Mr D'ARCY: That is right, there have been increases of up to 25 per cent. When that is compounded by the 2½ per cent increase in sales tax imposed by the Federal Government, the result is an attack on decentralisation—and Queensland is the State which should be promoting further decentralisation, not discouraging it.

Instead of putting up rail fares and charges and increasing the cost of necessities for people living in country areas, we should be conducting efficiency studies into the running of Queensland's railways to see where costs can be cut.

The Grants Commission has commented on Queensland's relatively inefficient performance in the carriage of non-mineral freights compared with the other States. Specific instances cited by the Grants Commission included manning levels and the handling of general merchandise. I trust that the Minister for Transport will have the Commission's comments investigated. Instead of that, however, we can probably expect pious platitudes from the Government on how efficient the Railway Department is. The remarks of the Grants Commission are an indictment of the administration of this Government.

"Efficiency" is a word the Government likes to use frequently. It is a platitude that almost everything in Queensland appears to be efficient. In reality, that is not so. Our education system is "efficient" because we spend less. Our health system is "efficient" because we spend less. Our care for the aged is "efficient", and the Grants Commission has shown how appallingly low our expenditure is in that area. The only thing that has not been described as efficient is the Auditor-General's report—presumably because it exposes inefficiencies.

Before I turn to the Auditor-General's report, I wish to refer to electricity. The Opposition's shadow Minister for Mines and Energy and member for Nudgee (Mr Vaughan) has mentioned many times the gross inefficiencies in Queensland. There has been Government bumbling on a monumental scale, nepotism, decision-making without consideration of economic arguments and pricing policies which have been condemned by consumers, professional economists and the Federal Treasury—everybody except the aluminium producers.

Mr Davis: They are in favour of it.

Mr D'ARCY: That is right. Queensland does not need one extra power-station for electricity for domestic use. The Treasurer appears on television and attempts to con the people of Queensland. He is often given the opportunity to appear on television. It is an excellent principle that the user should pay—and, if the Government followed its own stated policies, the user would pay.

Dr Edwards: You said it was your policy, too.

Mr D'ARCY: It is, but the Government does not follow its policy, as I will point out to the Treasurer.

Mr Casey: It never does. The Liberals are subservient to the Nationals all the time.

Mr D'ARCY: That is right.

The statement the other day by the Treasurer that the "basic cost of electricity was exactly the same for both aluminium producers and household consumers and that the high cost to consumers was because of the costs of distribution" is such a simple-minded truism that I am sure the Treasurer either did not wish anyone to take him seriously or is so naïve about the economics of the electricity industry that he should listen more often to Treasury advice. They shouldn't let the Treasurer loose; it is as simple as that.

Mr Davis: He was a good medico.

Mr D'ARCY: Yes, he was better at medicine—perhaps.

No-one denies the obvious fact that distribution costs to householders have to be met. No-one denies that aluminium producers buy in bulk and do not have the cost of a distribution network.

What we are saying is that the cost of new power-stations that are needed for industrial development is met largely by household consumers rather than by the industry using them. As Professor Kolsen put it rather colourfully, "Brisbane pensioners are subsidising foreign multinationals."

The cost of providing power-stations is enormous, yet another one is to be constructed. The establishment of a power-station takes from five to eight years. For that period, existing consumers have to meet the cost. Perhaps even the Treasurer can understand that. Cost recoupment does not begin until the industry becomes a consumer, which is years away. The household consumer does not need an additional power-station to enable him to meet his needs. The Government is establishing a new power-station to meet the needs of the multinationals, but the consumer is paying for it by way of higher charges.

If the Government treated its own consumers in the same way as it treats mining companies in Queensland—that is, if it allows for depreciation of assets, as it does in relation to the mining companies, and adjusted the supply price accordingly—household consumers would pay much less for electricity than they are paying now. Consumers and established business are being taxed to provide facilities for new and proposed industries.

Another charge that the Treasurer has refused to answer is that electricity is not priced at opportunity cost. In answer to a question, the Minister for Mines and Energy admitted that. I am not sure that the Treasurer understands the meaning of the term, so I shall explain it to him.

As all economists know, if the pricing of the product does not take into account opportunity costs, by definition it is subsidised. In the case of the people of Queensland, it is subsidised through earnings forgone. If coal is supplied to an industry at a price less than the market price, it is subsidised. If other inputs are supplied at a price that distributes the costs over all users, all users are subsidising the cost for the primary producer.

The Federal Treasury has presented a detailed attack on such pricing policies and on the policies of this Government; but this Government has refused to co-operate with the Treasury unit that carried out the study. It refused mainly because it has totally ridiculous pricing policies. The Government knows that, but it is not prepared to admit it.

To the existing mess can be added other great disasters, such as the Tarong Power Station. That whim of the Premier, who wanted a power-station in his own electorate, has cost the Queensland consumers an additional \$250m. The consumers in Brisbane and elsewhere throughout the State have to pay for that.

No reasons have been given why the latest one billion dollar power-station is to be built at Stanwell instead of at Blackwater, Broadmount or elsewhere. A recent newspaper editorial posed the following questions:—

Why has the Government accepted a site that will mean higher rail freight charges?

What are the human and industrial-relations advantages of building at Stanwell?

Will consumers be forced to pay a continuing higher price for power because of some short-term industrial issues during the construction stages?

Naturally, the people of Queensland do not expect answers to be given to any of those questions. The lack of response from the Government has had a soporific effect on everyone, including the Press. The public is becoming sick and tired of the lackadaisical attitude of this Government. In two years' time when this Government is defeated, it will be swept out of office by the biggest swing in Australia's history. More than at any other time in Queensland's history, the State now needs an effective, efficient and responsive Government. It does not have one, and the people are beginning to realise it. Queensland needs to not only grasp opportunities but also develop them in a way that ensures the optimal return to its people.

This Government's mismanagement has been fully exposed in the Auditor-General's latest report. The list of abuses is appalling. Serious abuses have been revealed under the headings of the Treasurer, Commerce and Industry, Employment and Labour Relations, Justice and Attorney-General, Lands and Forestry, Police, Mines and Energy, and Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs. They have occurred also in many other areas.

The amazing response by Ministers leaves a lot to be desired. Ministers have asserted that there is nothing to worry about. In spite of that, it is clear that the people of Queensland are being ripped off. Many of the Ministers are not even capable of answering the questions put to them. In fact, earlier today Ministers ran out of the Chamber when serious questions were about to be asked. The Ministry in Queensland is not responsible to Parliament. That is an absolute disgrace. No other Parliament operating under the Westminster system could survive as this one survives, with its incompetent, incapable Ministry.

Funds are missing from the Police Department, and some of them have been missing for six years. Police officers have been appointed other than by the proper procedure. At the same time, there has been unapproved expenditure of police funds. When asked about these matters, the Minister replied that the Commissioner of Police had assured him that there was no need for concern. It is a bat-and-ball situation: the head of the department says, "Don't worry"; the Minister comes into the House and says, "Don't worry". I am not sure that the people of Queensland are convinced.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr D'ARCY: I do not think that the Government has a lost-and-found department for anything. Whenever a sum of money is handed in, it is used by someone for petty cash.

The worst instance of financial incompetence involves the Police Superannuation Fund, which has an unliquidated liability of \$267.52m. No-one has explained what that means in economic terms. I am sure that Mr Peel does not know. What he really means is that nothing is left in kitty to cover that amount.

Dr Edwards: That is not correct. That suggestion shows the honourable member's absolute ignorance.

Mr D'ARCY: Possibly. I do know that some \$113m is there, and that the shortfall is between \$267m and \$113m. The Auditor-General virtually said that the Government has appointed people who cannot manage the fund competently. That was what he meant when he said that that amount will have to be made up by the taxpayers of this State.

The inadequate accounting procedures in many departments are a cause for further concern. They contribute significantly to the problems. Abuses have cost Queensland taxpayers many millions of dollars, but the Liberals are too weak-kneed to vote with the Opposition to establish a public accounts committee. We have told the Liberals that if they do not want to vote for an ALP proposal to set up a parliamentary accounts committee, they should move a motion and we will support it. If the Liberals fail to avail themselves of that opportunity, they will stand condemned in the eyes of the electorate. The Liberal Party is a party that fails to stand up for its principles and policies. The people of Queensland are becoming aware of its ineffectiveness. I am sure that this year, as usual, the Liberals will receive the jellyfish award for spinelessness.

One of the great myths about Queensland is that it is a low-tax State. Queensland is the lowest-taxed State if one looks at the aggregate figure. However, if one breaks the total figure down one finds that only three taxes in Queensland are the lowest. They are pay-roll tax, gambling taxes, and probate and succession duties. Other taxes in Queensland are higher than those in other States. All taxes that affect the average man in the street are higher in Queensland than they are in other States. That makes a mockery of the Government's claims that Queensland is a low-tax State. It is a myth perpetrated by the Premier when he talks about Queensland being a low-taxed State; he is talking not about low taxes for ordinary Queenslanders but about low taxes for multinational companies and his millionaire foreign friends.

The Treasurer's claim that there are no tax increases in the Budget strains one's credulity. True, he did not increase taxes in the Budget; he increased them just before. The difference between taxes and charges is a moot point. Whether the Treasurer likes it or not, a tax is a charge. The Treasurer increased charges for motor vehicle registrations, electricity, licence fees, etc., shortly before the Budget so that he could suggest that no increases were imposed in the Budget. All those charges are fiscal charges, and rightfully belong to Budget strategy. The Treasurer demonstrated the Government's underhand approach.

I conclude my speech by making a plea for a much more efficient and thoughtful approach to the development of the State. That approach should take full account of the needs of the people of Queensland and of the maintenance of their basic values, beliefs and welfare. Unfortunately, we have a Government motivated by a philosophy of greed and the importance of the individual over the welfare of all. The Liberals and the National conservatives have lately been stressing the importance of the individual and making the point that, for economic recovery to be achieved in Australia, the rich have to be given incentives to make greater profits.

The poor and the unemployed have, unfortunately, to bear the necessary burden of recovery and suffer the problems associated with structural readjustment. The philosophy of the reactionary author Ayn Rand, Guru to Malcolm Fraser, is "I owe nothing to my brothers. I owe everything to myself—this God. My God is I." If that is conservative philosophy, heaven help us all. We are back to the law of the jungle, and the weak and those unable to compete can be left to fall by the wayside. It will be only the people with muscle—whether it be powerful employers or unions—who will get the benefits. Those without power to disrupt will get nothing.

This Budget provides the people of Queensland with few benefits from the wealth of this great State of ours. That wealth is going to the mining companies, over 60 per cent

of which are foreign-owned, and to the few wealthy compradores who are co-operating with those companies in the exploitation of our resources. The people of Queensland are becoming aware of the Government's treachery. This Government is not the Government of Queensland; it is the representative of the Japanese, American and other foreign Governments which have large interests in Queensland.

The Opposition has clearly proven that many of the Government's arguments and assertions are fallacious, and I believe time will quickly condemn the strategy of this Budget.

(Time expired.)

Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (2.51 p.m.): Although the overall structure of the State Budget is sound, I should like to comment on a few aspects of it.

First I say how appreciative I am of the allocation for Babinda Hospital. It is a very nice little hospital. It is pleasing that the Government is continuing to look after the hospitals in my electorate, and I appreciate its efforts.

I am very concerned about the increase in rail freights. The sugar industry uses rail exclusively to transport sugar from the Babinda, Hambleton and Mulgrave mill areas and, unfortunately, those areas are subsidising other areas in the use of the railways. I am a great believer in the user paying, as was mentioned by the honourable member who preceded me in the debate. I hope that the Government will consider raising a larger amount of rail revenue in the other areas. The railways in the North would be making a fairly good profit and should not be required to subsidise other areas of the State.

Mr Davis: What do you think of the overall Government strategy?

Mr MENZEL: It is a lot better than the strategy of the ALP, but no Government is perfect.

There are not enough police in Queensland. I am a little disappointed that more money was not allocated for additional police. I would like more police to be provided in Atherton. In my opinion, the Government has cut back too much on protecting the people. Recently, at 2 o'clock in the morning, a woman was attacked 50 yards from the police station in Atherton. Things such as that would not happen if more police were stationed in the Atherton district. I bring that matter to the Minister's attention. More police should be sent to North Queensland.

Mr Davis: How many would you suggest?

Mr MENZEL: If I had a suggestion to make, I would not tell the honourable member. I am trying to offer constructive alternatives. I do not believe in destructive criticism, or in knocking mining companies just for the sake of doing that. If they want to provide jobs and develop an area, let them do so. One thing that the National-Liberal Government does is promote private enterprise.

Although the Labor Party seems to think that "profit" is a dirty word, I do not think it is. I would be far more disturbed if companies made losses, because that would show that we had a sick economy.

Getting back to the effect of the Budget on my area—the Government should try to increase spending on schools. Never enough money is spent on schools. In saying that, I am not being critical of the Government, but as a member of this Assembly I feel that I am entitled to press for more money for education.

Mr Mackenroth: Say some terrible things about the Education Minister.

Mr MENZEL: I think the Education Minister does an excellent job.

Mr Mackenroth: That's not what you told me out in the lobby.

Mr MENZEL: Mr Row, I did not say anything about the Minister for Education out in the lobby, and I ask that that remark be withdrawn.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Row): Order! The honourable member requests that the remark made by the honourable member for Chatsworth be withdrawn.

Mr MACKENROTH: I withdraw.

Mr MENZEL: A lot more money should be spent on water resources in Queensland, particularly in Far North Queensland. One thing that was noticeably absent from the Budget was an allocation for flood mitigation in Far North Queensland. No money has been allocated for any water resource projects along the coast from Ingham to Mossman. I recently attended a meeting of the Northern Sugar Industry Productivity Committee. The meeting was unanimous about the need for the Government to spend money to mitigate flooding which has resulted in the siltation of many northern rivers and streams over the years. That siltation was caused by a combination of flooding and development in the area. I am not knocking the development of the sugar industry; it plays an important role in the economy of Far North Queensland. It provides a lot of jobs and supports a lot of people. I know that cane farmers have made representations to various Ministers from time to time about the problem of flooding, but unfortunately they have fallen on deaf ears.

The honourable member for Flinders (Mr Bob Katter) addressed that meeting of the productivity committee. People at the meeting told him about a lot of problems that I have known of for some time, and I was very pleased when he spoke in the Adjournment debate the other night about the need to provide funds for flood mitigation in Far North Queensland. One sugar-mill manager said that the floods in North Queensland in January this year had cost the sugar industry \$33m. I once again appeal to the Government to do something about flood mitigation and drainage in Far North Queensland. Over the past 10 years we have had a flood every second year on average, and that has meant millions upon millions of dollars being washed down the drain. Something must be done about it. Queensland is a reasonably dry State, and, unfortunately, people tend to think that the building of another dam will solve all our water problems. The Government must lose an enormous amount of revenue in income tax, pay-roll tax and other fees and charges when mills are forced to stop crushing because of floods. I know that sugar-mills other than the one at Babinda in my area were forced to stop crushing earlier this year. It could result in a lessening of the demand for labour in the slack season, which would affect everyone in the small sugar towns.

It would affect those who work for North Queensland Engineers & Agents Pty Ltd and employees of engineering works that install capital equipment in sugar-mills. The Government has a lot to gain if it recognises the problem. The people in the sugar industry are united on this matter. They say that something must be done by the Government. I believe that the Government is looking at the problem but, in my view, not enough has been done about it yet.

I compliment the Government on the allocation in the Budget for the Young Farmers Establishment Scheme. Although it is only a drop in the bucket, it is certainly a step in the right direction. The Government should guarantee loans for young men and women who want to become farmers. I know of dozens of young people—when I say “young people”, I mean persons up to 40 years of age—who want to become farmers. They want to sell their house and use the proceeds as a deposit on a dairy farm or a block of land for farming purposes. If the Government were to guarantee loans with the private banks, and the applicants were properly screened, I believe that the overwhelming majority of those who receive loans, even at a high interest rate, would make a go of the venture. We have to give young people a go.

I again urge that we set up a State bank.

Mr Davis: Did you know that was League of Rights policy, too?

Mr MENZEL: It might be a socialist policy. I am only interested in what is right. I might be called a socialist, but I believe that we should keep our funds in Queensland to help to develop the State. Thousands of people want to use the funds we have in Queensland to start their own little business, and we should help them more than we do.

I am a little disappointed to see the 23 per cent increase in the allocation for national parks. In my view, that money could be better spent in other areas, such as conserving water or helping young people to get on to the land. National parks are only breeding areas for wild pigs. We do not want wild pigs creating problems for people whose farms adjoin national parks.

Mr Davis: Mr Munzel—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Row): Order! I remind the honourable member for Brisbane Central that the honourable member for Mulgrave should be addressed in the proper way. Also, his name is "Mr Menzel", not "Mr Munzel".

Mr MENZEL: I believe that there are enough national parks in some areas. We should not bow to the whims of a minority in the community who say, "This has to be a national park and that has to be a national park." I believe that, in the future, we will regret the decision to declare some of the present national parks. That might be a criticism of the Government, but I feel that I have to make that point. We need every inch of land on which to grow crops for food. Teeming millions of people in Asia are starving, and we should be growing as much food as we can and exporting it at reasonable prices.

Mr Davis: Do you adopt that policy of the old farmer: if you see a tree, cut it down?

Mr MENZEL: I would be one of the best conservationists in this Chamber. I would like to see the honourable member's backyard. I wonder how many trees he has in it? There were probably many trees on the block before he built his house on it. He had better pull his house down and live in the trees.

Our approach to national parks must be a realistic one because they cost the State millions of dollars. At this stage the money could be better spent in other areas. Perhaps some national parks should be leased for grazing purposes in an effort to provide employment for young people and food for the nation.

I compliment the Treasurer on a very sound Budget. My only disappointment is that nothing extra has been allocated for water resources in Far North Queensland. I hope that is rectified in next year's Budget.

Mr GOLEBY (Redlands) (3.5 p.m.): The Budget has more pluses than minuses. As many members have indicated, Queensland is a State of expansion and the only Australian State with continuous growth. Nobody can deny that that is a product of sound government.

More people are moving to Queensland than ever before. One of the reasons for the rapid increase in population is that Queensland is a State of the future and jobs are much easier to find here. On a percentage basis, more jobs are available in Queensland than in any other State. The Budget provides for expansion and relays confidence to the people. I do not suggest that it fulfils every need of the State, but it is at least a responsible Budget, especially when compared with the Budgets of the other States and the Commonwealth. Taxes have not been increased.

The Opposition referred to various charges for undertakings. Why should not an undertaking have to pay for its operations? In local government, it is compulsory that undertakings balance their books. It is very sound practice for charges to rise in accordance with inflation. If there is no inflation, there should be no increase in charges. With inflation running at 8, 10 and 12 per cent and today's high cost of labour, charges must increase accordingly.

I know that the Budget is a great embarrassment to the Opposition. I should not like to be in Opposition and have to criticise the Budget, because there is very little in it of which one can be critical. The Press and the electorate as a whole have applauded it, and it has been presented despite Federal funding cuts, which have been enormous in the areas of health, transport and tax-sharing. The Treasurer and his officers have done a remarkable job in presenting such a Budget.

I want to deal now with transport as it affects my electorate. I am very pleased that the new rail link into the Redlands electorate is well under way; in fact, it is well ahead of schedule and work is continuing at a rapid pace. The people of Redlands are most appreciative of that. So that everything will be in order when the rail link is completed, the bus services are being co-ordinated. People will have a reliable and fast train service and also a bus service that co-ordinates with the railway timetable.

Mr Davis: The Labor Party proposal would put it into Cleveland.

Mr GOLEBY: The Labor Party was not in office when the old link was constructed in 1880. The honourable member is a bit far off the track and should study his history.

As the honourable member for Brisbane Central has raised the matter I will point out how well the old bridges were constructed. The piles, which have been in for 100 years, were made of cast iron. I have been told by bridging engineers that they would have carried the existing railway bridge but that it was not sound economics to use them because there was no guarantee that they would last for another 100 years. I pay full credit to the workmen who built those bridges. They did a very good job with the equipment then available.

The road networks in most areas of South-east Queensland are overtaxed. Roads are a problem throughout Queensland, but the heavy increase in population in South-east Queensland magnifies the problem. In my electorate alone, the population is increasing by 10 per cent each year. That necessitates the upgrading of many roads.

The upgrading of Old Cleveland Road to four lanes means that people will be able to travel to the capital city with much greater ease and that public transport will provide a much faster service. The four lanes have been completed almost to Capalaba. I thank the Minister for Main Roads for his announcement this week that a new bridge will be built over Coolwypin Creek at Capalaba. As the area is a main shopping centre, that improvement is very badly needed.

A few days ago I asked a question of the Minister about the need for traffic lights in the shopping centre at the intersection of the various streets with Old Cleveland Road. It is a necessity that Dollery Road and Raymond Street, Capalaba, be fitted with traffic lights so that the traffic in the area wishing to connect with Redland Bay and Mt Cotton Roads can feed into Old Cleveland Road without the hassles presently being experienced. Of course, another road is planned for construction in the next 10 years that will by-pass the area and go to Cleveland. If our population growth continues at the present rate, there will be very close to 100 000 people in Redlands at that time. It is pleasing to note that the Main Roads Department is keeping up with its planning and that the roads are being provided as necessity requires.

Whilst dealing with roads and transport, perhaps I should mention my concern—I hope it is the concern of every member of this House—at the present road toll. I do not know how any Government can eliminate the road toll; I do not believe it is possible. As responsible members of this Chamber, however, it is our responsibility to do as much as we can to alleviate what has become an epidemic on the roads in Australia. Suggestions have been made about reducing the maximum speed limit to 90 km/h. I do not believe that this is the answer. I do not think that reducing the speed limit to 90 km/h will do anything at all about restraining the speeding motorist. The offender is not the man who drives within the speed limits, but the one who drives far in excess of the speed limit on roads that are not built for the speed at which he or she travels.

Statistics have shown very clearly—I do not think anybody could deny this—that alcohol is a major cause of road accidents. This is one area in which all members must be responsible and face up to the problem. We must educate our drivers so that they understand that to drink and drive is just not on. When I arrived at a function this week, there were very few cars, but a large number of people. Many of them had arranged for transport after the function so that they would not be guilty of driving after having had too much to drink. We must educate our drivers that, if they are to drink, they must not drive. I am not in favour of random breath tests as they have been conducted in some of the other States. I have seen complete roads sealed off and all motorists enclosed in a police net, as it were. The police then used the breathalyser to determine whether the drivers were under the influence. If breath tests are to be introduced, motorists should be pulled up at random. The police should not block off a certain section of the highway.

Dr Lockwood: That isn't random; that's dragnet tactics.

Mr GOLEBY: Of course it is. This means that many people are inconvenienced. I was talking to someone this morning who was involved in something similar. It cost him time to get to the airport to catch his plane. It is far different to select motorists at random than to adopt dragnet tactics. Personally, I do not favour either method.

The Treasurer and the Government have been responsible in the field of youth and sport for a continuation of subsidies for the various sporting amenities that have been provided throughout the length and breadth of this State. There would not be one member in this Chamber who has not been able to say to sporting bodies in this electorate, "The Government has assisted you in this way." I note that all sporting bodies are most appreciative of that. \$5.8m has been provided this year for sport. From all indications, the various youth and sporting organisations throughout the State have lodged a greater number of applications than ever before. As we have seen in the past, the subsidies for coaching and capital works have allowed many sporting bodies to become established, consolidate and provide facilities that otherwise would not be provided.

If any cut-backs are warranted—I hope they will not be necessary—we should make sure that large amounts are not made available to any particular code. In this context I am referring especially to coaching. In some instances, greater sums of money than were warranted have been given to certain codes. It is most important that, before vast sums are paid out for coaching, suitable playing fields are provided.

The previous speaker referred to water resources and to the need to harness the great volume of water that flows down rivers and streams during the wet season into the sea. Australia is short of water. It has short wet seasons followed by long dry seasons. This imposes economic hardship on the community and in particular on the rural community.

This year a total of \$66.1m has been provided for water resources. This is commendable, particularly when compared with the Federal Government's allocation, which is only about half that, even though it is for the nation as a whole. The Federal Government has the responsibility of providing funds for harnessing rivers and streams and for constructing dams and barrages. Those measures will ensure that this country is able to provide food for its people and also for other countries that are willing to buy.

To turn to my electorate—I am pleased that the Government has seen fit to make funds available so that the spillway of the Leslie Harrison Dam can be raised. The dam is a vital source of water for the Redlands area. It has supplied the whole of the electorate since 1969. The expansion of population in the area has exerted tremendous pressure on the resources of the dam. The raising of its spillway will almost double its capacity.

I give full credit to those persons who were responsible for planning the dam. When construction started in 1966, land was resumed to provide for the extensions that are occurring now. If the resumptions had not taken place at the time of construction, the cost of resuming that land now would have been phenomenal and a great deal higher than the cost of resumption in 1966. Full marks to those who were responsible!

In an area that is developing as quickly as mine, it is important that proper planning be undertaken. Recent studies have shown that the large volume of fresh water that flows each day from Stradbroke Island into the sea could be harnessed and used for the benefit of the growing population of the Moreton Bay area. It is interesting to note that in one area alone on Stradbroke Island, 60 million gallons of water flows every day into the sea. I hope that before long it will be harnessed and piped back to the bay islands and the mainland.

The Moreton Bay islands contain more than 17 000 allotments. Many people are setting up their homes on the islands. A reticulated water supply is needed for household needs and also for the purpose of providing adequate fire-fighting facilities. The allotments are small, and the residential areas are compact. The islands lack natural water. Therefore, water will have to be piped to them from either Stradbroke Island or the mainland.

I congratulate the Minister for Mines and Energy, the Treasurer, the Government and also the Redland Shire Council on the provision of electricity to the Moreton Bay islands. They cannot hope to develop as they should, nor can they offer a high standard of homes, without electricity. If it is not reticulated to the islands, the residents will be forced to run generators. That is a very expensive and most unreliable operation. However, the people on the islands have had to contend with it for many years. The reticulation of electricity has commenced and will be completed by June 1983.

Mr Davis: How many islands have not got electricity?

Mr GOLEBY: Three and a half. Only half of Russell Island is connected to electricity. The scheme to which I am referring will bring electric power to Macleay, Lamb and Karragarra Islands.

The Budget provides \$56.7m for welfare services. In other words, it provides in excess of \$1m for every week of the year. I do not deny that welfare services are necessary or that they will always be necessary for those less fortunate than ourselves who find the road of life hard, sometimes, through no fault of their own. However, there must be a limit to the welfare payments made. Unfortunately, when welfare payments are freely available, there will always be people seeking them who are not entitled to them.

When I recently visited Norfolk Island, which is an Australian territory, I learnt that very few welfare payments were made there. Sickness and unemployment benefits are not paid. Pensions are paid only to those people who have been unable to save during their working life and who now warrant assistance. If a family is well off it is expected to look after its elderly relatives. I do not suggest for one moment that we should go to that extreme, but while a community is prepared to accept welfare payments and the pressures continue to expand them, without doubt there will be more claims and, in all instances, assistance is not necessarily justified.

Mr Davis: It is a pity you could not be a little more specific.

Mr GOLEBY: I know that the honourable member will be very happy when I cite an area controlled by the Federal Government. One of the worst mistakes made concerns welfare payments for unmarried mothers. For some unmarried mothers, their status is an occupation and way of life. Some of them have no intention of going to work. The welfare payments are an easy way out for them, especially if they have two or three children.

Mr Moore: They have no idea of getting married, either.

Mr GOLEBY: That is so. Our Welfare Services Department has a 10-year adoption waiting-list. Many children of unmarried mothers receive no opportunities in life. If they were adopted they would enjoy family life, receive proper family training and be equipped to tackle the world and the job situation. Unfortunately the children of unmarried mothers usually follow in the footsteps of their parents.

The allowance for foster children has been increased from \$30 to \$32.75 a week. I believe that the increase applicable to children of 13 years of age and over is even higher. There are not many foster children in that age group. Children in their early years far outnumber the 13 years and over age group. That is because mothers find that they cannot cope with the children when they are very young.

I give full marks to the fine people in the community who are prepared to foster children. Many of them have children of their own, but they are still prepared to give a home and an opportunity in life to two or three foster children.

Mr Davis: Can you give reasons for that?

Mr GOLEBY: There are several reasons. The system was introduced by the Whitlam Government, but unfortunately it has been greatly expanded. That bears out what I said, namely, that when welfare is introduced in new areas, suddenly there seem to be many more unnecessary claims.

Much has been said here recently about the Police Force. I give full credit to the officers in my area for the fine job that they do. Queensland police, unfortunately, do not enjoy the facilities that they are entitled to. Police facilities, compared with Education Department facilities, fall short of the mark. I am sure we do not want our police facilities to remain unsatisfactory for much longer.

I am pleased to note that many additional police stations are provided for in the Budget. I hope that the Cleveland Police Station receives a mention in next year's Budget. At Cleveland, over 20 police are working in rabbit-warren conditions. They are dealing with the public and working as best they can under difficult conditions. The introduction of the 24-hour police coverage in the area has brought many benefits to the community. I pay special tribute to the CIB officers who recorded the highest

result rate in the State. I am sure that every member would like to have such a clean-up rate in his electorate. I understand that it is in excess of 60 per cent. The work of those officers, much of it beyond the normal call of duty, is to be commended.

Mr Davis: What about the bloke on Dunwich?

Mr GOLEBY: I have no complaints about any of the police at Dunwich. They have earned the respect of the majority of the community and the people would hate to see them shifted. They have done a wonderful job. They have cleaned the place up.

Dunwich on Stradbroke Island is a growing town. There is a great need on Stradbroke Island for additional educational facilities. I was very pleased to be able to take the Minister for Education there the other day and show him the problems confronting high school students. Many of them leave Point Lookout at 6.30 a.m., travel by bus to Dunwich, and board the barge for an hour's journey to attend the Cleveland High School. In winter, students leave home when it is dark and return in the dark. That is not good enough. I have suggested that a high school top be provided at Dunwich. I hope that the Education Department will provide it. If it cannot be provided in the immediate future, it might be possible to provide next year for Year 8 students, who are aged between 11 and 13 years. It is a rather long and arduous journey for them to undertake five days a week.

Mr Davis: Do you have any figures?

Mr GOLEBY: Almost 100 children are involved. Many children are attending private schools because their parents feel that the State service is not good enough. The Education Department should rectify that problem.

A new school is to be built at Birkdale South. I commend the Department of Works on the fine job it is doing with new schools. Only a few years ago, a new school lacked everything but the buildings. It stood in a desert, with no grass round it; it was in a dust bowl. The Minister for Works and Housing is in the Chamber and I commend him and his officers on the change that has taken place. The schools cost more money today but the facilities are provided from day one. Therefore the children take pride in their school. The new school at Birkdale South will provide education facilities for the children in the large residential development in that area and will ensure that the Alexandra Hills school and the Birkdale school do not have enormous enrolments.

The part of the Redlands electorate from Birkdale to Capalaba is expanding rapidly, and there is a need for a third high school in the electorate. I hope that after his visit to the area last week the Minister for Education will realise the need and will take early steps to provide an additional high school. The Cleveland High School has over 1 300 students and the Capalaba High School has almost 1 000 students, five years after it was built. That indicates how fast the area is growing.

As has been customary in recent years, school bus payments have been upgraded. Perhaps we take the school bus services for granted. What a wonderful asset they are in the education of our children. More than \$24m is spent on providing free buses to transport children to State primary and secondary schools. The amount is spent on children who live outside the 2-mile and 3-mile limits, depending on age.

The proposal, if I read the Budget papers correctly, is to expand services even further and assist in the transport of children attending non-Government schools. Honourable members will agree that the need for such a service has been apparent for a long time. One hears criticism of Government assistance to non-Government schools. But when one looks at the situation sensibly, one sees that if non-Government schools were not providing a high standard of education in the community the Government would have to spend far more money on education, and that would place an even greater strain on the State's resources.

While speaking about education, I want to refer to class sizes. I hope that in the coming year class sizes, particularly in the lower grades, can be reduced. I am very pleased that the Budget provides for an increase in the number of school teachers. That is very commendable, particularly in view of the fact that class sizes in other States have been reduced, in some cases quite substantially.

Much of the noise emanating from certain sections of the Queensland Teachers Union is not justified. The majority of the class-room teachers to whom I speak are very competent. They are prepared to co-operate and do their very best. Therefore, the demand for an immediate overall reduction in class sizes must be viewed in its correct perspective.

Only a few years ago there were no such things as teacher aides; now they are playing a very important role in the class-room. They are being called upon to do a great deal of work, and in some cases teachers rely too heavily on them. So it is not simply a case of classes being too large; in many cases there are two people in the class-room where in the past there was only one.

Mr Davis: That's not quite right.

Mr GOLEBY: That is the way I see it.

I believe that the allocation of teachers to various regions must be flexible. Because of the growth pattern in the Brisbane South region, a number of teachers were allocated for the year; yet after ten months there is a shortage of teachers. I have been told that teachers can be moved to various schools within a zone but that overall numbers cannot be increased.

When a teacher is ill, on long service leave or absent for any other reason, he is not replaced. He is deemed to be still on the pay-roll, and no-one takes his place. The school has to cover his absence as best it can. That is not good enough, particularly when children are in the final stages of their education at high school. If a teacher is absent on long service or accouchement leave, children have to make do with a teacher who may not be fully qualified in a particular subject. I am not saying that teachers are not fully qualified, but for a month or so an English teacher or a librarian might be asked to help out as a maths teacher, a job that he or she is not fully equipped to do. That is not fair to the teacher or to the students, and I ask the Education Department to provide for greater flexibility in meeting staffing problems in the future.

One of the greatest problems the Treasurer had to face in framing the Budget was in the area of health. Commonwealth cut-backs in funding were a great embarrassment to the Treasurer, and I compliment him and the Government as a whole on continuing to provide funding for the free hospital system. Health care is a most important part of community service, and since 1940 the people of Queensland have been accustomed to the availability of free hospitals. They would find it very difficult to accept the abolition of free hospitals, and I do not suggest that they should be abolished. The Government must care for those people in the community who do not have funds to pay for their own health care, and there are many of them.

However, the need to continue the free hospital system has placed tremendous demands on available funds. Last year Commonwealth income tax receipts increased by 16.3 per cent; yet the Commonwealth was prepared to pass on to the States only an additional 8.2 per cent overall. That is less than the rate of inflation and, of course, has made hospital funding very difficult.

This involves not only hospital funding; it goes further than that into other areas such as dental health. I believe that a very strong case can be made for the registration of people engaged in dental prosthesis. Those people should be able to deal directly with the public. I know that professional jealousies are involved here, but that problem has to be overcome. The members of the public are entitled to receive the best dental care possible, and dental mechanics are able to provide it in the making of dentures. No-one is suggesting that these people should be trained to deal with tissue or anything else—that is the dentist's role. However, they have a role to play in the community.

Primary industries have always been an important part of the State's economy, and much of the work-force has been engaged in them. Many more people were engaged in primary industries in former years. Because of Queensland's fine resources and climate people have been able to involve themselves in many different agricultural pursuits. The horticultural industry is most important in my area. In fact, it is the fourth largest such industry in this State, and it is growing in importance from year to year. More and more nurseries are being established, and many of the larger operators are within the area that I represent. They tell me that there seems to be a never-ending demand, particularly from overseas, for nursery products, and those who wish to specialise and provide a good product are assured of a ready market.

Many changes have taken place in the fruit and vegetable industry in recent years. Of course, one of the most significant changes has been the introduction of cooling for fresh fruit and vegetables on the farm. It takes the field heat from the product and stores it in cool temperatures. Fruit can be kept for many days under these conditions. When it is marketed it has a long shelf life, and the consumer receives a better product.

The Railway Department will have to take notice of this change. There is an increasing demand for cooling wagons for the transport of fruit. Road transport, which is in direct competition with the railways, provides these facilities. Some producers still find it advantageous to use the railways, and I hope that they continue to do so. If the railways are to retain their business, the Queensland Government will have to provide more cooling wagons so that fruit and vegetables can be transported round Australia.

I will not deal at any length with the Young Farmers Establishment Scheme because other members have already spoken about it. A land ballot is under way in the Emerald area at present. It has been arranged by the Water Resources Commission under the control of the Minister for Water Resources (Mr Tomkins). I believe that there are some anomalies in this matter. Many young men from my area who are interested in going on the land want to put their names in the ballot. However, I believe that some of the conditions imposed are too harsh, and there is not enough flexibility in the conditions. The applicants must have \$25,000 in cash. Many of them may have that amount in assets that they could take to a property if they were successful in acquiring it. A bank guarantee of \$25,000 to offset their assets should be all that is needed. Eligibility would then not be confined to those who have \$25,000 in ready cash. An applicant could have stock and equipment worth far in excess of \$25,000 at present, but he is excluded from the ballot because he does not have the cash. Surely a bank guarantee or bond for this amount should be sufficient.

Mr Davis: How many would have \$25,000 to start off with?

Mr GOLEBY: Many young people who wish to go on the land may have \$25,000 or \$50,000, but that is not enough to buy a block of land in the area of their choice. As I say, they may have the money in transferrable assets. The Government should be more flexible in this matter.

The problems facing the fishing industry have been very much to the fore. I will not elaborate on them; I think that every member in the Chamber fully realises them.

The problems of the fishing industry are not the fault of the Government. In many cases the fishermen have not been loyal to the organisation, which has resulted in the degeneration of the various depots and the closure of some of them. Today the Minister said that many more of them will be closed. One of the first to be closed was the one at Cleveland. I fought very hard to keep that open but, upon investigation, at that time only three fishermen were using it and it was incurring a loss of \$34,000 a year. No Government can be expected to restructure an industry and yet keep such a depot open.

I am a little critical of the composition of the new board. I would much prefer to see a responsible, leading fisherman as chairman or deputy chairman. Such a person as chairman could have made a bigger contribution and, I believe, would have understood more fully the complexities of the industry. I hope that as the restructuring takes place common sense will prevail so that the industry has an opportunity to expand. It is a very important industry and has a large role to play in this State.

I disagree with the Government's local government policies. As one who has served many years in local government and appreciates the problems, I believe that the cuts in subsidy, and the way they were implemented, should not have been foisted on local government. Local government can do without subsidies for roads, buildings and things like that, the Government has a responsibility to continue its assistance by way of subsidies on sewerage and water. It can be argued that the Queensland Government pays a much greater subsidy than any other State Government in Australia. It can also be argued that the Federal Government cut-backs are compensated by the 2 per cent tax-sharing that has flowed on to local government, which means \$50m for Queensland this year. Although that may be so in some areas, in the fast developing areas, particularly those

on the coast, the councils are at a severe disadvantage. The Redland Shire Council is the fourth smallest in the State, and its loss of subsidies amounts to \$1.8m. The decision to cut subsidies was made overnight and applied immediately so that local authorities were not able to plan ahead. Ongoing projects for which tenders had been let and on which work had commenced were effected. For those projects for which documentation and paperwork had not been finalised, subsidies were cut as at 30 June.

If local authorities are to take up their loan allocations each year they have to be swift and efficient in raising the funds. Many local authorities have experienced great difficulty in raising their loan funds, particularly debenture loans, in the financial year.

As the year progresses I hope that the Government and the Treasury will once again consider the vital areas of sewerage and water. In the main, local authorities are not unduly concerned about other matters. They have received additional funds from the Commonwealth that have assisted substantially, but they are not of the magnitude of the subsidies that the State Government has been giving for sewerage and water. The result is that many local authorities will have to increase sewerage rates by up to \$100 a year if the Government does not reverse its decision. That applies to my local authority, and I know that it is not an isolated instance.

To be quite fair, the Budget has assisted local authorities with the augmentation of their water and sewerage schemes. A 20 per cent subsidy now applies, whereas none previously existed. That is all very well for the long-established areas. The local authorities which are faced with the renewal or augmentation of their schemes are entitled to the 20 per cent subsidy, but those local authorities that are engaged in initial water or sewerage schemes have lost their total subsidy. They are the ones who can least afford it and will find it very difficult to implement the schemes that are proposed. In many instances, such development has taken place in newly developed areas where the soil does not provide suitable and essential drainage.

I turn to the Government's policy on housing. I suppose every member receives continual demands for welfare housing. More pensioner units are needed. Many fine complexes have been built to house people in their senior years. I commend the Minister for the various projects in my electorate. I refer in particular to Dean Lodge and the new complex at Birkdale. I hope that the proposed development at Cleveland will be commenced in the very near future. There is a tremendous need, particularly in the bayside areas, for accommodation for retired people. Many of those requiring pensioner units are in the lower financial echelon.

Mr HANSEN (Maryborough) (3.47 p.m.): I thank members on both sides of the House for the way in which they have co-operated in not taking up their allotted time. I thank the Whips for their co-operation.

Mr Moore: There was only co-operation for D'Arcy; there was no other co-operation.

Mr HANSEN: In any event, I am offering my thanks.

Mr Moore: I do not need it.

Mr HANSEN: It is appreciated, whether the Government Deputy Whip wants my thanks or not.

The Budget is a bit like the curate's egg—good in parts. Like the member for Redlands, I appreciate the allocation made for water resources. Originally the Federal Government gave assurances that it would provide funds, but those funds have not been forthcoming. Therefore, the State has to carry a larger proportion of the funding. Out of the total allocation for water resources this year, money has been made available for the completion of the Mary River barrage and other stages of the Lower Mary irrigation scheme. I am grateful for that.

It is pleasing to note the inclusion of life tenants among those who are eligible for State Government rate subsidy. That subsidy is of great importance to many pensioners.

I raise another matter that has become apparent since the State Government, in January this year, made available a 25 per cent subsidy on rates. Clarification is needed. Many councils allow a discount—the rates of discount vary—if rates are paid on or before

a certain date. Some councils allow a discount of 10 per cent; others are not so generous. Many councils are able to offer a discount because a considerable portion of the council's rate revenue is invested on the short-term money market.

The question arises whether the local authority should allow the discount on the gross amount of the rates before the Government subsidy is deducted or on the amount remaining after the subsidy is deducted. I do not know whether this matter has been drawn to your attention, Mr Miller, but it has certainly been brought to mine. Is the discount allowed on the amount that is actually payable to the council or on the amount before the Government subsidy is deducted?

It has been suggested to me that if a pensioner's relative were to pay portion of the rates, a discount would be allowed on that portion so paid, but that as the Government pays the subsidy, a discount is not given on the amount making up that subsidy. In some instances that means that the pensioner might pay an additional \$15 or \$30 by way of rates. The Local Government Association and the Treasury Department should get together on this matter and formulate a firm policy. In many instances, the matter is left in the hands of the local authorities, which, as far as I know, are prepared to give a discount only on the actual amount paid over.

Much has been made of the increase in allocation to school bus services. They have been a problem since their inception. I pay a tribute to the regional directors of education and other officers associated with the services for the manner in which the services have been organised. No matter how many problems are solved, another always arises.

The honourable member for Redlands referred to the use of Government buses by pupils attending non-Government schools. As he rightly pointed out, non-Government schools relieve the State education system of a great deal of the education burden. If they were to close down, even for a short period, the State school system would have to carry a tremendous additional load.

The Budget provides for an allocation of \$24.2m to school conveyance schemes. The cost of providing school buses should be weighed against the cost to the community of closing country schools. I do not think the State is better off now that many of those schools have been closed. I can see why country people want their schools to be retained. They give a community an identity. Even though many of those schools were small, they had a tennis team or a cricket team. When they closed, the only active organisation in some of the communities was the Country Women's Association. Without the local school, many of the communities lost the opportunity to compete with others in tennis and cricket matches. Nowadays, facilities that in the past were used a good deal are hardly used. However, I suppose that is part of progress. As I say, many rural communities have lost their identity as a result of the closure of their school.

We now know how the Young Farmers Establishment Scheme will operate. It is apparent that more persons are interested in it than will have the opportunity to take advantage of it. The honourable member for Redlands said that a person wishing to participate in the scheme will be required to have a cash deposit of \$25,000. I have looked at some of the properties offered in the Emerald Irrigation Area. Any young farmer who pays a deposit of \$25,000 on one of those properties will be putting a noose around his neck. He will be paying it off for the rest of his life.

This scheme cannot be compared with other land settlement schemes, many of which have been a success. I am thinking of the land ballots in the Upper Burnett district. Years ago in the Burnett electorate, some poor people, after paying \$20, walked onto blocks with an axe to clear the land. The day of the small farm has gone; farming now requires large capital investment. Soldier settlement schemes near the Glasshouse Mountains, on the Granite Belt and in other areas failed because people were placed on impossible land. Today, Government departments have a better appreciation of what is involved in farming and farm amalgamations. I am sure that, after five or six years, some of the people who approached me realise how lucky they are not to have walked onto a farm on which they would have been working for the rest of their lives simply to pay off their debts.

I intended asking the Minister for Commerce and Industry about a local firm named F. R. Foxcroft Sign Co. Pty Ltd, which gained the licence to manufacture flags for the

Commonwealth Games. I do not know whether the Minister is aware of the problems facing that small business employing a dozen or so people in manufacturing flags in a factory at Balmoral.

When the company won the licence to manufacture the flags, obviously it was aware that supposedly Australian souvenirs, such as Matilda, were being bought in Korea and other places. It tried to buy suitable materials in Australia. When it could not do so, it hunted round in other Commonwealth countries and found that a Canadian company manufactured suitable material. The company decided to import the printed material in bulk and make up the flags here. It estimated that the wholesale price of a normal, full-size flag would be \$28.50. At that price, the company was paying 19 per cent import duty on the material. When the sales tax was increased the company had to pay 19 per cent plus 17½ per cent. But then came the crunch! Someone discovered that imported piece-goods attracted 40 per cent duty. I have been told that the company would pay only 19 per cent duty if it imported manufactured flags. That seems to be a silly way of doing business. I could understand a high duty being imposed on partly manufactured goods, and an even higher duty being paid on manufactured goods; but some of the work was to be done in Queensland, and the flags would not have been labelled "Made in Canada", or whatever it might be.

The Minister should try to do something to help that firm. I understand that, under a regulation, exemption could be granted, if the material is not available in Australia. The Minister has a chance to make out a very good case.

Mr Sullivan: Foxcroft, the flag manufacturer, is negotiating with my department. I do not know whether the company is doing so in relation to the matter the honourable member raised, but I will get my officers to look into the matter. If we can do anything to assist I will write and let him know.

Mr HANSEN: I thank the Minister. I am glad of his interest. This firm is prepared to go Australian and should not be given the big A for doing so.

I should now like to raise the matter of the Australian Industries Commission and some of the matters that have been referred to it. I do so because I know that the Minister is interested in what is happening, particularly if it affects Queensland industries.

Submissions have been made to the commission that it should reduce tariffs. It is claimed that, if tariffs are lowered, benefits will flow to the community and any problems, such as unemployment, that might arise because an industry is closed will even out with the benefits that will accrue from the lowering of the tariff. History does not bear that out. Customers do not get cheaper goods when tariffs are lowered.

Mr Sullivan: I could not agree with you more.

Mr HANSEN: I am pleased to hear that.

I can understand the isolated stand taken by the Australian Farmers and Graziers Association for the lowering of tariffs, but farmers and graziers, of all people, should remember who constitutes their best and most reliable market—the home market. If Australians have lower living standards because of more unemployment, the market could be further reduced because of the reduced spending power of the Australian housewife. There is enough unemployment dragging down spending power now without any further recession. This is not the time to pull the rug out from under Australian industries that have been built up on trade-protection policies. I urge extreme caution in adopting IAC recommendations that could turn Australia into a nation of farmers and social welfare recipients who cannot afford to pay present prices for primary produce.

I now refer to what is known as the Granny Grab or Chaney's Choice—the proposal by the Minister for Social Security, Senator Chaney, to catch up with the pensioners who have money on which interest is not paid. Anybody who has spoken to pensioners would realise the problems confronting these people. I do not know how many people have come to me and said, "What will happen? I have \$600 that I have been keeping towards my funeral. I have put it into a cheque account. I do not touch it." Some have told me they have as much as \$5,000, which, of course, is not very much today. I know of others

who have \$40,000. Some of these people are adamant. They say they have paid income tax all their lives and do not intend to miss out on any pensioner benefits. It is almost a fetish with some of them. They say they have no less entitlement than other people.

Until 1976, a property and income means test applied to pensioners. There were disputations about the value based on property. Income was set at 10 per cent of the value of the property. If a person had an allotment valued at \$8,000, he was considered to have an income of \$800, even though he might have paid \$800 in rates. I do not think it worked fairly and it probably worked most unfairly against people in rural areas. Many people lived on a large property all of their lives and did not want to shift to the city. They wanted to have a few acres of land. Their land was valued at so much.

They therefore had an income of so much, and in many cases this meant that their pension was reduced. In some cases they did not even qualify for a pension, which was even more cruel, because the property had been theirs for years. They were then forced to negotiate the sale of the property or hand it over to their children. In many cases their children could not afford to buy the property because they had not been paid wages for a great part of their lives. I believe in some cases they signed a guarantee and in some cases the Agricultural Bank or some other bank came in with a certain amount of money.

There was then a commitment by the son, daughter, or other relative to maintain the old people. But the stage was reached where the old people were depending on charity, of having to go to their children and ask for money. In times of drought the children had virtually no money so that the whole situation was really embarrassing for the old people. I understand that Senator Chaney does not intend now to proceed with this proposal, but I would have preferred it if, when the proposal was first announced, Senator Chaney had explained how it would operate. I believe that the State Government should do something about this problem.

Hundreds of thousands of pensioners have millions upon millions of dollars lodged in non-interest-bearing deposits with banks, building societies and insurance companies. Some insurance companies offer what they call an investment policy which accumulates over a period and which the taxation office was prepared to accept as a capitalisation of assets rather than income. There is apparently a very fine line drawn in this area, and whereas one taxation officer might accept it, another might not. A number of insurance companies, including the Government Insurance Office in New South Wales, have looked at this very touchy subject but are undecided about it. I believe this Government should be doing something about it.

The Premier has said that Queenslanders should invest in their own resources. I believe that there is an investment bank that pays 15.5 per cent, but a lot of people do not even know of its existence. But once again interest is paid, and that is income, and therefore old people are not interested. I believe that we can capitalise on this money that banks, insurance companies and building societies are using and upon which they are not paying a cent in interest. I believe we should set up some sort of a resources bank—a State-guaranteed investment fund—so that that money could be used to develop the resources of this State. At present anybody wanting to borrow money has to get in quick, and this causes problems.

The honourable member for Redlands mentioned that local authorities have to get into the market very early in order to fill their loan allocations. I believe that this is a source of revenue that could be used for the development of the State, and I would like to see more thought given to it. I know that the Treasurer has a lot on his plate at the moment, but this is an untapped source of money that could be used for many of the development projects that he has in mind for this State.

Over the years I have been interested in the workings of the National Fitness Council of Queensland. I am alarmed that in this Budget less money has been allocated to it even though extra work has been passed on to it. A previous speaker referred to the youth development program, and I know that you, Mr Miller, represented the Minister on one of these very worthwhile projects. But whereas \$20,000 was allocated to the program last year, this year that amount will have to come from the allocation for National Fitness.

I have looked at the national fitness programs in the other States. Incidentally, the body in Queensland is the only one that uses the words "national fitness" in its name. In the other States the bodies are called recreational councils, and I think that that more aptly describes their role in the community. Such bodies involve the community, including the local authorities that assist with their funding. Many people in the community participate in the programs arranged by them. There was the "Life. Be In It" program. The National Fitness Council had to carry the responsibility for conducting that program with a reduced allocation—if inflation over the last 12 months is taken into account. I am disturbed that the allocation has been reduced.

It is more a recreational program than a national fitness program, although many people in the community still consider it involves physical fitness rather than recreation. Many people receive great help from the National Fitness Council. The Government itself has used the council's resources, through its regional area committees, to promote such programs as the International Year of the Child, the International Year of Disabled Persons and "Life. Be In It". No amount of advertising can get a message across in the same way as people participating in a program can. Over the last 12 months many people have involved themselves in these programs. The programs have helped disabled persons in the community to learn certain crafts. We have seen spastics making clay pots and other articles with their toes. Handicapped persons can learn crafts if they are encouraged. Many, if not all, of the regional area committees involve themselves in this work.

The competitive sports are assisted through the Department of Sport. It is able to fund many sports. I know that it assists with junior coaching. Many people want to participate in competitive sports. Other people play squash, badminton and an occasional game of soccer or cricket, but they do it merely as recreation; they are not interested in strong competition.

Sports medicine has not been funded this year, but it has been passed on to the National Fitness Council. We are on the eve of the Commonwealth Games and there is an accent on preparing our sportsmen and sportswomen for the various events. Perhaps we will discover some more Queensland and Australian champions. Most sportsmen and sportswomen achieve championship status through their own efforts and the sacrifices made by their coaches, parents and others.

There is a lot to be learnt in the field of sports medicine. I pay tribute to Dr Kevin Hobbs and the other professional men with him who give up their time to pass on to lay people information on how they can treat their own injuries. I believe that we should not be cutting back funds in those areas in which the community is involved.

I wish to mention the attitude of the Government and the relevant Minister towards local authorities, and particularly to the Local Government Association, a very respectable organisation comprised of persons of many political persuasions who get together to work for the common benefit of local government. I am alarmed at the number of occasions on which local government legislation is introduced in the Assembly without reference to that association. I realise the Minister has experience in local government but I do not think he is right all the time. Somebody has said that even a stopped clock is right twice a day. It is a long time since the Minister was involved in local government and I believe he should listen to current thinking.

In many ways he is sympathetic, but I am alarmed that he makes decisions without reference to that association. I was especially alarmed when he said he was prepared to introduce a ward system of elections in certain cities. Except in the case of Toowoomba, they appear to have been selected because of their pattern of voting. The honourable member for Toowoomba North, who has some experience with local government, might be able to tell us the reason for the inclusion of Toowoomba.

I am alarmed that people who are not elected should influence the Minister to introduced ward systems in the cities in defiance of the unanimous decision of the Local Government Association. I know the Minister says that anyone who thinks that politics do not enter into local government is fooling himself. I agree whole-heartedly with that. My experience has been that once people are elected they are prepared to work with each other, irrespective of political persuasions, for the betterment of the community. In that respect, I do not include the Brisbane City Council.

The people are being denied the right to choose the council they want. Under the ward system they will be given the opportunity to choose one or two aldermen but they will have no say in the election of the other member. That could mean that those who are elected will feel responsible only to those who voted for them. Under the parochial system that still exists in a few local authorities, the area is split up into a number of divisions which are allocated a certain amount from the budget. If that was not done—perhaps a certain length of road could be built in one year and then more the following year. However, under that parochial system the individual divisions do not have sufficient funds to seal any roads at all. It is a bad system, but if the Minister feels that a ward system should be introduced, he should at least give the people the chance to voice their opinions in a referendum.

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (4.19 p.m.): I intend to make a couple of observations before I embark on one of the most boring subjects the Chamber could be referred to—that is, boring to most people except businessmen and the Treasurers of this and other States—the matter of stamp duty.

The recent Treasury and Treasurers of this State have a good record for sound management of the State's finances. They have two responsibilities: firstly, to advise the Government on matters or developments which might have implications on the finances of the State and to negotiate on behalf of the State; secondly they must allocate funds to provide for the policy decisions that have been made, not by the Treasury, but by Government, some of which conflict and some of which compete for limited funds. Within those restrictions the Treasury and the Treasurer have performed very well in recent times.

All Budgets present difficult problems and this Budget is no exception. Apart from general changes in the Commonwealth's policy and attitude there is a particular problem with hospital funding. One might say that there are growing and looming clouds that might well burst in the future.

I endorse many of the commendatory remarks made frequently in this debate. The growth in expenditure for education and the extension of rate rebates for life tenants are two important instances where the Budget reflects real problems affecting members of the general community.

I now wish to embark upon an examination of a particular area which is fairly esoteric for many persons, not unknown to the business community and the subject of specialised interest by a few lawyers. I refer to stamp duty. I ask the House to bear with me because it is a very important matter. Rather than analyse this Budget, I want to turn my mind to the next Budget and to the action that we can now take to finely tune the economy and management of this State in order to consolidate and to improve the future of this promised land.

The business community, whether it be small, medium or large, is a primary source of the direct State taxes which are imposed by this State. Queensland gained much development and migration of people and capital from the abolition of death duties. The abolition of death duties was not a simple removal of taxes. In fact, one of the consequences—at least it followed the abolition of death duties—was the increase in other taxes, particularly stamp duties.

Mr Vaughan: You don't get something for nothing.

Mr INNES: We don't get anything for nothing. If the Government wants the same amount for services and has reduced income in some areas, it has to catch up in other areas. A picture of a net benefit can be gained if one looks at it in the broad. Increased activity, a larger work-force and an influx in capital bring about, when subjected to a macro-analysis, an overall benefit to the State. If one is looking in particular areas it may lead to cases that need some adjustments and some compensation in the interim. Such an adjustment took place in the area of stamp duty, and this now needs adjusting itself.

For the last ten years, the two most remunerative directly imposed duties in this State are pay-roll tax and stamp duties. Those two sources have constantly provided approximately half of the income derived from State-imposed direct taxes. I would briefly refer to figures to remind the House of those very important sources of taxation. For instance, in 1974-75 stamp duty provided almost \$49m in revenue for this State. Succession and probate was \$23.5m—in very rough terms, half the stamp duty. In 1975-76, before the abolition of death duties, the

figures were \$26.8m for succession and \$74m for stamp duties—about three-eighths the amount of stamp duty. This reveals a downward pattern. The portion of revenue derived from stamp duty was increasing, whilst succession and probate remained fairly constant at \$25m. In 1976-77 the proportion went down to 25 per cent. That year reflects some reduction because succession duty was abolished from 1 January 1977. Thereafter, there has been a small income only from succession and probate duties, dwindling to \$2m in 1980-81. By that time, stamp duty had risen to \$280,750,000 and succession duty had dropped by \$24m. In other words, stamp duty had risen from approximately \$48m to \$280m—an astronomical increase.

The stamp duty on conveyancing went from a flat 1.2 per cent to a rate of 1.5 per cent at the bottom of the scale up to 3.5 per cent at the top of the scale. That increase followed the abolition of succession duties. It is the old story of not getting something for nothing.

Great benefits have accrued to this State from the abolition of death duties. People have migrated to Queensland and have bought their capital with them. It is time that the Government looked at stamp duties and used the knife to the advantage of local business, thereby encouraging a widening of the financial base in this State. The imposition of duties, combined with other factors, causes certain financial transactions to take place elsewhere even though the transactions relate to businesses operating in Queensland. This type of problem is being faced in other States.

I call for the adjustment of stamp duties and certain other action, which will, in effect, make Queensland an on-shore stamp duty haven. An adjustment in stamp duties will give Queensland the competitive edge and will bring about an increase in transactions, without the State's incurring a loss in revenue. In fact, it will make a gain. Increased transactions will make up the shortfall.

I will give an illustration of how heavy the stamp duty burden is. Last night I spoke with a small businessman who has four retail outlets and an annual turnover of \$3m. He has taken out figures that show his overhead costs, including the cost of cheques, credit and so on. Stamp duty constitutes 6 per cent of his total overheads. Businesses start to become profitable at the level of 10 per cent of the capital outlay; so it can be seen that a factor of 6 per cent is a very significant one. That must be borne in mind when we are addressing ourselves to the problems confronting small business.

The Government's greatest source of revenue is pay-roll tax, which is an imposition on the business community. In fact, in 1980-81 pay-roll tax and stamp duties provided almost \$500m to the State.

Mr Moore: You don't have to wipe out pay-roll tax. All you have to do is raise the threshold.

Mr INNES: Precisely. I am merely calling for a constant review and a constant tuning to ensure that we retain our competitive edge over other States. We should do something to combat the inertia created by the tradition of doing business in Sydney or Melbourne.

Stamp duty is what I might term a rustling tax; it is a silent tax. Most people do not know anything about stamp duty. It is a tax on pieces of paper. It is a tax on agreements that have to be entered into every day of a businessman's life. It is a continuing burden on a business. Stamp duty is payable on the contract drawn up for the purchase of the land, on the lease of the building, on the mortgage that is entered into, on the loan obtained for the purpose of erecting a building, on the lease of equipment, on the provision of vehicles, on shares sold in the company, on cheques used to pay accounts and wages, on hire-purchase agreements and on contracts entered into by purchasers of its goods and services. Every one of those transactions attracts stamp duty. It is something that touches everybody, but it falls particularly heavily on the businessman. In return for the stamp duty that it collects, the Government provides no service. The Government provides many other services, but this is an impost just on the creation of a piece of paper. There is no direct service for the money that is taken.

I referred earlier to conveyancing tax. A duty applies to conveyancing—that is, the transfer of land or property, other than stocks, marketable securities or share rights. As

I pointed out, before the abolition of death duties, a flat rate of 1.2 per cent applied. Since then, a progressive rate has been imposed, starting at 1.5 per cent and going up to 3.5 per cent. A very laudable, proper exemption was introduced for first principle homes. I agree with that totally.

In this, Queensland does not compare unfavourably with the other States. In Victoria the rates are slightly higher at the lower end and lower at the higher end, with a progressive tax—not a flat tax—taking its proportion. It goes up to 3.5 per cent on transactions over \$500,000.

Mr Vaughan: It will not affect me.

Mr INNES: It may not, but it is the sort of amount that affects even small business from time to time. A senior public servant or a member of Parliament can get a quarter of a million dollars in superannuation and immediately has to think about some transaction to invest his money. These transactions are increasingly routine, not exceptions.

The progressive rate starts to attract very large sums. Because very large amounts of money are involved, people will carpet-bag around Australia to consummate transactions in other places just to avoid the imposition and payment of stamp duty. Companies in this and many other States had their contractual home at accountants' and solicitors' firms in the ACT for some time to avoid stamp duty. The Federal Government moved to close the loophole in the ACT. The ACT, which I think is the least worthy of all recipients of moneys derived from the States, apart from taxation, became the beneficiary.

I turn to leases on freehold premises which used to attract 0.25 per cent on the first year's rent. The first year's rent was computed and a quarter of a per cent was taken for stamp duty. Now it has been increased to 3.5 per cent on the entire rate—that is, the rent is computed over the term of the lease. For a three-year lease the increase is approximately 300 per cent. In Victoria, the charge was as high as 0.6 per cent over the whole of the lease period.

Now to the real guts, or the most frequent duty applying to all business, namely, the stamp duty attracted by what are called credit transactions. This is imposed on credit transactions when the interest rate is greater than 17 per cent. That was unthinkable once upon a time, but it is now routine for finance company loans. Unfortunately we have gone beyond the old tradition. Only the richest and best risks now get money at bank rates, apart from a few housing loans. The bank manager inevitably pushes the customer off to the bank's finance company or into commercial bills. The hard-cash factor—the finance company money—is a constant feature now of all businesses, particularly small businesses. They are the ones that are forced into the credit areas—and high interest areas. When the poor little businessman wants to do something—expand his business, for example—he faces a charge additional to the 17 per cent interest because the transaction attracts stamp duty. That stamp duty is rated at 1.5 per cent.

How does this relate to the average person or businessman? We should again think of simple illustrations. The small builder is involved in raising such amounts of money at such rates of interest every week. He has to continually buy land to build houses on. He has to borrow the money for the materials to keep his gangs and his subbies going. There are routine transactions for small businesses. Every business gets involved in obtaining money to lease vehicles, heavy machinery and office machinery. Every office in Queensland would have word processors, dictaphones or simple equipment of that type. Usually because of income tax benefits, they would be leased and, therefore, subject to transactions attracting stamp duty.

Because stamp duty is a penalty on business the Victorian Government took remedial steps as its economic climate of activity faltered. It realised the way in which stamp duties and other duties can be fine tuned to correct declining business. In this year's Budget the Victorian Premier referred to the importance that the Government placed "on the role of Melbourne as the leading commercial and financial centre in the nation" and on changes having "the objective of maintaining Melbourne's permanent position as the financial centre of Australia". He commented on proposals as part of "a major review of stamp duty legislation, which was already proceeding".

How did Victoria approach the problem? It removed stamp duty from second or discount mortgages. Secondly, I referred to credit business duty, pointing out that when 17

per cent was reached 1.5 per cent was paid. The Victorian Government slashed its rate from 2.1 to 1.2 per cent and now has an edge of 0.3 per cent on Queensland. Thirdly, there was a decrease in rental business duty from 2.1 per cent to 1.5 per cent. Also, there was a reduction in stamp duty on cheques from 12c to 10c. The approach that the Victorian Government took to a fear that it was losing financial business was to reduce the imposition of duty on transactions.

The reality is that such is the number of transactions, so mainstream are transactions to commercial life, people will carpet-bag round the Commonwealth to artificially consummate transactions in different places so as to avoid stamp duty. At the moment, the Northern Territory, where there are certain loopholes, is a very good place to do company business. Last year it was the ACT for stamp duties.

My proposals must be understood against that background. Our Premier has said, and I agree with him, "We wish to have businesses based in Queensland." We want the control in Queensland because that makes a company sensitive to Queensland conditions and results in a spin-off in terms of secondary and service professions. One of the big social problems in the Central Queensland coalfields is the lack of employment opportunities for the young children of the miners, and for these we need the development of secondary and tertiary or service industry. Therefore we want in Queensland the finance companies, the accountants, the consultant engineers and the suppliers and feeders of all of those people.

However, we start at a disadvantage. I have heard the major functionary of one of Queensland's leading and most famous locally based companies say that if he were advising his company today on where to start business in Australia he would not suggest Queensland; he would advise it to go to New South Wales. Utah went to New South Wales. He said that is because the provision of finance is so essential to modern business that a company must be where the finance is raised. I know that the Labor Party might not like it, but the reality is that people get finance through contacts. A person finds people, trusts people and gets used to talking to people with money to lend or borrow. That is how finance is arranged. If a director is seeking to protect his company he discovers where the take-overs are being hatched—not in the newspapers, but over a couple of drinks at the club, round the bar at night or at a business luncheon. Those are the real disadvantages which can apply in being a developing State such as Queensland when all the traditional inertia is in favour of New South Wales and Victoria, the financial capitals. What we have to do is endeavour to take steps to correct the balance; to give an edge and provide an attraction to the doing of business in Queensland and the development of a Queensland financial base.

Mr McKechnie interjected.

Mr INNES: I just referred to what the Victorian Government has done.

Mr McKechnie interjected.

Mr INNES: I am developing a thesis. In fact, through the last Budget the Treasurer showed a sensitivity to this and an exercise was done in relation to the discount mortgage market. I have spoken with the Treasurer and his officers about this, as have other members of a responsible subcommittee of the Liberal Party. The Premier himself went on record a month ago as saying that he saw some virtues in the use of the stamp duty vehicle for advantaging Queensland business and attracting business to Queensland. What I am saying is that I agree with the interest that has been shown by both the Treasurer and the Premier. We must attract business to Queensland. For the next year we have to pursue that course until it results in some co-ordinated action.

A related area to which I would like to refer is the Money Lenders Act. It has become antiquated. It was created in the 19th century to stop usury, complicated credit transactions and loans with very onerous terms being given to little people, getting them into terrible financial trouble. That Act has no relationship to the realities of modern commercial life in the 20th century. For instance, a procurator fee is not allowed in this State. A person cannot charge for finding an intending borrower of money and arranging a loan in Queensland, whereas in New South Wales he can. So what happens? In the past we have had credit brokers coming here from New South Wales, hiring a hotel room or motel room and settling transactions for millions of Queensland dollars; in fact, often finding Queensland lenders for

Queensland borrowers. We need these people. We need professionals who locate money. Provided it is done at commercial rates, provided it is done with people who have the capacity to look after their own interests, there is nothing wrong in it. Obviously those people need a return for what they do; they are specialists. In fact, they often consummate the transaction—they do the deal—in New South Wales, with all the stamp duty and other benefits going to New South Wales.

The reality is that people in Queensland are now ignoring the Act. There are people who openly trade and find large sums of money for others, and have to, to make the financial and commercial life of this State go round. What they do is dress it up as an establishment fee, or some other synonym for that fee; but in reality it is a procuration fee. What we have to do is legitimise that practice and consider the type of transactions sought to be prohibited when the Money Lenders Act was passed—the personal loans to little people—and confine the ambit of the Money Lenders Act to that type of loan.

That is what occurred in New South Wales. Commercial loans between corporations in New South Wales do not attract the attention of the Money Lenders Act; nor should they, because if a person is sophisticated enough and has enough money to establish a corporation, he will have an accountant, a bookkeeper and a solicitor and can look after himself. We are dealing with people who can deal at arm's length. It is the little person that the Money Lenders Act was intended to protect, but it is in fact now a shackle on the business person and companies. The penalties of ignoring the Money Lenders Act are very great; the interest rate in an agreement can be slashed to 8 per cent. It can be reduced from 17 to 8 per cent, despite the fact that both the lender and borrower are willing to enter into an agreement at that higher rate.

Let me give members an example of the law gone mad, or the impositions of law not staying with the times, and take what is a fairly common sort of transaction. It might sound a little complicated, but I shall try to keep it simple. Take a loan transaction involving a company with 10 subsidiaries that wants to borrow money, a transaction that because of the interest rate falls within the Money Lenders Act. The transaction is to involve a mortgage document with the head company and guarantees from each subsidiary. The shareholders and directors are the same; in effect, it is the same organisation. About 121 sets of documents have to be executed to complete the transaction. Each of the documents has to be stamped because everybody has to get a complete set of all the documents, and they have to be delivered within 21 days. Imagine the legal and photostating costs. I have heard of a pile of documents 3½ feet high to consummate one transaction.

What happens when the subsidiary gets the documentation? It puts the documentation in a shredder. A busy builder who, say, builds five or six houses at a time just cannot afford the space to keep the documentation. He just throws it in the shredder. All that happens is that he pays much higher legal fees or actual disbursements for paper and some nominal stamp duty, and passes it on to the purchaser. So it all comes down to the consumer in the end. The law has to stay in touch with commercial reality. If those transactions were outside the Money Lenders Act, that would not be necessary. What is even more ludicrous for people taking a more conservative approach is that, through the combined effects of the Acts Interpretation Act and the impositions of the Money Lenders Act, a person cannot even give over the documents on the day on which they are signed. They have to go 21 days after that date; so he has to either post them or find someone to deliver them.

There has to be a constant monitoring on behalf of the interests of the community, which eventually pays for all of the services, and on behalf of the businessmen, who want to get things done. They do not want massive piles of paper and they do not want to pay large amounts of duty. They want to get the business done and give the public purse a reasonable proportion of the money only. But the proportion is getting a little bit too high. In view of the competition from the other States, the balance should be rectified so that we have, in effect, an onshore tax haven which will be an advantage for people who want to do business here. We should remove impediments such as the Money Lenders Act to allow people to do business in this State.

I propose for consideration by the Treasurer and the Government that these issues be taken under concerted supervision by a working group of Ministers—and I say "Ministers" because there is a certain inertia in the departments, which become used to administering their Acts, and perhaps a bit of lateral and flexible thinking is necessary as

opposed to the way in which things are traditionally done and to socking every transaction. The working group should include the Treasurer, the Minister for Justice, who is in charge of the Money Lenders Act and the new securities industry and corporations legislation, and the Minister for Commerce and Industry. They should look at the ramifications in this area. At the time of the presentation of the next Budget, or even before then, some fine tuning should take place to remove impediments to doing business in Queensland, and for gaining revenue in Queensland. Because people are taking transactions elsewhere, we are losing revenue to the other States.

Similarly, in the share market there would be an advantage in stamp duty reductions for share transactions. That could encourage a great deal of business to this State. Some people suggest that a consequence of the new corporations legislation will be that fewer national corporations will incorporate and have substantial business headquarters in Queensland. The registration procedures will be simple and corporations will be able to do business in any State. So the impetus or encouragement or inducement to incorporate here, or to have formal contacts here, might be reduced. We have to counteract that. We want a viable stock exchange. We want locally listed companies. We want businesses that have their operations here to do business here. We want the Utahs here, not in Sydney. Therefore, we should explore every way in which we can encourage that to take place. A preference for locally domiciled companies and a reduction in stamp duty to give us a competitive edge are two avenues that should be explored and two things that I would welcome. That might cause consternation on the Victorian Stock Exchange, but why not? We used to have stock exchanges in Charters Towers and Gympie. We lost those; let us get a few of them back.

I could say other things but I would trespass on somebody else's time. I think that is probably enough of stamp duty for one day.

Mr KATTER (Flinders) (4.50 p.m.): I intend to pass some observations on the supply of water in Queensland. I preface my remarks by mentioning the unfortunate decline in population west of the Great Dividing Range. Unfortunately, in the last 15 years most towns west of the Great Dividing Range have suffered a 40 per cent decline in population. If anybody wishes to take me up on that, I am only too happy to take the time of the Committee to quote figures concerning towns in inland Queensland. With the exception of a few mining towns such as Mt Isa and with the added exception of Darwin, virtually all of northern Australia west of the Great Dividing Range is land that we are not in occupation of. So few people live in that area that in no real sense can the Australian people say that they occupy that area. A far greater problem is that every year that population continues to decline.

As if that is not enough, the Federal Government is proclaiming huge areas of land as national parks and also setting aside land because of pressures for Aboriginal land rights. Even the Queensland Government has been responsible for the creation of some national parks. By creating national parks and acceding to demands for Aboriginal land rights, which appear to be very near and dear to the opponents on my right, the Government is committing itself to not having a white population there in the future. By the creation of national parks and the granting of land rights the white population is being frozen out of those areas in perpetuity. The Government has made the cold-blooded decision not to settle northern Australia. I can see no precedent in history for a nation saying that other people cannot go into such an area of land. That cannot be justified morally or in terms of political reality.

Having made those remarks, I congratulate the Treasurer on the Budget, which is not only a sound document but also one which shows that the State Government has a far firmer grasp on the road upon which Australia should travel than has the Federal Treasury. I will say more about that later.

Returning to the population problem, I express my thanks to the Queensland Government, which in 22 years has had to make up for some 40 years of Labor neglect of inland Australia—

Mr Scott: How long ago?

Mr KATTER: An Opposition member says that that is not so. I do not know how long he has lived in North Queensland or how long he has been visiting inland

Queensland. If he had undertaken a journey from Cloncurry to Brisbane before this Government took office, he would have driven on approximately 150 miles of bitumen. If he had travelled the coastal route, he would have travelled on some 500 to 600 miles of bitumen out of a total of 1300 miles.

Before every election which he contested and won, my predecessor (Mr Lonergan) inserted a small newspaper advertisement in which he asked the electorate one question: "How much bitumen was on the Flinders Highway," which joins Mt Isa to Townsville, "when this electorate was held by the Labor Party and how much of that highway is now bitumen?"

Of course, the highway is now entirely sealed. Not only is it sealed, but many feeder roads connecting with it are also sealed. Most hospitals in inland North Queensland are new hospitals. Most of them are air-conditioned. Most of the schools are new. The buildings are in extremely good repair. All the infrastructure items that have appeared in these towns have been the result of massive spending by National-Liberal Governments to make up for the massive neglect by the ALP during the many years they had in office. If ever the people of inland Queensland lose faith in the Government—and I think that, at times, all of us lose faith in our own Government—let them cast their minds back very quickly to what it was like in those areas before this Government came to office. If they do that, an entirely different picture will be painted.

Mr Prest: You said that people were leaving the West under your Government.

Mr KATTER: If the honourable member will wait until I move on, he will realise that what I am saying is that in spite of those infrastructure items, the massive Government spending, and the fact that we have just about everything we can reasonably ask for, we still have a population drift.

In the main, the problem stems from the fact that people are changing from sheep to cattle. Twelve years ago there were 80 shearers in Julia Creek; there are now only five or six. That explains why the problem exists. The Government is not running away from the problem; it is biting the bullet. Unfortunately, I have been criticised on many occasions in my electorate for saying that. I see no benefit in putting my head in the ground like an ostrich and saying, "Everything in the garden is rosy," when it is not. The west is losing population, and the loss is as high now as it has ever been. Something must be done to arrest it. I wish to put forward what I regard as very sound proposals.

Mr Turner: Irrigation.

Mr KATTER: As the honourable member from Warrego said, irrigation is one that I have in mind.

The Mayor of Alice Springs proposed some very radical steps. He wanted 25 000 Asians brought out, a small dam built and an irrigation project established. He said that if Australians were not prepared to settle the huge areas of Australia not yet settled—in fact, half of the continent—people who were prepared to do so should be brought here.

Mr Davis: From Afghanistan?

Mr KATTER: I would not suggest that. I should like to think that people who are locked up in the great cities of Australia, where they are paying \$100,000 for an ordinary 25-perch allotment on which to build a house, would be prepared to settle on some of the hundreds of millions of acres that are not yet settled. Unfortunately, at the moment there is no water in some places. For these idiots on my right—

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr KATTER: I apologise.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the honourable member that such expressions are not favoured by the Chair.

Mr KATTER: I apologise for that remark.

We are told by environmentalists that we must look after the people in North Queensland, that we should not shoot kangaroos, and that all the people who live on the land, all the developers and all those who want to make more water available there will destroy the animals that one sees Harry Butler playing with on his television programs. Most of the people who whinge about that are in big cities and can only see the animals in a zoo or on television programs. They have the temerity to tell country people what they should do with their land.

The inland plains of North Queensland did not have any reptiles on them; in fact, there was no human, animal or insect life there. The land between Cloncurry and Hughenden had no surface water; consequently, no animals inhabited the area. However, with the coming of European settlement, holes were dug in the ground and artesian water began to flow. Where there was once no water, there are now 26 000 miles of waterways. The result is that kangaroos abound where once they did not exist, and goannas and other wildlife can be seen in large numbers. As well, of course, the area contains people who are helping to produce the wealth of the nation.

I want to mention what is involved in bringing water to that area. Before I comment on the Bradfield scheme, I refer to the dam site mentioned by the member for Warrego. There would be no more strategic place for a dam site than that referred to by him. It is in an area that suffers most from the lack of water and the drift of population. That trend must be reversed. We must attack the problem at its heart. So I speak forcefully in favour of the proposal put forward by the honourable member for Warrego. I would put forward a similar proposal for a town in my electorate—Hughenden.

I urge people who are sceptical about irrigation projects to consider the Emerald and the Nogoia schemes. Both of them were tremendously successful. Hundreds of people lined up to participate in the land ballots in those areas. Those schemes were successful because they were reasonably close to the existing farming infrastructure.

I do not speak with a great knowledge of these matters. I tried to engage in farming on a small scale on the banks of the Cloncurry River. My venture was a terrible failure. The reason was that I had to travel 700 miles to buy a second-hand plough. When the water-melons that I was trying to grow shrivelled up with some sort of rot, I had to travel 700 miles to obtain advice on what type of solution I should spray on the crop.

Unlike the Emerald and Nogoia schemes, the Ord River scheme is not a success. The landholders in the Ord River scheme have to travel not 700 miles but 2 000 miles to obtain advice and equipment. As a result, up to this stage the scheme has failed. Nevertheless, I believe that it will be more than successful in the future.

The Mayor of Alice Springs has suggested that a program be embarked upon to provide a chain of water projects from the interior of Australia to the east coast. One of Queensland's leading naturalists and a senior lecturer in geology at the Queensland University, Dr Heidecker, has suggested that it is quite feasible to establish a series of irrigation projects stretching from Ingham in the east, through the mid-west plains of North Queensland, to the Ord River in Western Australia. He says that that could be done fairly simply.

Many people claim that the construction of a tunnel through the Great Dividing Range would not be a simple task. Such a tunnel would cost approximately \$350m. I have obtained that figure from a number of reports on the Bradfield scheme. As approximately \$200m has been spent on a cultural centre on the bank of the Brisbane River, the expenditure of \$350m on such a vital project as the construction of a tunnel through the Great Dividing Range is not unreasonable.

I come now specifically to the Bradfield scheme. The first task of any Government of Queensland should be to attack the problem created by the population drift from inland areas. I have referred to the proposal put forward by the honourable member for Warrego and to my proposal for the construction of a small dam at Hughenden. Quite apart from those proposals, bigger schemes, which perhaps could not be implemented immediately, should be considered. We must think of the future.

The latest and most scathing criticism of the Bradfield scheme has come from Dr Nimmo, head of the Stanley Water Board. Perhaps it is because he lives in southern Queensland that he shows some sort of resentment towards northern development. Nevertheless, his report contains a number of blatant inaccuracies.

To cite an example—he mentions 14 miles as the length of a tunnel from the Herbert River to the Burdekin River. Even a cursory glance at an army contour map, which is freely available to honourable members, will indicate that the distance involved is not 14 miles but between 13½ and 14 km.

Mr Vaughan: The Herbert River is very polluted.

Mr KATTER: That is a problem that I might deal with at some future time.

Dr Nimmo claimed that the Herbert and Burdekin Rivers had certain flows. He quoted a figure of some .63 million ML as the flow available to the Bradfield scheme from the Herbert, and he attacked Dr Bradfield scathingly for quoting a figure of 2.07 million ML. We do not have to argue about that now because we can get the exact figures. At Gleneagle, which is well above the dam site, the flow is 1.12 million ML. Since the dam site is considerably downstream from that point, it is safe to quote a figure of 1.3 million ML. Dr Nimmo's figures were even less correct than those cited by Dr Bradfield. Dr Nimmo's major criticism of the scheme was invalid because his figures were glaringly incorrect. While Dr Bradfield did not have accurate figures available to him, Dr Nimmo had certain figures available, and cannot be excused.

It is very fitting that you, Mr Row, should be in the chair. Certain people near Ingham fear that they may be caught short of water. The Ingham River has a 3 million ML flow. The maximum that could be taken from its flow is 1 million ML. In the driest year on record in the Upper Herbert, some 5 million gallons a day flowed past Blencoe—an ample quantity to provide irrigation for some 7 300 acre-feet, if it were needed. The worries that sufficient water will not be available—

Dr Lockwood: That does not add up, you know.

Mr KATTER: I will look into that later on.

At the end of the year there was a flow of some 5 million gallons about 50 to 60 miles upstream. Presumably that flow would be greater lower down. The figures could be slightly inaccurate.

The hinterland, which is one of the most inaccessible and beautiful areas in Queensland, would get roads, electricity, telephones and all the other amenities that follow such a development. That would be marvellous for the district, as well as for areas in the far northern part of my electorate.

Mr Davis: I hate to ask you this question, but who will pay for the water?

Mr KATTER: I will come to that in a moment.

Sufficient water would also be provided very cheaply for Townsville from a small weir or dam at Mt Foxton and, if necessary, water could be supplied to the industrial belt between Townsville and Ingham. A big spin-off benefit would flow to Townsville, Ingham and the small towns in between.

On occasions I have been criticised for being critical of the Burdekin Falls project. I have criticised the third stage of that project. I am trenchantly opposed to its implementation. Having looked closely and carefully at the Burdekin Falls proposal as it stands, I see it as an agricultural dam that will be very beneficial. I certainly do not oppose it. Any remarks I might make in favour of the Bradfield scheme are in no way meant to be critical of that project. I applaud people for getting off their seats and doing something about their area.

I want to add some comments very forcefully about the Julia Creek oil-shale deposits.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr KATTER: The honourable member may laugh, but if he compares world oil reserves with the consumption of oil throughout the world—and reflecting on human nature it is safe to say that in future we will consume oil at the same rate as we did two years ago—he will conclude that we will need alternative oil sources.

Mr Prest: You made a fool of the people with Rundle once, but you won't do it again.

Mr KATTER: People like the honourable member who do not do their homework do not know the full story about Rundle. When I have the time I will explain it to the honourable member.

CSR has re-drilled the Julia Creek oil-shale deposits and significantly increased estimates of reserves. It now has a project that is quite capable of meeting one-fifth of Australia's oil needs. The French intended to mine the Julia Creek oil-shale deposits not for oil-shale but for vanadium. Quite apart from any consideration of mining oil-shale, there is an entirely different mineral which would also enable the establishment of a major mining operation at Julia Creek. One of the major hold-ups at Julia Creek is the shortage of water. An inordinate quantity of water—something like 20 000 gallons a day—would be required.

Mr Prest: Why wouldn't Rundle go ahead before Julia Creek?

Mr KATTER: Rundle cannot go ahead before Julia Creek because of subsidence. When it was originally decided to mine at Rundle, it was thought that a sheer cliff could be left, but that is not so. Julia Creek does not have these subsidence problems.

The proposals for Julia Creek require a large quantity of water. The proposals that are presently before the CSR board entail the expenditure of \$127m to secure the water required for the Julia Creek oil-shale project. A tunnel through the Great Dividing Range to bring the waters of the wet coastal belt to the inland plain would cost some \$350m; so CSR would meet one-third of the cost. The water not required by CSR could be made available for irrigation and hydroelectric purposes. There is a very real need for water in the inland and a very real possibility of obtaining it.

Other projects are possible in the area. The Galilee basin has very big coal deposits. Actually they run under the town of Hughenden. Those deposits cannot be developed, again because of lack of water. Projects involving a meatworks, coal-mines and oil-shale are lying dormant until water can be made available on the inland plain. The only source of water that is reasonably available is the one put forward in the proposal by Dr Bradfield and Ion Idriess in 1929.

Let me state very firm solidarity, if I may use that word, with the people of Burke in New South Wales, who organised a massive meeting that was attended by some 30 or 40 members of Parliament from throughout Australia. I am proud that the largest delegation was from this Parliament. Parliamentarians came from four States of Australia. One Minister for Water Resources and the Acting Prime Minister were in attendance. It was a very successful meeting. The meeting cold-bloodedly asked for a commitment by the Australian Government of some \$5 billion for a bicentennial project. Could there be anything more lasting as a bicentennial gift? Those in New South Wales want the Clarence River to be diverted. That is really the Bradfield scheme transposed from the Herbert and Burdekin Rivers to the Clarence River in New South Wales, turning its waters into the Murray-Darling Rivers system. We have far better figures to offer than that.

I mentioned \$5 billion. That seems to be an enormous amount of money but again I should like to reflect on a few figures. Brisbane's population is increasing. The population is centralised in Brisbane. I imagine that the situation would be 100 times worse in either Sydney or Melbourne. There is a need for a bridge across the mouth of the Brisbane River. It would cost some \$350m. I do not argue against it. I am saying that that sort of expenditure is needed because our people are sitting on top of one another in a few coastal cities. If our population were scattered more widely we would not have these huge monetary problems.

As a country boy I find great difficulty in understanding why people live in a city the size of Sydney where a unit in a modest area—I am not talking about a wealthy area—costs about \$50,000 or \$60,000. That is not particularly expensive for a unit. In fact, I

thought it was very cheap. So we are talking about middle income families. They are offered parking space for an extra \$30,000. Space is a horrific problem for them. Because there is no parking space available people cannot own a car or, because they cannot afford to buy a piece of land, they cannot own a house. Yet this is in a country three-quarters of which is totally empty. In the long term the only hope of reversing this trend is something along the lines of the Clarence River diversion in New South Wales or, certainly, the Bradfield-Idriess scheme in North Queensland, a scheme whose time has come. I am quite happy to argue the economics of the situation with anyone, anywhere at any time.

For the massive amount of work that has been done, particularly by the National Party water resources committee, I would like to personally thank Mr Harry Clark, OBE, from Charters Towers, a man with a great deal of experience and working knowledge of the Burdekin and its hinterland. For 25 years he was chairman of the Dalrymple Shire, the biggest in Queensland, and I always received advice when I requested it of him. I also thank very much that rather marvellous naturalist from Queensland University, Dr Heidecker, for the work he has done not only on this scheme but on many other facets of the development of Queensland's resources. I thank the officers of the Water Resources Commission. I also thank Roy Stainkey, a grazier from Richmond, who has worked very hard on this project and, I might add, very intelligently. I thank very much Mr Max Menzel for the tremendous work he has done not only on this project but, more importantly, on the drainage problems that exist in Far North Queensland. I thank Mr Vince Spina who is head of the supply mill committees, and Mr Ted Row, the member for Hinchinbrook. I thank Rob and Regina Atkinson of Glenruth Station, who gave great assistance to the party which went in and inspected the various sites. The visit enabled us to make fairly dogmatic statements about water levels in the Burdekin and Herbert Rivers. I also thank Mr Schluter, our very conscientious fauna ranger at Charters Towers, who was our anchorman for the trip. I thank Miss Kate Mitchell, my own hard-working secretary, without whose tirelessness the trip would not have been possible.

Before I conclude I want to reflect upon the fact that at the moment our major problem is finance. I agree with the comments of the honourable member for Sherwood about banking and where its control lies. The tight monetary policies of the Fraser Government, whilst restraining inflation, have caused unemployment to rise to 6 per cent, and this is in a nation that had 0.7 per cent unemployment before the ALP wrecked the economy. In fact we have a recession, and the only way to get out of recession is for Governments to spend money. If there is any doubt in anyone's mind about that principle, let me remind members of what happened during the Depression in the United States. All the credit that was known to man and could possibly be made available to the American economy was in fact made available, but the economy simply would not start working by itself. Franklin Roosevelt got the American economy working and made its recovery possible at a time when some 30 per cent of the working population was unemployed, by the building of massive irrigation projects.

Mr Scott: You are using Keynesian economics, too.

Mr KATTER: I have no objection to Keynesian economics. In fact, in that sort of situation there is something to be said for them.

Mr Scott interjected.

Mr KATTER: That is an absolutely ridiculous statement.

Mr Scott: It is not. That is what is needed in the North.

Mr KATTER: The honourable member obviously has a very limited appreciation of what is involved in Keynesian economics.

The money was available in the United States throughout those years. The economy simply would not start up by itself. Franklin Roosevelt climbed into the saddle and started spending money on the Tennessee Valley Authority and on the other development that had to take place to control that massive water resource. Money was also spent on the Colorado River project. What was literally a desert supporting some 3 million people in California and the surrounding areas is now supporting some 25 million people. That was the result of spending money in a time of recession. There is undoubtedly a recession in Australia at the present time, and I think that the only way of working our way out

of it is to adopt the approach that I have suggested. As a small spin-off, we could look at the Clarence diversion scheme in New South Wales and, more importantly and immediately, the Bradfield scheme in North Queensland.

Dr LOCKWOOD (Toowoomba North) (5.21 p.m.): I am acutely conscious that the Budget was delivered by the Treasurer in this Chamber some four weeks ago and the news is therefore old. However, I hasten to add that the Budget is very popular and has been very well accepted.

In the time available to me, I wish to address myself to some of the problems that have come before the Parliament and propose some solutions. At the last election the Liberal Party went to the polls on a platform that the party believed that Parliament was not simply a place where the decisions of the Executive were brought forward for automatic endorsement. Liberals have been elected on that policy, and they have an obligation, at least to their voters, to do something about it.

In this regard, the Auditor-General's Report on Departmental and Other Accounts is perhaps one of the best reports that have been presented to this Parliament for a long time. The Auditor-General has a duty to state that he either has or has not received all the information and explanations that he has requested about the departments and the accounts that he has to audit. He has to ensure that departments' budgets are spent according to the departmental legislative framework and also according to the provisions of the Act that he administers, that is, the Financial Administration and Audit Act. He also has to look at the financial impact of the duties and functions of officers and ensure that they are adequately and properly performed. But that is mainly concerned with the discharge of their duties under the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

The members of this Parliament and the public have a wider interest in the Budget and the administration and financial accountability of this State than the Auditor-General. The public pays taxes and expects the members of this Parliament to see that the taxes and the other charges that are imposed to make up the total revenue of the State Budget are well spent. Members of this Parliament vote to allow advances to all Government departments, but they have no direct control over Government expenditure. The public is concerned, and I think that it needs to be. The public needs to know the cost effectiveness of all Government programs. It needs to know about efficiency in Government. It needs to inquire and to be reassured that there is no waste. Most importantly, it needs to know that there is no rip-off by any person in the Government or by the Government in any of its departments. The public is also concerned about policies of expenditure. It is concerned electorate by electorate. This Parliament never receives a report on expenditure electorate by electorate. The public is also concerned about expenditure in towns and in country areas.

The public frowns upon any suggestion of political patronage. The attempt by the last Labor Prime Minister (Gough Whitlam) to introduce political patronage as a style of government promptly led to a rejection of him and his policy of political patronage instead of printed policy as a means of government.

Members of the Committee want to investigate these matters on behalf of their electorates. They are concerned beyond the scope of the Auditor-General with the policies and the politics of expenditure. They are concerned because they simply cannot get the facts that they require, if there is to be detailed and sensible debate, from the printed annual reports. The facts are not in those reports and honourable members simply cannot get them. All honourable members should insist that the excellent work done by the Auditor-General should be supplemented by the provision of cost-efficient and effective expenditure statistics in all annual reports that are tabled in the Parliament. Only in that way can the Parliament decide if Government policy is being adhered to.

Mr Scott: Is this your conscience letting you off the hook over the public accounts committee?

Dr LOCKWOOD: If the honourable member listens, he will find out.

Regardless of what a Government does, costs creep up. Sometimes there is a need for some services to decline, which can come about either suddenly or gradually. However, if the Parliament cannot discover which services are in a state of decline, and whether they should or should not decline, there is nothing we can do about it. Because the Government will not provide the information sought by the Parliament, then members

are in the dark and are ignorant of what is really happening in Government departments and, more particularly, in the statutory bodies created by this Parliament. If the facts are not provided, the Parliament cannot decide if a community service should be expanded, if the status quo should remain, if it should be reduced or, most importantly, if it should be abandoned.

I am pleased to see the Minister for Health in the Chamber. He is aware that I have raised the matter of the capital cost of implementing the policy of having pre-cooked frozen meals supplied to hospitals. The Health Department cannot provide details of the full costs of meals prepared under the old scheme, that is fresh food supplied to hospital kitchens and cooked there, or the new scheme of supplying fresh food to the Convenience Food Facility at Wacol, having that food cooked and snap-frozen, supplied to hospitals for storage, relaxation—that is what the thawing process is called—heated in the small 10 or 15-serve trays, forwarded to the wards and served. That is so simply because the department does not keep the type of information that is required to allow any cost comparison of those two methods of providing meals.

I refer to the Health Department because these examples come to mind. It is not the only department where this happens, by any means. It applies to every department, statutory authority, commission and committee established by the Government. Members of Parliament simply cannot get at the facts. In calculating the cost of meals the Health Department chooses not to count the cost of capital conversion as an expense in the cost of producing meals. On page 8 of his report to Parliament the Auditor-General states—

“In arriving at the operating costs no account is taken of depreciation or cost of money used to finance the construction of the facility.”

He conservatively estimates the cost at not less than \$1m per annum. I estimate that the cost is much higher, particularly when one takes into consideration the cost of refrigerated transport, huge hospital cold-rooms, conversion of kitchens, delivery systems, etc.

The amount of capital depreciation and the full cost of all services must be taken into consideration, not only for this service but also for every service provided by the Government. The Auditor-General is looking towards a change in Government accounting so that the full and recurrent costs can be applied to every service. I would support him in his move to change to that type of accounting. If we do not do that, the capital expense of programs will be ignored by Government.

We are all aware that the Government is inundated with requests for more and more capital. We must be extremely conscious of this in deciding which projects will have capital applied to them and the amount that will be expended. The Auditor-General says that depreciation and the cost of money used to finance the construction of the food facility would have added 33 per cent to the cost of meals in hospitals. I would suggest that it would possibly add 66 per cent to the cost. I don't believe that the Minister or anyone else knows the correct figure. This Parliament must agree to change all Government and statutory body accounts along the lines suggested by the Auditor-General.

Mr Davis: We could form a public accounts committee if you had a bit of intestinal fortitude.

Dr LOCKWOOD: At the conclusion of my speech I will state one deficiency in such a proposal. There are examples of deficiencies in policy which the Auditor-General has never discovered, and they have to be put aside.

The Health Minister cannot be blamed for any shortcomings in relation to the convenience food facility. It was designed before his appointment to Cabinet; in fact it might have been before his election to Parliament. The then Minister for Health (Dr Edwards) discovered that the cost of one service provided by the Government was \$603 per patient per day. That situation had arisen because of a decrease in need for the service while the staff wages and capital funds were still applied. Of course, escalation of wages contributed to the increase. No process existed whereby this Government or its departments regularly reviewed the cost of providing that facility. I will not mention that service; it is not important and it has been discontinued.

The Auditor-General has not reported on a cost benefit analysis of services that are reported to cost \$500 per week for the care of patients in some establishments for chronically dependent people. Similar care provided elsewhere by the department would cost under \$170 per week. No report of that is made by the Auditor-General. It is completely beyond his scope to examine such problems that have occurred in Government departments.

I have used the Health Department as an example to illustrate the point. Similar circumstances exist in every department and in every statutory authority. The money has been spent. No allegation of fraud has been made. The Auditor-General cannot comment on lost efficiency because it is way beyond his scope. We need a change so that all moneys spent are applied according to cost effectiveness considerations that are consistent with the Government's policies.

Annual reports to Parliament provide a great deal of information, but they gloss over areas where Parliament would insist on changes to policy if only it could get the facts. Cost effectiveness is never discussed. Annual reports by departments, statutory bodies and commissions are never debated in the Parliament. The reason given is that there is absolutely no use for Parliament to criticise or critically analyse the reports. Because of the manner in which the reports are presented, we cannot tell whether the departments are implementing the Government's policies, nor can we decide whether they are cost effective in their operations.

All departments and statutory bodies hide under the umbrella of their annual reports. We need to pull down that umbrella and reach the facts behind the reports. Annual reports advertise services and therefore encourage a greater use of them. This in turn leads to an expansion of departments. Annual reports do not point to the containment of costs or to services that should be eliminated.

Under the Westminster system, the people elect members of Parliament, members of Parliament form the Government and the Government appoints Ministers. The Ministers accept full responsibility for the administration of their departments, and under the Westminster system they can be called upon to resign or can be sacked if they either cannot or will not control their departments. In Queensland, there is not enough evidence of Ministers' moving to regain control of the departments and statutory bodies in their portfolio.

There are many instances of delegation of authority, with absolute or near absolute autonomy vested in statutory bodies. On previous occasions in this Chamber I have spoken about the State Electricity Commission and the regional electricity boards. Certain statutory authorities show a disregard for Parliament and absolute contempt for the people whom they serve.

Various commissioners who are appointed under Acts of Parliament have powers and authority beyond the very limited right of Ministers to intervene. The delegation of authority relieves Ministers of the burden of direct day-to-day administrative control. However, it also prevents Ministers from intervening in the interests of the public, their party or the Government.

The people elect a Government to govern, not to pass the buck. The people expect Parliament to use its powers to intervene. They expect it to do this so that it can regain the power that the people believe Parliament as a collective body should have over Ministers, and so that Ministers can regain the power that they should have over statutory bodies.

What can be done to remedy the situation? Cabinet has the advice of the Auditor-General, the Co-ordinator-General and the Under Treasurer, who act as a kind of priorities review committee. However, in the main, they are answerable to the Ministers with whom they work closely. They are too remote from Parliament, and certainly the public have no direct access to them.

I suggest that legislation be introduced to return full accounting of all departments, statutory bodies and commissions to their Ministers. All those bodies should be required by law to present annual reports to this Parliament, and those reports should reveal the operations of the departments in their true light. Departments must be made answerable to their Minister not only for their day-to-day administration but also for the preparation of their reports to Parliament.

Provision should be made for ultimate ministerial direction on policy and pricing in relation to departments and statutory bodies. Ministers must be answerable firstly to

Cabinet and secondly to Parliament. All reports should be debated. This Parliament should either adopt a report or demand, as the Auditor-General has demanded, a further explanation of statements contained in that report. If Parliament finds that a department or statutory body has been defiant, it should be able to place the department under the control of another Minister or the statutory body under direct parliamentary control.

In fact, the Auditor-General has reported instances of defiance. He has also reported the failure to comply with legal requirements to report. I am sorry to say that in one instance nothing has been done about this by the Minister. The situation has continued for three years, and no action has been taken to rectify it.

The Auditor-General has reported that departments have failed to change their ways. Apparently Ministers in control of departments are not forcing changes on them.

It is not that those things cannot be done. The New South Wales Labor Government has moved through its body of legislation to bring departments, statutory bodies and commissions firmly back under the direct control of the Ministers who, in turn, are responsible to the Premier and, beyond him, to the Parliament.

I must say that that move has proved to be very popular. People can see the value and the advantage to them as taxpayers and citizens, when dealing with statutory bodies and Government departments, to have them directly answerable to a Minister, with the Minister answerable to Parliament and, ultimately, the Parliament answerable to the people. Labor Premier, Mr Wran, has done it. This Government will just have to swallow the fact that he is a Labor man and accept the fact that he has done it and that it is very popular.

There is one bright spot. I have referred on several occasions to the Health Department. I am sure that the Health Department is fully aware of what I consider to be deficiencies in its system. The department is moving towards full computerisation of its accounting. It will take three years, but when it is in operation I expect that the department will be able to reach the facts behind the reports and thus provide very enlightened reports to Parliament to allow us to debate the annual reports and, where necessary, make changes in policy for the betterment of the Government and the people of the State.

The Auditor-General has done an excellent job on behalf of the State. More power to him! As I say, we should introduce legislation to bring about the changes I have mentioned. A public accounts committee, however, is not the perfect answer. As I have said, Government policies have to be considered, but the Opposition will never consider Government policy, in the cold, clear light of day. Opposition members try to make politics of everything. They will never approach the establishment of a select committee with a concrete suggestion. They play politics with any suggestion, just as they did with the Select Committee on Education. The answer lies in the Government's amending legislation progressively so that all departments, statutory bodies, commissions and even committees established by it come under firm ministerial control, with the Minister answerable to Cabinet and Parliament.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (5.44 p.m.): Various terms have been used by honourable members to describe the 1981 State Budget. Some of them have been flattering, others have been critical. Adopting an objective, non-partisan approach to the debate, I can best describe the Budget as deceitful. It is deceitful because charges were increased throughout the year, and, in particular, there were a number of increases a few months before it was introduced. In some instances the Budget will increase railway fares and freights by 20 per cent when the full increases are applied. I will have more to say about railway problems later.

One of the most pertinent points is the increase in traffic fines as from the first of this month. Judging by the way in which the Government operates, I suggest that those fines will be only another form of taxation. Some of them have been increased by 400 per cent. Last week I noted a proud boast by the Police Department on the Gold Coast that more than 500 motorists had been booked over the previous week-end. Figures that I have here relating to traffic offences over the past 12 months indicate that the increase in fines—or taxation, as I call it—will mean that an additional \$4m will flow into the Government's coffers.

Since my election in 1969 I have heard many flowery speeches from Liberal and National Party members extolling the virtues of the Westminster system. Those members have repeatedly told us that we should adhere to the practice, procedure, ethics and fine traditions of the House of Commons. They have told us that one tradition or convention that is adhered to strictly in most Parliaments is secrecy relative to the Budget.

Mr McKechnie interjected.

Mr DAVIS: It is a very important document, and if persons or companies had prior knowledge of its contents, they would be able to clean up by adopting the methods used by the well-known investor from Carnarvon.

The leaking of details of the Budget is a very serious offence. Last year parts of the Federal Budget were leaked to a reporter, and there was a furore. So it seems that every Parliament except the one controlled by this hick Government observes that tradition. This Government, in leaking Budget details, is something like a colander leaking water.

Because I believe that a person who has some evidence should bring it forward, I wish to quote from a newspaper editorial. The person I intend to charge with leaking details of the Budget is the honourable member for Isis. I am very sorry that he is not in the Chamber, but I did forewarn him that I would mention his name during my speech. The editorial in a Bundaberg newspaper of 21 September reads—

“Events of the past week provide good examples of the way parliamentary conventions are being whittled away in Australia. Soon, one will need to turn to a text book to gain an understanding of the traditional Westminster system. In Queensland over a number of years there has been a steady abuse of parliamentary privilege, the convention of ministerial responsibility and even the rules under which Parliament operates to the extent that senior Ministers are answerable to almost no one but themselves.

Canberra, on the other hand, which operates under a much stronger degree of public scrutiny, has maintained a far closer acknowledgment of the proprieties of the system of government . . .”

Queensland is the great exception. Last year the honourable member for Salisbury referred to the leaking of a document. This year, even though it was only a couple of hours before the Budget speech, the Minister for Main Roads was able to leak how much money would be spent on road-works. I do not imagine that two hours would make a great deal of difference, but there certainly was impropriety.

I shall return to the editorial and read it so that it is completely in context. It reads—

“The rural radio programme two hours before the Budget also contained accurate Budget information. In Parliament a day before the Budget, a Minister revealed the number of extra teachers to be employed . . .”

That makes two leaks.

Now let me deal with what the member for Isis did. The article reads—

“And in Bundaberg backbencher, Mr L. W. Powell, provided this newspaper with a written comment on two specific Budget items the day before the Budget was brought down.”

The paper does not give the two specific statements, but the fact is that it was quite willing to announce that a back-bench member of the Government had been able to give it information on some sections of the Budget. Honourable members might think that it is rather smart that back-bench members and Ministers are able to say, “Here are some parts of the Budget.” As I said earlier, we are always having the Westminster system pushed down our throats. Time and time again people who journey over to the mother country come back and say that we have to adhere to the Westminster system, we have to ensure that Ministers do not leak documents and so forth; yet three members had the most important document of all, the Budget, before it was delivered, thus having an advantage over other members, particularly Opposition members. It is only fair that we somehow ensure that that sort of impropriety does not occur. I would like to see the member for Isis appear before the Privileges Committee to explain how and when he got that information and also which Minister was good enough to give him an advantage over every other member of this Assembly.

Mrs Kyburz: What portfolio?

Mr DAVIS: That is not disclosed, but I intend to table an editorial from the Bundaberg "News Mail". This is a serious matter, and I believe it should be investigated by the Privileges Committee. If it is good enough for the Privileges Committee to investigate other matters, it is good enough for it to call before it for explanation a member who has broken one of the highest traditions of our great and beloved Westminster system.

Mrs Kyburz: It is not a matter of privilege.

Mr DAVIS: We have only one or two committees. It is not something with which the Subordinate Legislation Committee can deal, so there is only the Privileges Committee left. The Refreshment Rooms Committee does not meet—nor do any of the others—so what is left? Can the honourable member think of another committee?

Mrs Kyburz: They are all paper tigers, so why bother with them?

Mr DAVIS: I just want to see this matter brought to a conclusion. Perhaps the honourable member for Salisbury will be good enough to bring it up at a meeting of the joint parties and ask how the member for Isis came to be in possession of this document, because the Bundaberg "News Mail" said that he had it.

Mrs Kyburz: Why don't you make a public call for the Bundaberg "News Mail" to explain its source?

Mr DAVIS: It disclosed its source in the article. It states—

"And in Bundaberg a backbencher, Mr L. W. Powell, provided this newspaper with a written comment on two specific Budget items the day before the Budget was brought down."

Mr WHARTON: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Isis, in a speech to the Assembly, said that he had embargoed that statement.

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

Mr DAVIS: I am quite happy to table the editorial.

Mr Wharton: We have seen it a dozen times.

Mr DAVIS: If the Minister saw it, why did he not ask the member about it himself? If he is so smart, why did he not ask the member?

Mr Wharton: Because he told the truth; it had an embargo on it. Would you like me to rise on a point of order now? You don't know what you are talking about.

Mr DAVIS: Did the honourable member for Burnett give the document to the member from the adjoining electorate?

Mr WHARTON: I rise to a point of order. I deny the statement. It is offensive to me and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DAVIS: I withdraw it, but at the same time I ask the Minister will he give me credit by saying that it is a very serious charge?

Mr Wharton: It is no credit to you. You are making ill-founded statements.

Mr DAVIS: Is the Minister saying that the Bundaberg "News Mail" is telling a lie? That paper has come straight out and said it.

Mr WHARTON: On behalf of the honourable member for Isis, I must rise to a point of order. I must object to the honourable member saying that the honourable member for Isis told a lie. He did not tell a lie in this Assembly.

Mr Vaughan: He didn't say that.

Mr DAVIS: I said, "The Bundaberg 'News Mail'."

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Isis can take a point of order on his own behalf; the Minister cannot take one for him.

Mr DAVIS: Just in reply to the Minister: How the hell can an embargo be placed on a Budget item? The member should not have had it in his mitts at all.

Mr Wharton: How would he know about it?

Mr DAVIS: Unless the Minister read it out to him. That is the point. If members opposite call on us to abide by the Westminster system, for heaven's sake let them abide by it.

Mrs Kyburz: It is just the Westminster system.

Mr DAVIS: That is right.

Mr Warburton: The carpet.

Mr DAVIS: It is brushed under the carpet; that is perfectly correct.

While I am on the subject of the member for Isis, I wish to quote from an article in the same newspaper a week later. Mr Millar, who is the member for the Federal seat of Wide Bay, is reported in that article to have said—

“Up to this point I have resisted the proposition that Queensland is heavily populated with lightweight State politicians but, after the remarks attributed to Mr Powell . . . regarding this matter, I find it very hard to resist a compulsion that I should revise my attitude.”

Mrs Kyburz: Who is Mr Millar?

Mr DAVIS: The Country Party member for the Federal seat of Wide Bay. He was discussing what was said by his State counterpart.

I now wish to deal with the procedures in this Chamber. I am always amazed when members of the Liberal Party in this Chamber cry and whine that they are not given enough time to study Bills. Last Tuesday night the whining, whingeing member for Toowong (Mr Prentice) said in this Chamber that members were not getting enough time to study Bills. He said that about 15 minutes after I had moved a motion which was designed to have a Bill lie on the table for seven days to enable consideration of it. He raced over and voted with the Government, and then 10 minutes later he asked in this Chamber, “Why are we not given an opportunity to study the Bills?” We in the Opposition do not move such motions lightly. We want at least seven days in which to look at the majority of Bills that are introduced into this Parliament.

Mr Wharton: And I am giving it to you.

Mr DAVIS: No, the Minister is not. When the procedure for debating Bills was changed, we were told that we would be given seven days in which to consider them. The Bill dealing with Lang Park was pushed through in one day.

Mr Warburton: There will be the Racing Bill tonight.

Mr DAVIS: Yes. That Bill was introduced on Tuesday. We asked for seven days in which to consider it. It is an important Bill. It involves some \$9m. It will be pushed through tonight, some 48 hours after it was introduced.

Mr Wharton: It is an urgent Bill.

Mr DAVIS: It is not an urgent Bill. The people of Queensland who might want to express some views on it have not been given the opportunity to do so. Time and again we have given the Liberals the opportunity to support our motions, but they have not done so.

Last year the Opposition sought leave to move a motion to implement what is actually Liberal Party policy, that is, the formation of a public accounts committee. As usual, the Liberals ducked and shoved and got out of it. I can recall, as no doubt my colleagues can, that that night the member for Greenslopes, who is now Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services, appeared on television, wrung his hands like the Liberal Leader does and said, “Look, it is our policy but, unfortunately, we know it was nothing but a political ploy by the Opposition. They were trying to embarrass us. We are in favour of a public accounts committee, but we realise that it is only a few short

weeks before the election and it was only politics." That happened nearly 12 months ago to the day. What did we do recently? We sought leave to move the same motion. Surely there will be no election for a couple of years. What happened on that occasion? Where were the Liberals?

Mr Scott: They abstained.

Mr DAVIS: That is right.

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

Mr DAVIS: I wish to comment on some of the promises made by the Liberal Party.

Mr Moore: Talk about your own rotten party; there is nothing wrong with ours.

Mr DAVIS: Don't panic.

Mr Prest: Here he is, he is drunk again tonight.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Akers): Order! The honourable member for Port Curtis will withdraw those comments.

Mr Prest: I am talking to the drunk from Windsor.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Port Curtis will withdraw those comments.

Mr PREST: I withdraw those remarks. I don't suppose he bought any.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will withdraw them without any further comment.

Mr PREST: I withdraw those remarks.

Mr DAVIS: I had commenced to discuss the Liberal Party. The Labor Party is often discussed in the Chamber, but next month is the first anniversary of the Liberal Party's election policy speech, so this is an exceptionally good time to discuss those policies and how many of them have been implemented by Liberal Ministers.

I refer to a document titled "The New Direction" or "Give Us The Numbers", depending on which university a person attended. Part of the document states—

"The Liberal Team offers you a style of Government which is open, accountable and compassionate. A style of Government which places people before politics, and one that respects all points of view, one of absolute integrity."

How is that accounted for, particularly when last week the Ministers tried to get away with \$1,000? The only reason that was brought to the attention of the public—not the Parliament—was that the information was leaked to the Press.

Mr Moore: Which \$1,000 are you speaking of?

Mr DAVIS: That was the money granted by Cabinet to its own members so that they could attend the Commonwealth Games.

Mr Moore: That has been explained.

Mr DAVIS: The only reason it was explained is that somebody leaked the information. That is what I am getting at: That is the so-called open and accountable government that the Liberal Party policy is so much in favour of.

Mr Moore: There is a time and place for everything. It would have been revealed.

Mr DAVIS: It would not have been revealed.

Another part of this document states that a Liberal led Government would have nothing to do with extremism, confrontation with churches or bitterness with minority groups. I do not see the Liberals supporting such minority groups as the Aborigines. The Liberals are the first to denigrate that race.

Mr Moore: No, I don't. I say there is one law for everybody in Queensland, black and white.

Mr DAVIS: The honourable member for Windsor is a grand example of the extremism that the Liberal Party supports.

Mr Milliner: Do you think the Liberals would support the statement made by Lang Hancock?

Mr DAVIS: No, I would not go as far as that. If I have time I have a special part for Mr Lang Hancock.

Mr Ahern: How does this relate to the Financial Statement?

Mr DAVIS: It is relevant because a Liberal Minister is the Treasurer. Because he is a Liberal Treasurer he will be able to reply to some of my statements about his own policy speech. The Minister may think he is smart but he does not realise that we have very few opportunities to enter a debate in which the Liberal leader has the right of reply.

Mr Moore: There are the Matters of Public Interest debate and the Adjournment debate every week.

Mr DAVIS: But the Minister does not reply to those debates. Don't be so ridiculous.

A very important plank of the Liberal Party platform is the register of pecuniary interests. That party's policy includes—

“ . . . we will establish a Register of Pecuniary Interests for all Members of Parliament, to ensure that politicians place the public interest before their personal interest at all times.”

In the last 12 months I have not seen Liberal members introducing legislation to ensure that members of Parliament declare their pecuniary interests. Members of the Opposition are not frightened to have their pecuniary interests registered.

The policy further states—

“We will reform the Parliament with an effective Committee system; upgrade the Standing Orders for the conduct of Parliament; and introduce Information Papers on important Government initiatives . . .”

Let us examine the Government's committee system. The Government has had 12 months to put forward an effective committee system in this Chamber. The Opposition has invited the Government to join with it. What has the Government done? It has done absolutely nothing in the past 12 months!

Mr Prentice: Mr Davis—

Mr DAVIS: I do not want to talk to the member for Toowong. He did not support the Opposition last night. The members for Toowong and Mt Gravatt moaned and whinged that they did not have an opportunity to debate the motion. When the Opposition moved a motion to adjourn the debate to allow the Bill to lie on the table for seven days, where were the honourable members for Toowong and Mt Gravatt? They certainly were not here to support the Opposition. That is a classic example of what Government members do.

The 1980 Liberal Party policy speech further states—

“In response to the community's growing concern about big government, we will undertake a major review of all Government Statutory Bodies.”

Has there been a major review of statutory bodies? No way in the world! I can guarantee that in six months' time we will have extra statutory bodies.

The Government has a Liberal Minister in the Transport portfolio, so no blame can be shifted to its coalition partner. The Liberal Party visited all the war widow organisations and said, “We will extend the pensioner rail concession scheme to include war widows.” Twelve months have passed, but no concessions. The policy also stated—

“We will provide free bus transport for all secondary school children using approved bus transport on approved routes . . . This will mean an average saving of \$2 per student a week.

As part of our commitment to help families, we will introduce free weekend passenger rail travel for children accompanying adults.”

I said to my next-door neighbour, “Don't wait at a railway station for that policy to be introduced because you will be missing a few trains.”

The policy also states—

“We will implement a ‘Sunshine Rail Pass’ concept similar to those operating elsewhere in the world.”

The Liberal Party’s policies are as shallow as one would ever encounter.

Its policies are as phoney as a statement which was reported in the Press on 4 June 1973. The report stated—

“Government rift widens on power site

The Liberal Member for Ipswich Dr Llew Edwards, said yesterday he would cross the floor of State Parliament if necessary to back an Ipswich bid to become the site of Queensland’s next super powerhouse.”

Ipswich still has not obtained its powerhouse. That powerhouse will be sited at Tarong. One went to Gladstone and another is to go to Rockhampton; it is getting further and further away.

Mr Scott: He wrung his hands a couple of times.

Mr DAVIS: Yes. I will tell honourable members what else he said in this same article.

Mr Moore: Can you show that in “Hansard”?

Mr DAVIS: I will table this later.

Mr Moore: Don’t table that; table the “Hansard” document and prove it.

Mr DAVIS: I will go a bit further. The Treasurer can refute it.

The next statement that I want to quote will prove the accuracy of this report. It states that Dr Edwards said, “My future politically doesn’t worry me. Financially I’m earning as a politician only about a quarter of what I was in private medical practice.” That was his statement. Of course, he has never crossed the floor.

Mr Prentice: How often have you done it? You would not be game because you would be expelled from your party.

Mr DAVIS: At least I haven’t got a big mouth!

One of the Liberal Party’s young Turks, Mr Scassola, wants Parliament to sit each day at 2.30 p.m. instead of 11 a.m. The only reason he wants Parliament to sit at 2.30 p.m. is so that he can conduct his legal business in the day-time and attend Parliament on a part-time basis.

I want to give another illustration of the “courage” of the Deputy Premier.

Mr Scassola: Mr Davis—

Mr DAVIS: I am not going to take an interjection from the honourable member, because he has never taken one in his life.

In 1972 or 1973 the Minister for Justice brought forward a Bill to relax the drinking laws that applied on Sundays. At that time, Dr Edwards made statement after statement to the effect that there was no way in the world that he would support the Bill. He said he would cross the floor.

I remember that in a division during the debate on that Bill Dr Edwards, Dr Crawford and the honourable member for Ithaca crossed the floor, Sir Gordon Chalk looked at Dr Edwards and gave him a wink and the next moment Dr Edwards scurried out of the Chamber. Members who were present at the time will remember that.

To get back to the Liberal Party’s policy—the Liberal Party highlighted the fact that a thorough investigation would be carried out into the electricity industry in Queensland. Twelve months have gone by. The only thing the Liberals have done is agree to the increase in electricity charges throughout the State.

Mr Ahern: Is it a good Budget or a bad Budget?

Mr DAVIS: It’s a shocking Budget.

Mr Ahern: Well, refer to it.

Mr DAVIS: All the Minister has to do is worry about the Fish Board. What a shocker! When the Government decided to transfer control of the fishing industry to the Department of Primary Industries, we supported that move. However, having seen what the Minister has done to the industry over the past six months, I suggest that the quicker it is taken from his control, the better.

Mr Casey: No wonder they call it a cow-cocky Government. He's got the dairying section of his department looking after it.

Mr DAVIS: That is right. He has his great clodhoppers on.

I want to conclude by speaking about geriatric people—a term that applies to half of the Cabinet. Of course, the Ministers are sufficiently affluent to be able to look after themselves. I want to talk about my constituents.

Mr Moore: They say it takes one to know one.

Mr DAVIS: I know that the honourable member for Windsor will support me in the comments that I am about to make.

It would be a tragedy for Brisbane and particularly for my area if Rosemount Hospital were not offered by the Federal Government to the State Government. If it were, the State Government could convert it into a geriatric hospital. It has been well maintained by the Federal Government. It is being disposed of because the Repatriation Department decided that all patients should be cared for at Greenslopes.

Mr Moore: Rosemount is close to transport and close to town.

Mr DAVIS: That is a good point. It is close to the Royal Brisbane Hospital, which is only 1 or 2 km down the road, should a patient require major surgery. Specialists are close by on Wickham Terrace. It would be a tragedy if the Government allowed that building to go to waste.

In answer to the brilliant young "economist" who is looking after the Primary Industries portfolio, and who made a botch of the Fish Board, I point out that the Budget is a shocking, deceitful document, because all rates and charges have been jacked up over a period. In a few months' time, when the police start bringing in revenue from the proposed huge fines, people will realise just what a con Budget has been presented.

Mr JENNINGS (Southport) (7.31 p.m.): I compliment the Treasurer on the Budget.

The member who preceded me in the debate referred to the Minister for Primary Industries and his handling of the Fish Board problems. Many brickbats have been thrown today about the Fish Board, but not one constructive point has been made. The Minister inherited the problem of a loss of \$100,000 a month. I do not know whether Opposition members want that loss to continue, but I am sure that no Government member does. I compliment the Minister on his handling of the Fish Board and the fishing industry, with their many associated problems. No doubt we will debate them later.

The honourable member for Flinders raised a number of issues earlier, such as the State's water resources, the drift to the cities and the development of the North. It is worth recalling that in the 1960s there was the Develop the North Committee. In those days it was said that many people were leaving inland areas for the cities. That trend is continuing, and 80 per cent of Australia's population now lives on the eastern side of an arc running between Brisbane and Adelaide.

The area of Queensland is three times that of France. The State has great potential, but I know from my experience in the bush how difficult it is to get people to work there. The comments made by the honourable member for Flinders on that point were absolutely right. His comments in relation to water resources and their importance to the State's future were very much to the point.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North spoke about the pre-cooked frozen meals prepared at Wacol. When the Gold Coast hospital began using those pre-cooked frozen meals, there were doubts about them and problems occurred. The problems have been ironed out and the hospital authorities are very happy with the service. Many people do not understand that, basically, that is a Government facility at Wacol operated by

private enterprise. The Gold Coast hospital is quite happy about the quality of the food, but it is not very happy about the price. The meals are a little dearer than the local meals were. Costs will decrease as more people use the facility.

I assure the honourable member for Toowoomba North, and any other honourable member who has a hospital in his area that will use the facility, that the system works well and that the quality of the meals is good. The service is of benefit to everyone.

One reason why the Treasurer has been able to present a balanced Budget is that the Government has been in power in Queensland for 24 years—25 years in the not too distant future. Queensland has the most stable government in Australia, the most stable government in the British Commonwealth and probably the most stable government in the world. It is important to recall what Frank Nicklin said in the early 1960s, namely, that Queensland had the slowest growth rate in Australia. In those days this State was a long way behind Tasmania. There were many things wrong with Queensland, but now it is the fastest-growing State.

Mr Scott interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: There are always things wrong; I agree with the honourable member.

The balancing of the Budget, the stability of Queensland and the fact that people are coming here in droves prove what has been achieved. It must not be forgotten that Queensland lost \$150m by way of Commonwealth cut-backs.

It is remarkable that the Treasurer has been able to balance the Budget. One of the reasons it is balanced is that people are coming to this State; others are the volume of property sales, the turnover in stamp duty and increased revenue. It is important that everybody realises this.

There is no doubt that the Gold Coast is the show window of Queensland. People come here for a holiday in the sun or to do a bit of fishing, and they stay. Every 100 newcomers create 66 jobs. These people do not come here to take jobs; they create jobs. It is important to appreciate that, on the Gold Coast, there is a different sense of purpose, even in the unions. Recently there was a building industry stop-work meeting at the Gold Coast. The union organisers pleaded with the workers to go out on strike but they did not, because there is a different approach to work on the Gold Coast. That is a great thing. It is because there is an incentive to achieve and to produce.

An Opposition Member: There are a lot of industrial accidents down there.

Mr JENNINGS: I know, and they are being looked into. I know a few of the fellows in the game. One of the reasons for industrial accidents is that there will be a concrete pour a number of floors up and they take a barrel up and finish it off before they finish the concreting. The fellows on building sites are told not to wear thongs. They still wear them and they slip. That is human nature.

We are still one of the most over-governed democracies in the world. At one stage one in every four people was employed in the Public Service; now it is one in three. The Public Service comprises about one and a half million people; three and a half million people in the private sector are paying for them as well as the two and a quarter million people on welfare. It is a simple equation. I am not criticising any aspect of it, particularly the people on welfare.

I must compliment the Treasurer on one provision in the Budget, because he knocked us back on it before. Pensioners who are life tenants wanted rate subsidies but they could not get them because they did not have the assets. I am pleased that the Treasurer has now allowed them a rate rebate.

The Budget provides for an additional 756 teachers, 553 hospital staff, 316 railway employees and 105 police. They will be of great benefit to the State.

I have had a lot of discussion with people in the education structure in my electorate about class sizes. Class sizes are not the main priority. There has been a dramatic increase in expenditure on education. During the last decade, expenditure has increased by 353 per cent per capita and the CPI has increased from 100 to 249 in the same period,

but one of the greatest problems in the whole country is that we do not have people trained for technical jobs. The Australian Schools Commission triennium report for 1982-84 stated—

“In an increasingly information based society no-one can afford to have deficiencies in reading, writing, oral communication or calculation. It states and exhorts all schools to regard literacy and numeracy as priority areas.”

Right throughout the country there is an increasing demand for skilled labour. In May this year BHP had vacancies for several hundred men in its Newcastle steelworks and a similar number at Port Kembla. A private employment agency in Sydney is bringing skilled tradesmen from Europe regularly. John Lysaghts is advertising in New Zealand for skilled tradesmen because it cannot obtain them in Australia. The New Zealand Government foresees an increased demand for engineering skills and has introduced special apprenticeships shortened from three years to two years by establishing an intensive 20-week training course at polytechnics. Skilled tradesmen are queuing up in the United Kingdom to come here.

The director of the Labour Relations Confederation of Western Australian Industry said that it expected to get 1 800 to 2 000 workers through the service in the next 12 to 18 months. Those mainly sought were in the metal trades, the professions and the construction industry. The requirement of the construction industry alone was 5 000.

Even “The Age” did a review of a book on trade prospects and said—

“In summary, the book predicts shortages of engineers, tool makers, tradesmen associated with mineral exploration, metal tradesmen, fitters, turners, boiler makers and draughtsmen. Most professions (including medicine, law, the arts and teaching) and service industries are either oversupplied or balanced.”

But the point is that a great many employers require tradesmen. I compliment the Minister for Labour Relations on his production of the very good book entitled “How do I learn a trade?”.

I now turn to the subject of school buildings. The cost of building an ordinary type of school has doubled in the past five years from more than \$400,000 to more than \$800,000. Over the past five years, average pupil numbers in Queensland have increased by 9.54 per cent, yet in Southport alone in the same period the number of students has increased by 28.9 per cent. That gives some idea of the growth factor on the Gold Coast. There has also been a dramatic increase in the cost of running schools; in fact, it has doubled in the past five years.

In my electorate of Southport, the Ashmore State School is functioning well. The Benowa High School is being completed, pre-schools have been built at Musgrave Hill, Ashmore and Southport and a new school is proposed in the Bundall-Benowa-Heeb Street area. A new TAFE college to accommodate 9 000 full-time and part-time students is expected to be completed by 1986. The old TAFE college caters for 4 762 students. I mention that because at present nine of the 18 schools on the Gold Coast have 750 or more students, and if the growth pattern continues, by 1990 another 11 primary and four secondary schools will be needed. Land will have to be purchased for those schools.

There is always a problem with money and inflation. There has been much discussion about subsidy cuts for local councils lately, but I want to read from an article which states—

“‘We’ve been conned’. The Premier . . . yesterday accused the Federal Government of ‘pulling a confidence trick on the States’ over finances.

He said the Federal Government starved the States of finance, knowing they would have to raise their own taxes to get the extra money needed.

He was discussing moves by other States to introduce taxes on business turnover similar to that in Victoria.

‘This so-called smart move in trying to remain popular by not raising Federal taxation is going to rebound.’”

That Premier happened to be Henry Bolte, speaking in 1968. Things have not changed much.

I now wish to compliment the Co-ordinator General's Department. All around Australia, compliments have been paid to the efficiency of the Co-ordinator-General's Department. It does an excellent job in organising projects and clearing bureaucratic obstacles out of the way. I will read just one paragraph from the department's report—

"The Capital Works Programmes of Departments, Semi-Governmental Authorities and Local Bodies are facing double digit inflationary pressures. In the period 30 June 1979 to 30 June 1980, construction costs, in general, rose by 13.2 per cent compared with 7.0 per cent in the previous twelve (12) months period."

That will be a big problem.

I turn now to the excellent report of the State Electricity Commission, which states—

"To meet the massive demand for electricity in Queensland, 2 450 MW of new generating plant is under construction in three major power stations . . ."

The report then goes on to describe the 1 375MW Gladstone Power Station, the Wivenhoe pumped storage and the Tarong Power Station.

The Land Administration Commission is doing an excellent job in certain areas. Planning is most important in any growing area so that people know what is going to happen. The Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police should be complimented on his action last year in removing the amenity clause from the Local Government Act. Councils can no longer stymie a genuine development unless they use the proper rules and regulations. That is particularly important in the Gold Coast area. For argument's sake, at the moment the Southport Golf Club has applied to build high-rise, something to which I am completely opposed.

The building industry is the major secondary industry in the whole of Australia. There has not been a major strike in the housing industry since the 1950s, and one of the reasons for that is that each little gang of carpenters, brickies, plumbers and so on works for itself. They are not interested in going on strike, because they are paid on results. That in itself is a perfect example of incentive payments combating militant unionism.

I also wish to compliment the Industrial Development Committee for the work it is doing on the Gold Coast and in the Albert Shire. It is doing a good job in encouraging pioneer industries.

I now wish to discuss the question of casinos. Some time ago it was stated that a casino would be built on The Spit at Southport. I was the first person to come out and say that I was totally opposed to that because The Spit is one of those few family recreation areas left on the Gold Coast. A family can go there and relax. They can go to Sea World, Bird Life Park and now Andalucia Park. I am pleased that the casino is not to be built there.

Much work has to be done in The Spit and The Broadwater area. There has been a great deal of discussion about stabilising the Southport bar—whether it should be dredged, and whether it will affect the fish. The important point is that the Government must do the best it can for the majority of people. A boat at anchor takes up 12 times as much space as a boat moored in a marina.

I think many people have the wrong idea when they talk about mining and resources. They forget that 80 per cent of the money is taken off the top in the form of taxes, wages and so on. That provides many benefits for the community. The Bureau of Industrial Economics said that more than 110 000 jobs and \$17.5 billion in capital will be created by development in the mid 1980s in iron ore, black coal, uranium, oil and gas. In September 1981, the Bureau of Statistics said that Australia is not far away from a \$1 billion annual budget for mineral and oil exploration.

Many people have said, "We want more benefits from mining and all the rest." When it comes to saying, "We are going to invest. We are going out to explore.", who has the money for exploration? That is the problem; that was the problem with Mt Isa when it started. Even if oil or minerals are found, only one in twenty projects gets off the ground, and that is the important point. Recently there was an article in the "Business Review" about the incredible growth in this area.

Many people say that we should not sell off the farm. Every generation has been concerned about where tomorrow's food, fibre and minerals will come from. The Club of Rome is probably the most famous pessimist. Its conclusions of doomsday were

reached by a complicated computer program. Now, all honourable members know what a computer is. It is a remarkably efficient accounting machine with a huge memory and no brains. There is an old saying in the computer world that has not yet percolated through to the world of the economists. It is, "Garbage in, garbage out." That means that if the assumptions are wrong, any logical conclusions based on those assumptions must also be wrong.

"Known reserves" is a very misleading term to those unfamiliar with mining. In 1953 the Bureau of Mineral Resources calculated Australia's total reserves of lead and zinc. By 1973, three times as much as this had been mined, and reported reserves had risen to double the 1953 figure. In 1952, the United States Government had an attack of resource jitters and commissioned a report on materials policy called the Paley Report. Looking at Australia and New Zealand, the Paley Report listed bauxite reserves as 20 million tonnes and iron ore as nil. Recent statistics show Australia's bauxite reserves as 4 500 million tonnes and iron ore as 20 000 million tonnes.

At any time in the history of civilisation a computer would have told us that we were running out of minerals. The Club of Rome's forecasts will also prove to be wrong. Its computer, when fed with 1850 data, predicted that by 1920 the streets of New York would be 10 feet deep in horse manure. "Garbage in, horse manure out" is a variation of the slogan. But what was forgotten was a fellow named Henry Ford in a tin shed in Detroit. He changed the whole set-up. One of the most important financial decisions to be taken relates to the proportion of debt and equity finance. However, that is another aspect.

There is a great deal of talk about benefits. If a person in business wants to invest in mineral exploration, every dollar he puts in is a dollar gone. Every dollar invested by a mining company is tax deductible and so attracts a rebate of 50c. That is an important difference for people who want to enter mineral exploration.

The increase in remote-area allowances for students is very important for people who live in country areas. There is no doubt that Queensland is a very large State.

The establishment of a regional headquarters of northern development at Townsville will be of great advantage to the people of North Queensland.

The Budget is a responsible document. However, in the field of housing, we must take cognisance of the fact that it is most important to assist young couples in the first three years of buying their first home. Interest rates are a major problem, and there is no doubt that they should be subsidised. Yesterday I was very pleased to hear that in the last month interest rates in America fell by 3 per cent.

Mr Prest: How does that affect our interest rates?

Mr JENNINGS: We are tied in with their economy.

First-home buyers comprise 50 per cent of the housing market. Everybody would agree that the most important thing is to get young couples into a home as quickly as possible.

The establishment of the National Companies and Securities Commission is another great step forward. The member for Sherwood mentioned stamp duties. I am sure many people are considering establishing their company's headquarters in Queensland.

Earlier this year I voiced my concern that the number of major trading banks in Australia had decreased from five to three. Competition in that field is desirable. I will be interested to see what happens to the Campbell report on finance.

A practice in America that should be adopted in Queensland is tax-free interest-bearing bonds for local authorities. Under that scheme, if a municipality wishes to raise \$2m for a particular development, bonds are issued at about two-thirds of the going interest rate, but the interest to investors is non-taxable. That is of benefit both to investors and to local authorities.

A great deal can be done in the field of pensioner housing. We must always help elderly people and those who cannot care for themselves.

Mr Scott: Those in North Queensland.

Mr JENNINGS: As the honourable member says, in North Queensland, too.

The member for Warwick mentioned the problems facing dental technicians. In New South Wales, the relevant Minister has stated that the initial fears of registering dental technicians have gone by the board. Such registration is operating well in New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria. I know that action is currently under way and that shortly there will be deputations to, and discussions with, the Minister for Health to overcome the existing injustice.

Queensland has over 1 400 cultural organisations, which gives some idea of the depth and scope of the arts in Queensland.

I compliment the Minister for Primary Industries on the work that he has done in relation to the Fish Board. A number of people have asked about the boards that control oats, wheat, sugar and other primary products. They are bulk commodities; fish are not. There are many varieties of fish and a multiplicity of problems involving the people who participate in the industry.

The retail industry is one of the last of the great free-enterprise industries. It is not subsidised by the Government in any way and employs nearly one million people around Australia.

Naturally, I would like the Government to give more to those who are not so well off. However, to give more we must have more. The State must endeavour to produce more and to encourage industry and people to come here.

This is a very sound Budget. It shows good housekeeping and provides for stability and progress in the future. The Government has been in power for about 25 years. If it continues to produce Budgets such as this one, there is no reason why it will not remain in power for another 25 years.

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (7.54 p.m.): I congratulate the Treasurer on presenting a sound and responsible Budget. When one considers the present tight financial climate and the tough restraints imposed by the Federal Government, one realises that it is a good Budget that has been well received by the people of the State.

This debate has continued for two weeks and honourable members have spoken about many different items, but I shall speak of my electorate of Mirani, the best electorate in Queensland. Within the framework and allocations of the Budget I must make a claim for the needs of the Mirani electorate, one of the fastest-growing electorates in the State with its new coal-mines and new associated townships, the expansion in the sugar industry, a substantial beef industry, unlimited tourist potential and a projected huge coke works which will need housing, roads, sewerage and many other facilities.

I sincerely hope that infrastructure costs associated with the project will not be left to the local authority concerned. The Mirani electorate makes a vast contribution to the coffers of the State and not only needs, but deserves, an injection of funds from the Budget allocations in the appropriate spheres.

The Mirani electorate produces approximately 28 per cent of Australia's sugar production. There are 1 230 growers in my electorate. Last year they grew 4.7 million tonnes of cane, producing 670 000 tonnes of 94 n.t. sugar. The harvested value of that sugar was \$253m. The electorate makes a tremendous contribution to the economy of this State.

There will be a continuing growth in the world's demand for sugar. The growth will continue over the long term at the rate of 2 to 3 per cent per annum. There is every reason to expect the continuation of that long-term average growth.

Of immediate concern to the sugar industry is the threat of a massive EEC surplus production of 1½ million tonnes of sugar. If this sugar is "dumped" on the world market, there will be a depressing effect on world prices. However, if it is dumped, the EEC because of its heavy subsidies on agriculture could be faced with a massive subsidy payout of close to \$1 billion for that sugar alone. Therefore, it is a Catch 22 situation for the EEC if it does not act responsibly. But there is a chance of this occurring while the EEC remains outside the International Sugar Agreement.

This huge surplus has been generated because of favourable weather conditions world-wide for sugar production. Traditionally, the trauma of adverse weather had been spread amongst producing nations, and this has been evened out by good growing conditions in

other countries. On this occasion the good conditions, particularly in Europe, have created an excess of production over consumption. We also have to face the challenge posed by alternative sweeteners such as high fructose syrups.

This threat to the sugar industry is ever present. It boils down to a question of taste and price. Because of the fluctuating nature of the price of sugar, sweeteners are boosted in periods of high sugar prices, and the converse happens during periods of low prices when sugar is more than competitive. So far, artificial sweeteners have not posed a dramatic threat in Australia, but have made large inroads into the North American market.

Japan has placed heavy import duties on sugar, whereas domestic artificial sweeteners are not taxed. Thus it becomes very difficult for one to compare the relative merits of sugar and artificial sweeteners, when in many cases government intervention distorts the market-place and may favour the artificial product. But we have to face up to these challenges and I am quite confident that the industry will do just that.

It appears that Australia has entered into agreements with some of its customers, which are less advantageous than earlier contracts. This simply is a reflection of the commercial realities of the situation. When the Japanese long-term contract was originally negotiated in 1974, the price was very high. In these circumstances, Australia was able to negotiate a favourable contract.

Because of a temporary surplus, the present price is low. A Japanese refiner is unlikely to be so charitable as to pay more than he should. But I am confident that Queensland can favourably compete on world markets with a high grade product and its reputation for reliability.

The present Queensland-Australia agreement is a vast improvement on its predecessors in that it has removed the sugar price from the political sphere. The present formula which adjusts the wholesale price to manufacturers on 1 July each year is unsatisfactory and in need of review.

I understand that the Honourable P. J. Nixon, Minister for Primary Industry, has undertaken to examine this problem, and he awaits detailed industry submissions. I record my extreme disappointment at the slow rate of funding for the Eton irrigation scheme. I note that the Government has not increased its allocation to the scheme in the Budget, despite the fact that cost escalation has been dramatic. Worse, the Commonwealth in its allocations to water resources in 1981-82 increased the total by some 20 per cent at the same time as the details revealed a reduction of 23 per cent in Commonwealth funding for the Eton scheme.

The Mackay Regional Water Resources Committee has advised me of its dismay at this state of affairs. I must say that I whole-heartedly share its views. It is simply not good enough. I have made my thoughts and concern known to the Minister for Water Resources (Mr Tomkins) and have written to Senator Carrick expressing my dissatisfaction in the strongest possible terms. It is to be hoped that next year we will see a substantial increase in funding to enable some real progress to be made on this vital and important project.

Concern is expressed in my electorate at the prospect of the establishment of a rival sugar industry on the Ord River in Western Australia. This concern is not unreasonable in the light of the fact that the existing industry has struggled for more than 100 years to establish itself and to develop its markets. The existing industry has the potential to develop further at a cost a lot lower than anything that Western Australia can come up with.

Although we should not be adopting a dog-in-the-manger attitude to our fellow-countrymen, we should not hand Western Australia a share of the existing industry on a platter, to the disadvantage of existing producers in Queensland and New South Wales. Therefore, I ask the Government to take account of this concern expressed by the sugar industry and to remember that charity begins at home. We cannot forget that because of the ISA limitations on exports, in the 1970s the cane growers were forced to leave millions of tonnes in the field. I know that cane growers will not want to surrender any of the markets that they have won and maintained over the years at great cost.

I now turn to tourism. The allocation for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts has increased by 23.15 per cent. This pleases me greatly, because the Mirani electorate has virtually an untapped potential and a need for tourism facilities. It has a closely

settled rural community that has already benefited and can benefit to a much greater extent, particularly from generous grants for capital works for sporting organisations and coaching of young sportsmen. My area has a large number of gifted young sports people who will benefit from this scheme. The North Queensland track events and Rugby league trials have highlighted the ability of many of our youngsters.

The annual Budget allocation for tourism has increased from \$5.99m to \$7.7m, or by 28.67 per cent. The allocation for national parks has risen by 23.4 per cent, from \$5.2m to \$6.4m. The allocation for sport is now \$3.2m.

I want to deal first with tourism and the needs of the Mirani electorate. It contains countless magnificent beach areas that are capable of handling tourism from week-enders to developments of international standard. Many prime sites for top-standard developments are available along the 120 km of top-class beaches.

There is no doubting the value of the tourist industry. It is of great value initially to local developers and builders and it creates tremendous job opportunities.

The coastline of the Mirani electorate has sites second to none waiting for development. I hope that, with the Government's obvious desire to develop tourism, local people and all Queensland people will be encouraged to take advantage of the potential offered by the Mirani electorate.

Funding is available through the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, which is the executive arm of the Department of Tourism, to assist a potential developer to establish a tourist project. Whilst I realise that many established tourist areas are vying for such assistance, the additional funding must open the door to new areas.

I have said that there is a need for tourism development, and there is—to serve the need of a large number of people whose contribution to the prosperity of the State is of great value. I speak of the miners and their families in the Bowen Basin hinterland. They live not exactly in isolation—social facilities are being provided and upgraded in their mining towns—but under difficult and often harsh climatic conditions. Easily accessible beach resorts and facilities would be a blessing for them.

The Mirani coastline provides the area that is most easily accessible to them. An existing tourist region in the Mirani electorate contains the Eungella Range, which has tropical rain forest, and the developed Broken River area. It is a tourist mecca for people coming to the region. Anyone who travels up the Pioneer Valley will see magnificent scenery. It must be the richest tract of land in Queensland. The view from the chalet on the Eungella Range is marvellous. Once seen, never forgotten. If this area was in the United States, it would be regarded as a wonder of the world and exploited to the fullest. I want to see the allocation of more finance to the area so that its facilities can be upgraded.

Certainly an increased allocation of funds was provided by the National Parks and Main Roads Departments to build a foot-bridge over the Broken River as a vantage point for visitors to see platypuses in their natural state. There are not too many places in Queensland where that can be done. The area has a beautiful, natural rain forest, the Broken River park area and the Eungella Dam, which is a man-made playground. Basically all these attractions are in their natural state and I should hate to see such beauty over-commercialised. Extra facilities are needed for tourists. I hope that the responsible departments are aware of the needs and will press for them.

The figures relative to day visitors and campers visiting Eungella speak for themselves. In 1974 there were 18 000 day-trippers and 600 campers. By 1979, the number of visitors had increased to 27 000 and the number of campers to 2 200. To the end of September 1981, there had been 35 000 day visitors and 34 000 campers. The figures represent an increase of almost 100 per cent in day-trippers and more than a 500 per cent increase in campers in one year. A further breakdown of the figures reveals that 51 per cent of all visitors to the national park at Broken River came from overseas and interstate, while 24 per cent were Queensland holiday-makers and 25 per cent came from the local Mackay area.

Basically, I desire to see tourism developed in the Mirani electorate, but not to such an extent as to create another Gold or Sunshine Coast, or even an Airlie Beach, although they all serve individual tourism purposes. Our areas have their own charm and beauty in their natural state. I hope that they retain them.

Although I certainly favour industrial development for the benefit of the people of Mirani, I would not like to see the industrial area centred on the Hay Point coal-loading terminal developed without planning along the coastline with the consequent wasting of good agricultural or recreational land.

I welcome the news that the proposed coking works is expected to be in operation in 1984. The benefits this will bring to the region through buildings, job opportunities, supportive industry and business speak for themselves. But there must be a balance between necessary industrial development and preservation of the national heritage for future generations of Australians who have the right to see unspoiled Australian land. I believe that this Government can be relied on to ensure that that happens.

I was pleased to hear last week's announcement by the Government about the extension of certain rail lines serving the mining industry in and bordering the Mirani electorate and the upgrading of others. Those rail lines will all be capable of serving the summer grain-growing industry of the Central Highlands, which is about to explode in development. The developing grain industry will require loading facilities, although obviously there will be central collection and loading points.

In many cases grain-growing has become a diversification for the cattlemen of the region who have struggled through so many years of low prices and adverse weather. The beef men will also be able to take advantage of the railway lines running through their areas. There will be a need for yarding and loading facilities for the valuable Central Queensland beef industry, which is part of the financial backbone of our State.

Mr Davis: We are a bit concerned—

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member had better stay concerned. I am concerned about the people in my electorate, but he is not. Time is going by so I must make my speech without replying to inane interjections from the honourable member.

More importantly, there is need for an improvement in the accommodation standards of some railway workers throughout my electorate. The men who maintain our vital rail links, terribly isolated because of the vast distances involved, surely deserve improved living conditions. I speak particularly of fettlers, gangers and workers in flying gangs.

I have outlined the infrastructure facilities I would like to see provided, and I will press for further benefits for people in my electorate.

It is pleasing to see that the allocation for the Police Department has increased by 14.5 per cent to \$141.4 million. That will permit the employment of additional personnel. I hope that we see more police on patrol carrying out essential law enforcement activities. To do that, it will be necessary to employ more clerical staff to release officers from time-consuming paperwork. It is vital that police earn the respect of the general public and receive greater co-operation from everyone. A few thoughtless and arrogant actions by a young policeman can undo all of the good work performed by a majority of good, solid and conscientious officers, of which the force is almost entirely comprised. I know that in my electorate there is a mature body of men very capable of maintaining law and order to the benefit of our community.

I note that an allocation of \$4.5m has been approved for the upgrading and construction of police buildings and residences. This will be particularly good news to the country men concerned. I will be pressing for some of this money to come to my electorate in view of the sheer growth and development there.

I understand that the Police Department is currently undertaking a study of the building, equipment and manpower needs of the Mackay Police District. Mirani electorate contains the bulk of country police stations in that district, and I hope that this study will ensure that we get the necessary funding requirement to fill the needs of these stations. There is also a real need to allocate more police personnel to the Mackay Police District as there is a shortage when some men take their holidays and other officers are required to attend police seminars.

I must make mention of the beef-grazing industry in the Mirani electorate which, although it is often overshadowed by the sugar and coal industries of the region, is important to the economy of the electorate, the State and the nation.

It provides a living for many rural families—not only the big graziers but also the battlers who cleared the brigalow scrub to carve out grazing land and create employment for the stockmen, and right down the line to the hundreds of workers employed in the local meatworks. They have been fighting drought and low prices for years and, only a few weeks ago, were hit by the kangaroo-meat scandal. They do not need Government control but Government help to restructure the industry to maintain viability and to retain the many jobs which it supports.

The cattlemen of the Mirani region are very important to the industry as a whole because they were largely responsible for the development of tropical breeds for the benefit of all beef men, and they certainly make a major contribution to this State and nation. I know that the Government recognises that contribution and will continue the excellent liaison that has existed over the past years.

It is pleasing to see that there has been no increase in rail freights in that sector. I hope that the concessional rail freight that expires in September 1982 will be renegotiated. It is of the utmost importance that properties in the Far Outback be kept viable.

I must say a word about double-decker transportation of cattle. There is some confusion about it. I believe that there should be length, width and height specifications for these vehicles. They could possibly be 40ft long and 8ft wide, with no restriction in height, within reason, provided they have two levels for cattle or three levels for sheep. There should be no weight limitation and they should be used purely for the transportation of stock.

Mr Davis: You don't worry about the roads.

Mr RANDELL: We have more problems with roads than the honourable member would ever know about. Why doesn't he get out of the city and have a look at our roads? If he comes out I will show him what we have to put up with out there. He should get out of the city for a while and see what the people are putting up with.

An Opposition Member: What you need is a good Government.

Mr RANDELL: We have a good Government. How could anyone expect the development that has taken place in Queensland if we did not have a good Government? We would not have the problems if Labor was in power because we would not have the development. I will have a talk to the honourable member later and explain some of the facts of life to him. He should get some dirt under his fingernails and he would know what it is all about.

I believe that trucks carrying livestock should not be pulled up at the scales for weighing because sometimes they can be kept waiting in the hot sun for a considerable time and that causes distress to animals. In addition, with a sudden stop, cattle often go down with resultant bruising and even deaths. We should aim for specifications and not weight in such transports.

It has been my pleasure to comment briefly on the Budget. During the Estimates debate I intended to talk about items that I have not raised today. Although I am extremely disappointed about the lack of funds for the Eton Irrigation Scheme and the cut in local government subsidies—and I have made my thoughts known on that matter, being a local shire chairman—I recognise the fact that there is only so much money to go round and, to get more in one sector, something has to be cut back in another sector. Overall it is a good and reasonable Budget and has been generally accepted very well.

Mr Davis: Why don't you grab a headline?

Mr RANDELL: I will grab a headline if the honourable member keeps talking. It does me good in my electorate to have the honourable member interrupt me.

I know that the Budget will provide a base for the future stability and prosperity of this great State of Queensland.

Mr YEWDAL (Rockhampton North) (8.15 p.m.): I might say at the outset, Mr Akers, that I had made plans to travel to the southern part of Australia for my holidays, but after hearing the member for Mirani speak about the wonders of his electorate, I think I will cancel my southern trip and go to his electorate instead.

During his speech the honourable member made one comment which I think is worthy of a response. He spoke about the young people of this electorate being involved in sport and praised their efforts, but he forgot to mention to the Committee that at the present time the National Party Minister who is responsible for sport is cutting subsidies to junior sport in Queensland across the board. Subsidies for junior coaching are being reduced from dollar for dollar to 50c in the dollar. In addition to the 50 per cent cut in subsidies for junior coaching there is to be a 50 per cent cut in capital works for junior sport. That is a drastic reduction, and this Government should be ashamed of taking such action when it is ploughing millions upon millions into the racing game. It is depriving young people throughout the State of the advantage of facilities with which to pursue their commitment to sport. I point that out to the honourable member in the hope that he might take notice and say something to the Government.

I now turn to a point that was raised earlier by the honourable member for Toowoomba North. He spoke in considerable detail about the accountability of Government. He spoke about a parliamentary public accounts committee not solving the problems of this Government; but it is reasonable to suggest that, in the past week or so when Opposition members were raising the subject of the Auditor-General's report and the sad lack of supervision and control over many departments such as Police, Labour Relations and Mines, we had Ministers ducking and diving, unable to answer questions about the finances of their departments. It was an indictment of this Government; and I am sure the people of Queensland took careful note of it. I reiterate that when we asked Ministers to respond to questions about the finances of their departments they did not have a clue what we were talking about. It was obvious that they did not have a clue how to run their departments. The views of the Liberal Party, through the member for Toowoomba North, and the National Party, particularly through the Premier, are obvious. They have indicated that they will not have a bar of a parliamentary public accounts committee. The Premier said so only last week on the floor of this Assembly; so this Government will not be accountable and will not take measures to make itself accountable. That is an indication of the attitude of this coalition Government.

I now want to raise a matter that I attempted to raise with the Premier this morning—the cancellation of a government familiarisation course that was to take place in Brisbane on 14 and 15 October—that is, yesterday and today. The situation is that the Queensland Confederation of Industry Limited, of which all members would be aware, convened the familiarisation course. On 29 September several members of the Opposition, many Ministers and many departmental officers—I presume through their departmental heads—were invited to participate in the course. I have in my hand a copy of a document that would have been sent to all members, including Ministers and the Premier, and departmental officers. To all intents and purposes the Confederation of Industry moved ahead with its organisation of the course. In doing so, it circularised the people it wanted to participate, arranged for interstate visitors, accommodation and a venue at the Ridge Motor Inn and did all the other things necessary to organise what was obviously going to be a fairly well-attended course.

As late as Tuesday morning, the executive officer of the Queensland Confederation of Industry received a letter from the Co-ordinator-General of the State, under the direction of the Premier and Cabinet, withdrawing the participation in this activity of Cabinet Ministers and any departmental officers who were committed to be involved in the discussions that were to take place. No reason or excuse was given to the confederation.

The Premier was not in the Chamber this morning to answer a question that I intended to ask him on this matter. The Minister for everything, who has taken over from the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police, willingly accepted the question and said that the withdrawal of Government Ministers and departmental officers was based on the premise that they were misled or they misunderstood the objectives or overall motive of the people organising this activity. I do not accept that answer. Obviously the Premier and his Cabinet colleagues had given permission for the departmental heads to be involved in the course. It would seem to me that a responsible Government would have checked the matter before accepting the invitation. Today the Government says that the Ministers and departmental officers withdrew because of the reasons outlined by the Deputy Premier.

The net result was that the confederation cancelled the course. Because of the withdrawal of the Ministers and departmental officers involved, it could not proceed. The Ministers who were invited were the Premier, the Deputy Premier, Mr Sullivan, Sir William Knox, Mr Hinze, Mr Wharton, Mr Bird, Mr Austin, Mr Lane, Mr Ahern and Mr I. J. Gibbs. I am led to believe that those Ministers accepted the invitation to attend. From the Opposition side, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Davis, Mr Hansen, Mr Hooper, Mr Prest, Mr Vaughan and I were invited. With one exception, we all accepted the invitation.

We were to join this group of people in a social function this evening. There was liaison between the executive officer of the confederation and me with a view to ensuring the attendance of Opposition members. I had the rather unpleasant duty yesterday morning of advising members of the Opposition that the course was cancelled. Consequently, I asked a question this morning, and it was answered by the Deputy Premier.

Mr Moore: Are you saying that you thought the House was not sitting tonight?

Mr YEWDAL: No. This function was to be held during the dinner recess. That is mentioned in the document, but I do not want to bore the honourable member by reading it. The people who invited us to the function were conscious of the fact that the Parliament would be sitting, and the function was arranged accordingly.

We are not concerned about missing some drinks and dinner with the people from the Queensland Confederation of Industry; but we are very concerned about the attitude of the Government in withdrawing the Ministers and the departmental officers on the day before the activity was to be held. This happened after weeks of organising by the confederation. The Government, and the Premier in particular, cannot be condemned strongly enough. I hope that the public become aware of the events.

Mr Moore: Why did we do it? I knew nothing about it.

Mr YEWDAL: We were not told why the Government did it, and neither was the confederation. The Deputy Premier intimated in this Chamber today that Ministers were meeting certain people tomorrow afternoon. From the ready answer that I received from the Deputy Premier, it would seem to me that some member of the confederation must have advised the Deputy Premier of what had happened.

Mr Moore: I have to say that it is news to me.

Mr YEWDAL: The honourable member knows about it now. It is left to his own conscience to work it out.

Mr Moore: I have no conscience on that issue.

Mr YEWDAL: The honourable member has admitted that he has no conscience.

As the risk of being monotonous, I have to describe the Budget as maintaining the status quo. I do not think it has done any more than previous Budgets. I think back to the days when the Premier and his Deputy at that time, Sir Gordon Chalk, were crying crocodile tears about the Whitlam Government. At that time they were crying, "Give us a Liberal-Country Party Government in Canberra." They said that Whitlam had to be got rid of, that a Liberal-National Country Party Government would solve the problems of the nation.

However, recently we have heard the Premier, the Deputy Premier, other Cabinet Ministers and both National and Liberal back-benchers speak about the bad treatment dished out by the Liberal-National Country Party Government in Canberra—their own counterparts. Government members have been very critical of the Federal Government, and have been so for some years. With the cut-backs and the results of the economic policies of the Federal Government, the recent razor-gang cuts, the recent Federal Budget, the sales tax imposition on low-wage groups, one must say to the State Government "If you lie down with a dog, you get up with fleas." That is what has happened to the State Government. It has committed itself to the Federal Government and has to put up with it. Any blame that it directs to the Fraser/Anthony Government must lie on its own shoulders.

Mr Hansen: Is that the same as flying with crows?

Mr YEWDAL: Yes.

During this debate, which has run for some time, some of my colleagues have exposed the deceit of the National-Liberal Government, particularly in regard to the Treasurer's attitude to the community. The Treasurer has said that Queensland is a low-tax State, and he spoke of motor vehicle registration fees, driving fees, stamp duty, nominal defendant fees, and so on. The honourable member for Lytton (Mr Burns) produced a document that compared those charges in Queensland with charges in the other States and exposed them for what they are.

The classic example of discretionary interest rates charged by the Government is the infamous \$100,000 loan at 1 per cent that has been bandied about the Chamber and the newspapers for the last week or so. The Government cannot say much about that; it is a fact of life.

The Auditor-General's report reveals that 190 000 notices were issued for machinery inspection but the Government carried out only 112 000 inspections—a shortfall of 78 000 in 12 months. The problem is acute when a Government does not carry out 78 000 inspections on machinery, particularly when industrial injuries are causing concern.

On the Gold Coast, where development has accelerated, a number of cranes have collapsed. The Government must accept some of the blame for those accidents and injuries. The shocking increase in the road toll must reflect the fact that some inspections of motor vehicles have not taken place. I will not be emotional and exaggerate, but I believe that some accidents could have been prevented if more inspectors had been employed and more inspections had been carried out.

For the nine months to 31 March 1981, advice was received of 24 188 constructions. Of those, 10 per cent were not inspected. The Budget does nothing to rectify the serious problems in this field in the State. I shall cite what I believe to be a pertinent part of the report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops—

“The Inspectorate again conducted monthly courses during the year ended 30th June, 1981.

The object of this course is to assist industrial personnel such as newly appointed industrial officers and trade union officials, personnel officers, wages clerks and other persons wishing to gain a better understanding of the more important aspects of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, the Factories and Shops Act and the standard provisions found in most awards of the Queensland Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

It also helps to foster a better understanding and appreciation of the role of the Inspectorate in relation to these matters.”

I commend any organisation that sets out to conduct a course of that nature. It would seem to me that, for the reasons I have just given the proposal has not come to fruition and nothing achieved.

If one continues to read the Auditor-General's report, one sees that it reveals a story of unbelievably bad management by the Petersen/Edwards coalition. My assessment is that the Department of Employment and Labour Relations will have an overall increase of seven persons during the forthcoming financial year. There is reference to seven additional staff under the Minister's total departmental responsibility. I am not restricting my remarks to labour relations; I am also speaking about consumer affairs, the Workers Compensation Board and other activities for which the Minister is responsible.

It is no use the Government saying to the Opposition that the Budget is a good Budget when there will be a repetition of, or even an increase in, the problems that I have outlined, particularly in the fields of machinery and industrial safety. I do not know what the Minister or the Government intends doing, but I believe that the situation will worsen. The Government says that it is going to do something about the problems. If there is a development boom and a population increase in this State of the magnitude that the Government suggests—I think that the figures are exaggerated; nevertheless, one must accept them—inevitably there will be an increase in construction. But there will be only seven additional people in that department. If my memory serves me correctly, the staffing in the inspectorate area is reduced by one in the forthcoming financial year. Instead of doing something to remedy the situation, the Government will allow it to deteriorate.

Associated with those problems will be a worse industrial climate and more problems in the work-force. If the inspectorate is not staffed adequately, people in the work-force will be aware of that and the situation will be aggravated. There will then be a greater problem in the industrial area. I refer to that specifically in that context, not in the overall context.

I took the trouble to look at the Government's record in industry. Industrial relations is the responsibility of Sir William Knox. When one looks at the policies dominated by the National Party, and in particular by the Premier, one sees only the infamous Essential Services Act, which, of course, is typical of the Government's big-stick attitude.

Members spent many hours in this Chamber debating the pros and cons of that legislation. The Government tried to justify the introduction of legislation of that type. At the end of the power industry dispute and the dispute relating to shorter working hours, it seemed that, in spite of brinkmanship of the Premier and his threats, the matter was resolved around the table. The workers returned to work without the provisions of the Essential Services Act being implemented.

The dominant personality in industrial relations in this State is the Premier. I say that in criticism of the present Minister for Employment and Labour Relations (Sir William Knox) and the former Minister (Mr Campbell). I believe that those Ministers, and Mr Campbell in particular, became totally frustrated with the dominance of the Premier, and that dominance continues to this day. It is obvious that it will continue while he is in this Parliament and while he is the Premier of Queensland.

Recently a declaration was made by the National Party through the honourable member for Peak Downs (Mr Lester). He was chairman of the industrial committee of the National Party. With all due respects to him, I do not feel that he is the type of person—I am not being personal—who would adequately handle the chairmanship of an industrial committee, particularly one formed by the National Party.

He talked about a new move within the Government and the introduction of a grievance clause. Grievance clauses, of course, are nothing new in industrial relations. For many years they have been used in this country and others as a set procedure right across the board. Now the National Party is talking about solving problems by the introduction of grievance clauses.

I have here the National Party document. Among other things, it states—

“Settlement of Disputes and Grievances—The National Party submits that the industrial relations climate in Queensland will be significantly improved if all employers and employees under State awards and agreements are required to follow an appropriate grievance-handling procedure.”

I accept the word “required”, as long as people are consulted and the grievance clause is acceptable to them.

Later, the document states—

“Such grievance handling procedures should be required to specify mandatory conciliatory or arbitration steps to be followed within given time limits for each step.”

That is quite all right. However, it then goes on to say—

“Strikes and lock-outs should be prohibited in those industries which provide vital or essential services until the procedures under the appropriate GHP have been exhausted and a further seven days' notice of intention to strike or lock-out has been given to the community.”

That is getting back to the old “essential services” cry of the Government.

It is appropriate to reiterate that the Government has been very harsh on essential services. Whilst I appreciate that the community are affected by the cessation of work in essential services, I consider that many workers in essential services should be given some type of preferential treatment in their conditions. The Government will be retarding the industrial progress of ambulancemen, nurses, fire brigade officers and power workers for ever if it says to them, “You cannot go on strike, nor can you stop work. You will have to talk about the matter, and if you don't you still can't go on strike. You are in an essential service and the law won't allow you to go on strike.”

Essential services contain a number of categories of workers. I would separate power workers from those employed at "Eventide" and in ambulance centres. The wages of those workers vary, as do their working conditions. If the Government is anxious to ensure that workers employed in essential services remain at work, it should meet them half way. Some disputes that have arisen have been justified to the extent that the workers involved should have been given consideration.

The National Party document goes on to say—

"There will be a prohibition on the expenditure of any part of members' annual subscription or dues or the striking of any levy or imposition of any fine by such organisation in the furtherance of any political objects."

This gets back to the old argument over political levies.

In the normal course of events, trade unions call conferences and hold State conferences. In their various areas they elect officers. Like other organisations, they make policy decisions at their conferences. Agenda items are called for from branches, sub-branches and groups. The decisions are made by the members attending the conferences. Those conferences lay down the policies of the unions.

If a union decides on a certain policy concerning the payment of portion of a wage by way of union fees, that decision is arrived at in a democratic manner. The unionists are entitled to object to such a policy either at sub-branch or branch level. Probably they are entitled to voice their objection at conference level. However, if that policy is adopted there is nothing wrong with implementing it. Because of the National Party's policy, I have gone to the trouble of reinvestigating this matter.

In one major union in Queensland, if a member wants to opt out of paying a political levy, he has simply to write to the union indicating that he wants to opt out, and he is allowed to do so. I am not fabricating anything; that is happening in a major union which covers many thousands of workers in Queensland.

I worked in a waterfront industry for many years that had a political levy. That political levy was highlighted by the Hursey affair in Tasmania. Anyone with a knowledge of trade union history knows what happened at the time. That affair is history. Because the High Court upheld the right of unions to strike a political levy, the union which would have to be described as being fairly militant at that time, although circumstances have changed to some extent these days, allowed its members to pay a levy to the political party of their choice.

I have referred to two angles relative to opting out of political levies, but probably the most pertinent fact over many years is that there was no real agitation at rank-and-file level to do anything about political levies. They were generally accepted. Like the conscientious-objector issue, it was a minor issue.

Mr Hooper: Do you realise that the honourable member for Windsor opted out of the levy when he was a member of the ETU?

Mr Moore: I even made a donation to the ALP just to see how it would go.

Mr YEWDAL: I know the honourable member's background because he has told us all about it on several occasions. I cannot verify that comment.

Mr Moore: There is no truth in it. Smiles cannot be recorded in "Hansard" so I have to answer that.

Mr YEWDAL: That is the climate in the trade union movement in relation to political levies.

It is typical that members of the Government should continue to agitate about trade union contributions to Labor Party funds. They have a mania about it. Even if the Government legislates, as is proposed in this document, I am sure it will not stop men on the job supporting the Labor Party. If it is a matter of taking the hat around or employing some other means the trade union movement in Queensland, the Commonwealth and probably the world will support the political party of its choice which, predominantly, will be the Labor Party. Government members still aggravate the position and stir up the community on this question.

When the honourable member for Peak Downs released his infamous document about the National Party solution to all the industrial problems, I rang the Trades and Labor Council—and nobody can deny that it is the major trade union group in Queensland—and separately contacted two of the top union officials without imparting information from one to the other. In no circumstances could they confirm that the member for Peak Downs or any member of the National Party had spoken to them about the new National Party policy on grievances and so on.

I also spoke to a Mr Edgar Williams of the Australian Workers Union who gave me permission to use his name. He said that so far as he was concerned no approach had been made through any channel. So far as the unions are concerned the proposition from the National Party is just waste paper; there have been no consultations with them. I spoke to several other unions of reasonable size, asked the same question over and over again and received a negative answer on each occasion.

The member for Peak Downs, the chairman of the National Party committee, obviously misled the community, the Parliament and the Press when he said that he had had discussions with unionists and employers. I qualify my remark: Surely a man in his position, at this time, could not come back here and say that he spoke to two men on the corner of Jones Street at Emerald or Blackwater. To make such a statement, he would have had to speak to responsible people in the trade union movement.

I realise that the honourable member is not in the Chamber, but I challenge him to come up with evidence to back up his argument and to identify to whom he spoke about the National Party proposals and who agreed with them. It is pertinent to point out that Sir William Knox, the Liberal Minister for Employment and Labour Relations, is on record in the Press as saying that he has had a look at and agrees with the propositions from the National Party about the industrial problems that will be resolved. I do not know that Sir William has spoken to anyone about them.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Akers): Order! I ask the honourable member to use the correct titles of other honourable members.

Mr YEWDAL: I apologise, Mr Akers. I did not do it deliberately.

I reiterate that, as far as I am concerned, the Government has not in any way officially approached anyone from the trade union movement concerning the proposals. Some sections of them are fairly irrelevant and do not mean much at all, but some of them are pertinent. If the joint parties accept them and they are brought into the Chamber and then imposed on the trade union movement, they will create further confrontations. It is as simple as that. That is what will happen.

This is a Budget debate and I realise that all Temporary Chairmen and the Chairman have been very patient with members. I think I can say that the functions of government that I am talking about are covered by the Budget. It would seem that the Government will go ahead with these proposals, seeing that the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations has accepted them.

I have reason to believe that the joint parties are to be confronted with this infamous document. If any persons in the joint parties have any reason and sense, the matter will be referred back to the committee to arrange consultations with people—even if it is only to disagree to some extent. Whether or not we get criticism from some trade unions or trade union officials, there are innumerable members of trade unions who are prepared to sit round the table and talk. I have not consulted the trade union fellows but I am saying that the Government should talk to people before coming into this Parliament and waving another big stick.

Mr HARPER (Auburn) (8.49 p.m.): I join with other honourable members in commending the Treasurer on this Budget. Despite the refusal of the Federal Government to realistically share revenue such as that which it gained from the liquid fuel levies, the Treasurer has been able to produce, on behalf of the coalition Government, a very responsible Budget. Road-funding, water resource development and soil conservation are three extremely important issues and top domestic priorities in a nation such as ours. It is very pleasing to see that the Ministers responsible and the Treasurer have been able to achieve something and to allocate funds to develop those very important resources.

I now want to turn to the subject of road-funding. Funding for both main roads and those under the control of local authorities is far from adequate, and lives continue to be placed at risk simply because of that inadequacy. We hear many suggestions—some commendable, some airy-fairy—about how to reduce the road toll, but I do not think anyone can deny that an improvement in the surfaces of our road network would be one of the best ways to reduce the road toll, particularly in country areas. Heavy traffic such as road transports with double decks and dogs—in fact, even the single-deck semi-trailer—do not mix particularly well with normal passenger vehicles on stretches of narrow bitumen road, particularly when there are unskilled drivers at the wheel of either a transport vehicle or a sedan.

The widening of highways is certainly progressing, though admittedly at a slower pace than we would choose. The Leichhardt Highway, which has a very adequate width of highway in New South Wales (which has been able to obtain a very much more realistic share of funding for its roads than has Queensland) becomes a much poorer type of road in my electorate. Slowly but surely the Leichhardt Highway is beginning to achieve the status that one would expect of a highway.

We still have extensive stretches of narrow bitumen highway in the Taroom Shire, but the Banana Shire has received a commitment from the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police to fund work on an unsealed section between Banana and Rannes. We have a commitment that \$1m will be spent annually on that section and we look forward to the commencement of that work.

Of course, no amount of road widening will remedy a lack of driver intelligence. I have very recently been treated to a typical example of the problem we face on our roads from heavy transports. It occurred at 10 a.m. on a weekday in Gatton when a semi-trailer coming from the Condamine electorate drove down the hill in Railway Street towards the Brisbane turnoff. As most members would be aware, that is a built-up area with a 60 km/h speed limit. Even though it was loaded with only half a dozen bales of wool, that semi-trailer was travelling at 80 km/h. I caught up with that vehicle a little further on because he was stopped by traffic lights, but he took off again, cutting in and out from one side of the two-lane highway to the other, doing 100 km/h in an 80 km/h zone. I again caught up with him when he weighed at Gailes. He was able to do all those things and break all those speed limits without being apprehended. Drivers of that sort seem to escape apprehension. In many cases it is the responsible driver who is, unfortunately, apprehended for breaches which in reality are not nearly as serious as those committed by that transport driver and the careless drivers of smaller vehicles who seem to get away with acts of irresponsibility. We have to turn our attention to the heavy transport vehicles on our roads, because their number is increasing and it will continue to increase as the State develops. We have a relatively small population with a tremendously long road network, and we are not able to obtain adequate funds for our roads. Therefore, we have to face these problems and try to find ways of alleviating them.

One of the other problems is that these heavy transport vehicles travel in convoys of two, three or perhaps four. Following motorists have no opportunity to pass and become very frustrated. It is at this stage that one tends to see irresponsibility, or lack of true responsibility.

An important aspect of this matter relates to the speed signs themselves. I sometimes wonder just who is responsible for selecting the speeds indicated on our main roads, and indeed on all of our roads. I know that the Police Department has the responsibility for ensuring that the speed limits are adhered to, but I wonder who is responsible for deciding what the speed limit will be in a certain area. As I said in my maiden speech, there are areas on the road to Gailes where the traffic regularly travels at a speed in excess of that indicated on the road signs.

Mr Vaughan: You only have to drive around the city here.

Mr HARPER: The city might even be included in the Gailes area.

Temporary signs are erected when road-works are being carried out. This Government is carrying out road-works on the much-used highway between Brisbane and Toowoomba and temporary road signs are erected. Again I wonder who is responsible for deciding what the speed limit will be on those sections of the road. We know who polices the

regulations. We know who fines the motorist who exceeds the speed shown on those temporary signs. More responsibility should be shown. In fact, sometimes it appears to me that, because some of the signs are so ridiculous and are not adhered to, every effort is being made to train drivers to ignore speed signs. No responsible person could be expected to adhere to them. The mere fact that speed signs are there, that they are ridiculous and that motorists regularly ignore them is an invitation to drivers to ignore legitimate speed signs. It seems to me that the officials who fail to fulfil their obligations in this area—who fail to remove temporary speed signs when the need for them does not exist at week-ends or holiday periods, or when the work is no longer in progress—should make a contribution to Consolidated Revenue through fines, just as the motorist who exceeds legitimate speed limits does. It seems to me that we in Government and in this Parliament should be turning our attention to that matter.

The Treasurer in his Budget, which is most responsible, has certainly been assisted in achieving his objectives by the mining development that the Government continues to encourage, which makes such a contribution to this State's progress. Over some three or four years I have studied the effects of that development on landholders who suddenly find themselves being dispossessed of their homes and businesses. Recently I was privileged to chair a National Party committee that looked at the effects of mining development, acquisition and resumption, on rural land. Although it still has a few areas on which it is yet to report, the committee has issued a basic report, which has been adopted by the National Party and has been made available for public comment. The report has been very well received in practically all areas, with general agreement on its main thrust, from both the rural and mining industries.

There are those who have a vested interest in criticising in a non-constructive manner, criticism that reflects anti-National Party paranoia rather than objective, balanced judgment. In that category is a comment in a recent edition of "The Queensland Times" by one David Walker. I do not know the gentleman personally but he claims to be a spokesman for the Prevention of Urban Mining Association. His occupation is obviously that of solicitor.

The recommendation for establishment of a Mining Court of Queensland, which was made by my committee in the report that I was privileged to present, follows the pattern of the established and highly acclaimed Land Court of Queensland. It would give everyone ready access to an independent tribunal, quite free from the hassles of legal jargon and propriety, a truly democratic court to which any landholder would have recourse, whether he held a few perches of land or many acres, a few square metres or many hectares.

The catch, from Mr Walker's point of view, is that they would receive just as good a hearing if they went to the court alone as if they went with the assistance, and the cost, of legal representation. The Mining Court would inform itself on any matter in such manner as it deemed just. It would receive evidence in equity and in good conscience. I ask honourable members: could there be any more democratic guide-lines than those?

When that gentleman appears in court, I wonder if he is troubled with the knowledge that the judiciary is appointed in the very manner that he abhors, the one suggested for appointments to the Mining Court, which follows the same pattern that has operated under this and previous Governments. One must wonder if the gentleman's bleatings are simply anti-National Party paranoia.

If the committee's recommendations are adopted by the Government, the whole State will benefit, because mining development will proceed more smoothly for both mining companies and affected landholders. Competent and knowledgeable solicitors will appreciate the recommendations, which foster rather than oppose improvement in democratic processes. Mr Walker would do very well to follow the lead of responsible spokesmen for major organisations and study the report and, if he then believes he has a need, to comment constructively.

I congratulate the Premier and the Treasurer for providing funds to initiate the Young Farmers Establishment Scheme. One expects that Government members will have an opportunity to discuss the details of the scheme. Opposition members are correct: the principles are certainly those of the National Party's Young Persons Farm Purchase Scheme. In the future we look forward to the opportunity to discuss the suggestions that have been made to the Minister for Lands and Forestry by his departmental advisers. I would certainly hope that before too long Parliament will have the opportunity to consider introducing

legislation to implement the proposed Young Farmers Establishment Scheme. Whilst the Minister obviously has, without equivocation, the right to foreshadow recommendations that he will be making to the Parliament, I take very strong exception to public servants—no matter how senior; no matter how junior—having the audacity to publicly pre-empt the decisions of this Parliament by stating categorically that this or that will be part of one scheme or another.

Mr Hooper interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

Mr HARPER: That action by public servants should not be tolerated, as you yourself said in relation to an interjection, Mr Miller. The scheme that the Treasurer has made possible by an allocation of funds in the Budget is one that our Premier has advocated. It is another which will go down as an achievement of the Bjelke-Petersen/Edwards coalition Government.

I turn now to the vexed matter of water resources, which I am sure most of us who have a knowledge of the rural areas of Australia would agree must have top priority in our nation. Those resources are of particular importance in my electorate, for a great volume of water regularly flows down the Dawson River and is presently conserved only by weirs. Also we have the waters of the Auburn, Boyne and Burnett systems. Completion of the Cania Dam on the headwaters of the Burnett system on the Three Moon Creek will give a boost to dairying and fodder conservation in that area by allowing the available water to be utilised to the best advantage. It is a replenishment dam, primarily for underground water reserves, but it will certainly boost that area and its production. The people of my electorate in the Monto district appreciated the \$3.2m that the Treasurer has provided for the project in the Budget. We believe that that sum should be almost sufficient to complete the job. I hope that the Government will be convinced of the logic and the advantages to be gained from utilising construction facilities already existing at the dam site for the Education Department to develop a special education unit for the benefit of children in that area of Central Queensland.

You yourself, Mr Miller, inspected the Boondooma Dam in my electorate only a few days ago. We believe that the people in the Mundubbera and Proston areas of the Auburn electorate will benefit considerably when that dam is completed. We would like to see advantage taken to increase storage capacity of the dam at a time when it will be most economical. Unfortunately, it would seem that the \$9.2m provided by the Government in the current financial year will only be sufficient for major work on completion of the main embankment as presently envisaged. That means, I presume, that we shall have to look at increased storage at some future time.

Presently of very great concern in the Auburn electorate in the field of water resources is the shortage of water in the Wuruma Dam on the Nogo River. The citrus orchards in the Mundubbera area depend to a very great extent on that water. It is to be hoped that during the current summer season sufficient rain will fall to fill the Wuruma Dam. If sufficient rain does not fall, the citrus growers in the Mundubbera/Gayndah area, which has the highest citrus production in Queensland, will be in dire straits. Unlike other primary producers, citrus growers cannot send their crops away on agistment when the river runs dry. Years pass before they can get back into full production. We in the Auburn electorate look forward to good rain during the coming season.

It is unfortunate that excellent dam sites on the Dawson River have not yet been utilised. The most appropriate sites, with ideal gorge-like features, are at Baroonda, where a dam has been planned, and Palm Tree Creek.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to ensure that the States have adequate funding. As I have said before, Queensland has been short-sheeted in the provision of funds compared with other States. The allocation of financial aid to Queensland for the development of its water resources is not nearly as great as that to other States, particularly South Australia. If funds could be provided for the construction of dams at the sites I have mentioned, the full potential of the surrounding area could be realised.

The drought tolerance of many of the industries in the area could be ensured. The construction of those dams would also ensure back-up water supplies for both existing and planned weirs further downstream on the Dawson River.

I am confident that the Government will continue to promote this State's water resources with all the vigour that its finances permit. Again I congratulate the Treasurer and the Premier on their continuing good stewardship of our coalition Government and on once again bringing down a responsible Budget.

Mr MILLINER (Everton) (9.13 p.m.): All those Government members who have participated in this debate have congratulated the Treasurer on his Budget. I suggest that has been a compulsory measure imposed on them. I am pleased that I was able to hear the contributions made by my colleagues on the Opposition side. I hope that the Treasurer takes cognisance of the suggestions put forward by them.

I want to refer to my electorate. Only two weeks ago a disastrous fire occurred at the Grovely State School. I pay tribute to the principal, Mr Lindsay Barton, the members of the p. and c. association and the teachers for the way in which they handled the situation.

The fire was first noticed at approximately 15 minutes after midnight on Saturday night. The principal was rung at 12.30 a.m. He proceeded to the school and spent the rest of the night there. He did not leave until 6 a.m. and he returned again at 7.30 a.m. He spent the entire Sunday at the school sorting out problems and contacting teachers. He was there for the whole of the Sunday and did not leave until approximately 4.30 in the afternoon when the State security people arrived. He was at the school again at 7 a.m. the following Monday. Thanks to his dedication, experience and organisational ability he had all the students being taught at the school by 12 noon that day. It was a credit to him.

On the following Saturday the school held a very successful fete which raised over \$8,000. To add to the principal's problems the school was broken into on the Saturday night—obviously someone was looking for the fete takings—but, fortunately, there was nothing worth taking in the principal's office.

A number of honourable members have had problems with fires in schools in their electorates. Some of them have had to take fairly drastic action to get the schools replaced. Quite obviously the security of school buildings is a problem for the Government. The Minister for Works and Housing said that various methods of securing schools against fires and vandals have been looked at. I certainly hope that the Minister will take action to prevent fires. I ask him to seriously consider installing sprinkler systems in schools. I heard a member refer to security lighting. The Grovely school had security lighting, but that did not deter the vandals from committing senseless acts. I hope that the Government can come up with some method of securing these buildings.

Mr Hooper: It is not a matter of "can come"; it is a matter of "must come".

Mr MILLINER: I agree. The Government must protect school buildings in some way.

The Auditor-General's report points out how much it is costing to replace the buildings. That money could well be spent in other areas of education.

I shall deal now with the care services provided by the Reverend Bob O'Neill. He is a dedicated Christian. It is unfortunate that in society today the need for care services is growing. The Reverend O'Neill provides care services from three premises, one of which is in a shopping centre at McGinn Road, Ferny Grove. The Minister for Welfare Services officially opened the crisis centre two or three weeks ago. I pay tribute to the proprietor of the shopping centre who made accommodation available for the crisis centre at a reasonable rental. When the shops were being constructed, this gentleman arrived at 6.30 a.m. to find a woman with two children curled up in a corner of the deserted building. When asked what they were doing there the woman said that her husband drank a fair bit and became violent and she feared for her safety and that of her children. She decided to leave the house, but having nowhere to go the poor woman spent the night in that building.

Another building that the Reverend O'Neill operates from is situated on eight acres of land in Plucks Road, Arana Hills. The Reverend O'Neill has grand plans for this property. I hope he can bring his ambitions to fruition and use the potential of that property in the

best possible way. Fully developed it will be a tremendous asset to the State. Because of his awareness of the problems of disabled people he is going out of his way to provide facilities so that they may fully enjoy the environment of the area.

The Budget announced increased transport costs, which I will deal with later. Transport is a problem in my area, although we have an efficient electric railway service which has increased patronage on the line tremendously. Because the car-parks associated with railway stations are becoming overcrowded, motorists are parking their vehicles on surrounding roads and streets, which is causing tremendous problems. The police have made inspections and "No parking" signs have been placed in streets adjacent to railway stations, particularly Grovely Station.

The all-day parking of vehicles in Dawson Parade, which is the main thoroughfare, is creating some problems for the business people. Commuters are parking their vehicles outside shops, and that is precluding the passing trade from parking there. I hope that the Minister for Transport and the Treasurer will have a look at this problem.

The lack of protection of property in the parking areas at railway stations poses another problem. Many people—I do not know whether they are fitness fanatics—ride bicycles to the Ferny Grove Station. There is a lot of vandalism and theft of push-bikes and motor vehicles at that station.

The Budget provides for a 15 per cent increase in rail fares and freights. Last year's Budget provided for an increase of something like 15 per cent, so this is the second 15 per cent increase in two years. The increase in passenger fares is usually more than 15 per cent because the department takes the increase up to the next 5c. The increases this year can be anything up to 20 or 30 per cent and, coupled with last year's increase, in some instances up to as much as 40 per cent.

The Auditor-General, in his report, says—

"Recurring deficits of this magnitude place a heavy burden on Consolidated Revenue Funds and must be viewed with some concern."

The Government tells us continually that we might not be getting much out of mining royalties but we are getting revenue from other areas, such as rail freights. I am concerned when fares and charges are constantly increased and the Auditor-General makes such a statement, yet we are told that we are getting a good deal out of our rail freights. I challenge the Treasurer to table the agreements with the mining companies so that we can see just what we are getting.

In his report the Auditor-General also referred to Government motor vehicles. I have said previously that I agree that public servants should take motor vehicles home, although the Auditor-General says—

". . . more than 50% of their kilometres travelled on 'to and from home' journeys. These vehicles have a relatively small official use of less than 40 kilometres a day and their collective need is suspect."

Mr Mackenroth: Mainly for fat cats.

Mr MILLINER: That may be.

By and large, public servants are very responsible people. There may be a few who abuse the privilege of taking vehicles home but they should be able to take vehicles home. They should be encouraged, however, to pool with other employees who could travel to and from work with them.

Recently I noticed in the car-park that the Deputy Premier and Treasurer has indulged himself by acquiring a nice ministerial chariot to carry him round the State. He is now driving a new Mercedes Benz. I am told that the model he is using costs approximately \$49,000.

It is interesting to see in the Auditor-General's report that the "Royal Queensland Air Force" has purchased a new aircraft. The Government should not only be honest but should be seen to be honest. The report says that the Government received something like a \$740,000 trade-in on its previous aircraft.

I am not quibbling about that, because aircraft are valuable and the trade-in is normally what was initially paid for them. But what worries me is that tenders are not called for the sale of the aircraft. Government vehicles are disposed of at public auction, but when the Government aircraft is disposed of for \$740,000 we are not to know whether the Government could have obtained more. It is interesting to note that the aircraft the Government traded in, VB-Sierra Golf Tango, is now flying out of Eagle Farm under Draydon Investment colours, and we all know that the company is owned by the Premier's friend, Sir Leslie Thiess.

Something that should disturb all honourable member is the section of the report relating to the Department of Employment and Labour Relations. The Auditor-General talks about the lack of inspections carried out in a number of areas. He referred to the Motor Vehicle Safety Act and said that although there were something like 190 000 notices issued only 112 000 inspections took place. In other words, 78 000 vehicles were not inspected. In an attempt to reduce the carnage on our roads, "The Courier-Mail" has embarked on "Campaign 550". Surely there is something wrong when inspections of motor vehicles are not carried out. Obviously a lot of the inspections would have been of commercial vehicles, but a number would have been of defective private vehicles, and it concerns me greatly that inspections are not being carried out. I do not believe the Government is fulfilling its role in the campaign being waged by "The Courier-Mail".

In his report the Auditor-General said, "A third of the machinery inspections required were not performed." That is of grave concern to workers in industry. The honourable member for Rockhampton North indicated that there is provision for only seven additional employees for the entire Department of Employment and Labour Relations, which includes the Consumer Affairs Bureau. I asked the relevant Minister what advice he would give to employees working on construction sites with machinery that had not been inspected and whether the workers should break the law and operate such machinery or abide by the law and refuse to operate it. The Minister answered, "Of course, my role is not to give advice or opinions." As far as I am concerned, the Minister is supposed to be a leader and set an example. It was a fairly simple question and yet the Minister could not even given advice.

I believe we will see tremendous growth in the tourist industry. Qantas recently announced a new route between Tokyo and Brisbane. I was concerned about the facilities available to cater for Japanese tourists. I recently went to Japan as a member of a delegation, and it was quite obvious to all of us that the tourism market in Japan was ripe to be tapped. We spoke to three medical students from middle-income families. Two of the three had been to America on holidays, and their reason for travelling to that country was the cost. They said the fare was approximately half the fare to Australia. If that is the case, the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation should do everything possible to get out and sell Queensland so that that potential market can be tapped.

The other matter that concerned me greatly was that there was not a trained travel consultant in the Queensland Government Representative Office in Tokyo to answer queries from the potential tourists who were inquiring about Queensland. One member of the staff spent her entire day answering these queries. Of course, she was not au fait with the tourist industry in Queensland. I asked the Minister for Tourism to take the necessary action to overcome this problem, but he said that he would not place a qualified travel consultant in that office in Tokyo to assist potential Japanese tourists to Queensland.

One other matter that is causing me grave concern, and which should be of grave concern to all Queenslanders, is the cost of housing generally. There has been a rapid escalation in housing costs. The Valuer-General's report that was tabled the other day pointed to this fact. One of the problems associated with housing costs is interest rates. It is interesting to note what the Liberal Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, had to say on 21 November 1977 when delivering the Liberal Party policy speech. He said—

"... interest rates have begun to fall—and they will keep falling. We've been doing the job we were elected to do."

That is a rather incredible statement from the Prime Minister. As we all know, interest rates are now at their highest level. I am worried about the amount of money that people are being forced to pay for a home. The repayments are frightening. A

couple with \$1,500, who borrow \$30,000 from a building society over 20 years, have to make monthly repayments of \$324. It is very difficult, if not impossible, for a single-income family to meet the monthly repayments. The Housing Commission repayments are a lot lower than that, but not everyone can get commission finance.

Another matter that I wish to mention is the recently announced increase in the limits of Housing Commission finance. Previously a loan of \$25,000 was available from the Housing Commission for the construction of a house. A loan of \$35,000 was available from the commission for the purchase of a house and land package. Those amounts have been increased to \$30,000 and \$40,000. That is good for people who are able to borrow money from the Housing Commission but, unfortunately, there has not been an increase in the funds available to the commission. It means that one in every six people who want a Housing Commission loan will have to drop out. Although there has been an increase in the limit of the commission's loans, there has not been an increase in the total funds available to the commission for this purpose.

I believe that the Government can play a role in providing housing for people. The scheme that I am about to put forward is not unique although Government members may jump up and down about it. I believe that the Government can develop residential land. Once the land is developed it can be leased to a home purchaser on a perpetual lease basis. In this way the Government would take the land-cost component out of the house and land package. Instead of a couple having to borrow \$30,000 and pay high monthly repayments, they would have to borrow only \$18,000 and their monthly payments would be a lot less. Many more people would be able to buy their own home. After a certain period they should have the option to freehold the land. That system has been operating with commercial premises in Keperra. Commercial land was leased on a perpetual lease basis. As I said, this concept is not new, but it is one positive way in which the Government could assist people to obtain a home.

I could say a lot more about the Budget and the Auditor-General's report, but the matters in them have been well canvassed by Opposition members.

Much has been said about the Budget but I believe that what the Leader of the Opposition said was most apt: it is much ado about nothing.

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer): I seek leave of the Committee to complete my reply to the debate on the Financial Statement.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order. The motion that the Treasurer seeks to move is quite a strange one.

Dr EDWARDS: Mr Miller, I ask for your ruling. I sought leave of the Committee and I ask that the Committee decide whether leave be granted.

Mr CASEY: That is not exactly what the Treasurer initially said. I presume the Treasurer is seeking leave to move a motion without notice.

Dr EDWARDS: I will repeat what I said. I seek leave of the Committee to complete my reply to the debate on the Financial Statement.

Mr CASEY: I wish to speak to the motion before the Chair, because in fact that is what it is.

Dr EDWARDS: I rise to a point of order. This is not a motion. I am seeking leave of the Committee to complete my reply to the debate on the Financial Statement. I ask whether that leave is granted.

Mr CASEY: I desire to speak to the motion. The Treasurer says that he is seeking leave to complete his reply.

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will take only one point of order at a time.

Mr CASEY: Never at any stage did the Treasurer seek leave to adjourn his reply. Early in the debate the Treasurer adopted the most unusual procedure that the Committee has ever seen and replied immediately after the speech I made on behalf of the Opposition. Standing Order 109 provides that the Treasurer is entitled to reply.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member has now made his point. I draw the Leader of the Opposition's attention to Standing Order 164 which states that all questions before a Committee shall be decided by the votes of the majority of the members in the Chamber. I have a question before the Chair and I intend to put that question.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a further point of order. I believe that as Chairman, Mr Miller, you must also decide whether the question before the Committee is a valid one to be placed before it. The Treasurer has stated that he is seeking leave to continue his reply. In actual fact any member of this Assembly concludes his speech or reply, whatever it may be, by resuming his seat. Last Tuesday week the Treasurer resumed his seat when he completed his speech. He did not indicate that he wished to speak further. He simply resumed his seat in this place. With respect, I believe that if the Treasurer wishes to speak again he should seek leave to move the suspension of Standing Orders so that he may further speak.

Dr EDWARDS: I am quite happy to ask the Leader of the House to move a motion. I have no objection to that whatsoever.

Progress reported.

#### SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER No. 109

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That so much of Standing Order No. 109 be suspended as would enable the Honourable the Treasurer to complete his reply to the debate on the Financial Statement.”

Mr CASEY: Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have a motion before the House—

Mr CASEY: Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! While I am on my feet the honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition under Standing Order 123A.

Mr Casey: What for?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have a motion before the House that so much of Standing Order 109 be suspended as would enable the Honourable the Treasurer to complete his reply to the debate on the Financial Statement.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will hear the honourable gentleman now.

Mr CASEY: The Leader of the House is seeking leave to move a motion without notice. I understand that the motion you just read is the motion that he wants to move if the House gives him leave.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable gentleman has missed the point.

Mr CASEY: No, I haven't.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable gentleman has missed the point. The Leader of the House asked leave to move a motion without notice. I said, "Is leave granted?" There was no objection. The Leader of the House then rose and moved the motion. That is the motion before the Chair.

Mr CASEY: Quite correct. I seek to speak to the motion before the Chair.

Mr SPEAKER: Very well.

Mr CASEY (Mackay—Leader of the Opposition) (9.43 p.m.): Something very unusual occurred during the Budget debate. The Treasurer replied immediately after I completed my speech on behalf of the Opposition in reply to the Treasurer's Financial Statement. In fact, that had never been done before in the history of the Queensland Parliament. Unquestionably, it was done because the Government was stunned by my reply on behalf of the Opposition. The Treasurer knew that, as I had claimed on behalf of the Opposition, the Budget was a "nothing" document.

I do not intend to take up the time of the House further by canvassing other points made in the Budget and making a second speech, as the Treasurer now seeks to do. Standing Order 109 states clearly that the Treasurer is entitled to reply. The Opposition accepts that he is entitled to reply. However, the Standing Orders of this Assembly do not provide that the Treasurer, the Leader of the House, the Premier, or, for that matter, the Leader of the Opposition, may speak at any time and as often as he wishes in a debate in the House. It is clear that the Standing Orders are designed to ensure that members who have a point to make may make it in this Chamber. But when they conclude their comments and resume their seat, the next speaker is called.

In the media, the Treasurer endeavoured to claim that his action was not unique. In particular, he drew the attention of the House to the action of Sir Gordon Chalk, a former Treasurer, in 1966. I have perused "Hansard" and found that on that occasion Mr Duggan, while speaking in the Budget debate, announced to the House his resignation as Leader of the Opposition. Quite rightly, at that stage Sir Gordon Chalk sought leave of the House to speak on that matter, and on that matter only. Because the circumstances were so unusual, the House gave him the opportunity to speak, and rightly so.

Sometimes in this House, and also in the community outside, the Treasurer has claimed to have a great knowledge of Standing Orders. But if I might use a colloquialism, in this instance he did his own thing. I am not sure what motivated him. After I had spoken in the debate on the Financial Statement, the Treasurer virtually muddled his own nest by speaking immediately in reply. Probably he was motivated by a desire to capture the attention of the media at that time and nullify the effect of the comments that I made. His efforts were unsuccessful. He now seeks to continue his reply.

I have not seen a Government that is as touchy as this Government. Indeed, it can rightly be said that its actions are those of a guilty Government. It objects to comments that are made across the Chamber, it objects to any criticism levelled at it, it objects to any attempt by the Opposition to highlight its shortcomings, and it objects to derogatory comments about the way in which it is behaving. I cannot use the term "for and on behalf of the people of Queensland"; it has not acted for and on behalf of them. Members who have been in Parliament for a long time would know that my comments are correct. I have never seen a Government that is so touchy and so easily upset by comments and criticism. It is touchy because the Opposition's criticism can be justified.

The Treasurer, in order to reply further to the attack that I launched on the Government, is endeavouring to have Standing Orders suspended to get him out of his dilemma. That shows that the Government does not care about the forms of the House. Again it wants to use its numbers to do whatever it wishes.

Mr Moore: You've broken every rule in the book.

Mr CASEY: I am certainly not breaking any rules now, nor am I breaching Standing Orders. Furthermore, I am not seeking leave to suspend Standing Orders so that I can make my comments.

The action that the Government is now taking is a further illustration of its contempt for Parliament. Earlier today we saw a very bad example of such contempt when, during question-time, the Premier and some of the Ministers left the Chamber at 12 noon, claiming

they were going to attend Executive Council. I repeat the comment that I made at the time: this Parliament, not Executive Council or Cabinet, is the supreme body in Queensland. Executive Council and executive government should be subject to Parliament, not the other way around.

Normally, question-time is concluded by 12 noon. However, today it was not concluded by that time, for the simple reason that—as happens on many occasions—a great number of ministerial statements were made. That fact, too, is an indication of the way in which the Government is stung by attacks made on it by the Opposition, both inside and outside Parliament. As happens on many occasions, the Government finds that it has to jump to try to defend itself. Of course, Opposition members do not have ample opportunity to reply to ministerial statements.

If the Government wished, it could postpone the Executive Council meeting till 12.30 on a Sunday—

A Government Member: Sunday!

Mr CASEY: I am sorry; on a Thursday. In fact, it would not hurt Ministers to do a bit of work on Sunday. There is no statutory requirement that Executive Council meet at a particular time. The time is arranged to suit the convenience of the Ministers and His Excellency. I am sure that His Excellency would postpone his lunch for half an hour to enable Executive Council to meet 30 minutes later. The Government, however, is intent on ensuring that executive government is supreme. It succeeds only because of the weakness of Government back-benchers. They merely sit back and support the Ministers in whatever they do.

I have made this speech only to show the contempt that the Government has for Parliament, contempt that is revealed by the way in which the Treasurer is now endeavouring to treat members.

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (9.49 p.m.): I second the motion moved by the Leader of the House. At the outset, I must say that I regret that the Leader of the Opposition has adopted this attitude. I, as Treasurer, decided to respond to the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition because it was an innocuous and terrible speech and because of the inaccuracies contained in it. As a result of that I spoke in the debate at that time.

Opposition Members interjected.

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

Dr EDWARDS: I did not reply to the honourable member for Sandgate. At no stage did I make statements as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. I read that I allegedly made statements. I did not make statements regarding that matter.

I make it very clear that replying to the Leader of the Opposition was an error on my part. I apologise to the House for that error. I should have sought leave to reply at that stage to the Leader of the Opposition.

It is because of my integrity and respect for Parliament, something which the Leader of the Opposition has not got, that I support the motion moved by the Leader of the House. Of course, the Government could have rammed through a motion to suit itself. Because of the Government's respect for Standing Orders and because an error was made, I am asking the Parliament of Queensland to decide what I should do about continuing my reply.

I accept responsibility for the original decision, but I believe that Standing Orders are in error in this instance. A Minister of the Crown may reply at any time in any other debate—in the middle of an ordinary debate or in the middle of the Estimates debate—and that principle should apply in the Budget debate. Because of a statement in Standing Orders, an error was made by me. I accept full responsibility and blame for it.

I abide by the Standing Orders, I respect the Parliament, and I trust that the way in which the Government is handling the Opposition's continuing degradation of Parliament will be an inspiration for the future. I therefore ask that the matter be now considered by the House, and I move—

“That the question be now put.”

Motion agreed to.

Question—That the motion (Mr Wharton) be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

Ayes, 37

Ahern	Jennings	Randell
Akers	Katter	Row
Bertoni	Kaus	Scassola
Booth	Knox	Simpson
Borbidge	Kyburz	Stephan
Edwards	Lester	Sullivan
Fitzgerald	Lickiss	Tomkins
Goleby	Lockwood	Turner
Greenwood	McKechnie	Wharton
Harper	Miller	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hewitt	Moore	Gygar
Hinze	Powell	Neal
Innes	Prentice	

Noes, 19

Blake	Mackenroth	Vaughan
Burns	McLean	Warburton
Casey	Milliner	Yewdale
Eaton	Prest	<i>Tellers:</i>
Fouras	Scott	Davis
Hooper	Shaw	Hansen
Kruger	Underwood	

Pairs:

Bjelke-Petersen	Jones
Gibbs, I. J.	Wright
Menzel	Wilson
Doumany	Smith
White	D'Arcy
Austin	Gibbs, R. J.

Resolved in the affirmative.

## SUPPLY

Committee—Financial Statement—Resumption of Debate

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Miller, Ithaca) in the chair.

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (10 p.m.), continuing in reply: I took the unprecedented action this year of responding immediately to the speech with which the honourable the Leader of the Opposition opened this Budget debate. This was not because of any great concern I had for what he said. His speech was innocuous enough—in fact, one of the worst commentaries on a Budget from a Leader of the Opposition that I have had the misfortune to hear in this Assembly.

What I had hoped to do by responding immediately and correcting his misapprehensions, misstatements and falsehoods was to prevent the Opposition's contribution to the debate turning into the debacle of other years when member after member stood up and repeated like parrots the various ill-founded accusations and criticisms of their leader. I had hoped that Opposition members would then have set about doing some research and introducing a bit of originality and constructive thinking into their presentations. Alas, this was not to be.

We have suffered during this debate the spectacle of Opposition members standing up to harangue the Government over various parochial matters and to flog almost to death their old hackneyed hobby-horses like increases in fees and charges, rail freights and so on, and demonstrating as always their deplorable lack of understanding or appreciation of the Budget documents, the financial principles involved and, indeed, the fundamentals

of good government. I have said it before and I say it again—heaven help this State, its future and its people if by some quirk of fate the inept, inexperienced and inexperienced members of the Opposition ever find their way to the Government benches.

The honourable member for Lytton took the easy line and filled in his allotted time by reading from the Auditor-General's report. When the Budget has been passed, I intend to ask leave of the Assembly to make a statement on that matter. All members are quite capable of reading that report themselves. What sort of a constructive contribution to the Budget debate was that?

As I have said, having responded to the honourable the Leader of the Opposition, I had hoped that in the remainder of my reply I could cover some new ground. It seems, however, that I must repeat at least some of the comments I made previously, particularly those about the Government's policy—in fact, its statutory obligation—to regularly review its fees and charges for services. The legislation providing for this was supported by the Opposition.

The Opposition seems to be quite paranoid about this, and well it might be. The honourable member for Lytton is the most paranoid of all. He is quite obsessed with the conviction that the Government has in some way deceived the people by saying that taxes have not been increased but that fees and charges for services have. How can the Government's action possibly be seen as deceptive? The Budget speech points out quite clearly that fees and charges have been reviewed in the normal course of events, as required by law, to maintain their value in the light of cost increases.

Mr Casey: You said you have the cheapest fees in Australia.

Dr EDWARDS: Because we have had the lowest cost increases in Australia. No wonder the Leader of the Opposition and other Opposition members do not understand what they are talking about.

Mr Casey: The Auditor-General also says it is not done in accordance with the Act.

Dr EDWARDS: The Leader of the Opposition need not talk about what he understands of the Auditor-General's report. As far as his contribution to this debate is concerned, he could not even read the Budget papers let alone understand what the Auditor-General had to say.

This need not have been mentioned at all by the honourable member for Lytton—it is part of the continuing on-going business of the correct financial management of the State. My view, though, was that it was my responsibility to remind people, as I should do in the Budget, that this was being done so they would be aware that these things are happening, and why they are necessary.

Even the honourable member for Lytton, who is not noted for his financial or business acumen, must recognise that it would be quite irresponsible to leave fees and charges to users of Government services at a constant level while the cost of delivering them are increasing by 10 to 12 per cent per year. Where does the Labor Party expect the money to come from? I am appalled that the members of the Opposition should be so ignorant of the financial matters in this State.

Does the honourable member want the taxpayer at large to meet at a constantly increasing rate the costs of services availed of only by particular sections of the community? Of course he does, and that is the kind of Government we would get with Labor—a sectional Government. We know what course it would embark upon.

Does the honourable member want ultimately the complete welfare State, where every service or benefit available from Government sources is free to the actual user with the cost met from a huge tax pool to which everyone must contribute? It is no wonder that the Labor Party is a high-tax party. It is no wonder that the taxation levels imposed by Labor Governments are the highest in Australia. That is so in New South Wales and Tasmania, and it was so with the Whitlam Government. If that is the philosophy of Opposition members, let them stand up and be counted on it.

Mr Turner: They know it.

Dr EDWARDS: Of course they know that they are a high-tax party, and they know that they cannot be honest in that regard.

Let us now look at a couple of the major issues raised by the Opposition in regard to the Government's action in increasing charges. Opposition members mentioned motor vehicle registration fees. Much attention in this debate has been directed to the recent increase in registration fees and the assertion that Queensland's drivers are the highest-taxed car drivers in Australia. This is rubbish! Certainly, registration fees were increased earlier in 1981.

Mr Vaughan: Sixty per cent is not bad.

Dr EDWARDS: That is about the correct figure, but he does not tell the people of Queensland that that was the first increase in three years. This action, although unwelcome to the Government, became necessary in the face of a continuing decline in real terms in the level of Commonwealth funding for road-works in this State.

The steadfast refusal of the Commonwealth Government to increase its contribution to road-funding, despite the massive amounts collected from motorists in fuel taxes, meant that a realistic capital program for road construction could be maintained only with an increase in funding from State sources. The only course available to the Government of Queensland was an increase in its own charges.

May I remind honourable members that registration fees were last increased more than three years ago, in May 1978, and that motorists therefore have had the benefit during all that time of no increases in this area. I do not deny that this increase placed Queensland registration charges as such above that for some of the other States. However, this is only one of several charges incurred in putting a car on the road. Four other States, including a Labor State, faced with a similar funding dilemma acted to impose a new tax—a petrol franchise fee, or "fuel tax", as it has come to be called.

The imposition of that form of charge on Queensland drivers was not favoured by this Government, because we are a low-tax Government. The franchise fee adds up to 2c per litre to the cost of petrol, at which level the additional cost for the average motorist would be about \$36 per annum. That should be added to the calculation. The increase in registration fees in Queensland was \$25 for light passenger vehicles and \$41 for medium vehicles.

Looking at motor vehicle charges in totality—the Queensland motorist pays less than his counterparts in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, and only slightly more than he would pay in Western Australia. I shall quote some correct figures, not the inaccurate ones that have been quoted by the Opposition. These take into account the actual registration charge on a medium passenger vehicle, the compulsory third-party component and an estimate of the State fuel tax paid by the average owner of such a vehicle in most other States.

Queensland .. .. .	\$161.00
New South Wales .. .. .	\$194.00
Victoria .. .. .	\$217.00
South Australia .. .. .	\$188.00
Western Australia .. .. .	\$157.00
Tasmania .. .. .	\$147.00

Mr Davis: That includes compulsory third party insurance.

Dr EDWARDS: Of course. I have given honourable members the total costs. To suggest that the Tasmanian figure is lower than ours is ridiculous because one can almost spit from one side of that State to the other. That State does not have the length of roads that have to be maintained by the Queensland Government.

The point is that the Queensland motorist is not in the disadvantaged category by comparison with his fellows elsewhere. It is quite improper for the Opposition to attempt to deliberately mislead the Committee and the people of Queensland by quoting comparisons without properly researching the matter.

Another factor that must be taken into account is that Queensland has the greatest length of roads to service on a per capita basis of any State, and it could therefore be

expected that our per vehicle registration charge would be the highest, which it is not. In addition, the stamp duty imposed on motor vehicle registration and transfers in Queensland is by far the lowest of any State.

I now turn to rail fares and freights. Members on both sides of the Committee have expressed concern about the Government's decision to increase rail fares and freights by 15 per cent. I understand their concern. The impact of this increase on people who depend on rail services for transport of their commodities to and fro, and the consequential flow-on of the increase of consumables in country areas, was a major consideration in the Government's thinking.

The plain fact is that the Government could not afford to side-step the issues associated with the subsidisation of the general railway operations. I pointed out in my speech that the overall loss on railway operations was expected to be in the order of \$140m this year. This \$140m has to be found from the general tax pool—\$140m to be provided by the community at large, most of whom have no direct dependence on the railway system. I am not arguing that this is an unacceptable principle where a service such as the railways is concerned. What I am saying is that every effort must be made to contain this subsidy, which I believe is essential to reasonable proportions, to make sure it does not consume a continually increasing percentage of the State's financial resources. The Government is extremely proud of its record of the benefits that it has been able to give to rural industries in the transport of rural commodities. The Government continues to be committed to that policy.

There has been much ado about the latest report of the Auditor-General and I want to now quote from that report a statement that indicates the Auditor-General's concern about trends in railway operations. He said—

“Financial transactions in connection with operations are contained within the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The cash deficit in that Fund in respect of the Department's transactions for the year was \$106,768,637 (1979-80, \$97,077,507). To this must be added the general interest charge of \$45,070,966 making a total deficit of \$151,839,603 which was \$15,514,220 or 11.4 per cent higher than that sustained in the previous year. The deficit represents 37.2 per cent of the year's operational income. In the period of eight years since 1 July 1973, the deficits incurred by the railway services have totalled \$863,629,731. The deficit for the year under review was over four times that of 1972-73.

Recurring deficits of this magnitude place a heavy burden on Consolidated Revenue Fund and must be viewed with some concern. The demand on the Fund in respect of the overall railway deficit for the year was equivalent to 5.83 per cent of total Consolidated Revenue Fund receipts as shown in the Treasurer's Annual Statement.”

I do not take the Auditor-General's comments as a criticism of Government policy, nor does anyone else who understands economics. He is making a statement of fact. That is his responsibility. The comments of the Auditor-General are meant to alert readers of the report to the Auditor-General's awareness of the impact that the subsidisation of the rail system is having upon general funds.

I do not believe that he is proposing that action should be taken to suddenly abolish the losses and that the Government will not undertake that responsibility. Rather, what we are going to do, and continue to do, is to take measures which we consider reasonable to ensure that the position does not deteriorate further.

I now turn to the return from mineral resources. The honourable member for Woodridge, the Treasury spokesman for the Opposition, did little to engender any confidence in his ability to competently or efficiently perform as an alternative Treasury spokesman. He tended to dwell on matters incompetently raised by his leader, all of which, if they were of any importance, had already been answered.

For as long as I have been a member of this Assembly, I have listened to the Opposition berate the Government about what it sees as inadequate returns to the State from mineral developments. Such claims have been answered year after year by successive Treasurers. Never were the Government's efforts to attract a maximum return from mining operations greater than they have been over the last few years. Ask the mining companies whether they think the Government is generous in its demands.

The Government has been the butt of all sorts of accusations of excessive and unreasonable demands. These have been accompanied by all sorts of prophecies of failure or non-commencement of ventures because Government imposts will make them non-viable. To date, none has failed and none has had to fold up, but it is an indisputable fact that nowhere else in Australia does the Government achieve a level of return from resource developments equal to what is achieved in Queensland.

The honourable member referred to differences in freight rates for various coal developments. There always will be differences because of variations in capital requirements, operating costs and so on, but differences also exist because of a quite considerable tightening over the years of policy in relation to the profit component of the rail freight rate.

These factors mean that the rates applicable to more recent developments, such as German Creek, are substantially higher than those for earlier developments such as Moura and Peak Downs.

I turn to electricity charges, a subject which was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, whose query I have already answered, and raised again by the honourable members for Woodridge and Nudgee. As they saw it, their particular grievance was that the cost of new power-stations that are required primarily to cater for the future needs of major industries were being met by the public at large.

The projected future power needs which are to be met by Tarong Power Station, the newly proposed station at Stanwell, and others that are yet to come, relate to major industry and public consumption (which include small industry) on a 50/50 basis. Those stations are not being built primarily for industry.

The matters I have already mentioned constituted the main thrust of many of the speakers in this debate. There were also, of course, many other matters of concern to particular members. I intend to have those matters examined and I shall reply to honourable members individually where possible.

I believe that this Budget debate has been a disappointment because of the very poor contribution by the Opposition. The members of the Government went about their business of debating the Budget in a proper manner. The coverage of Opposition speeches in the newspapers indicated the support that the media were prepared to give honourable members opposite, and that, of course, was absolutely negligible.

I have found nothing else of sufficient importance or interest in the Opposition's criticisms of the Budget on which I need to dwell. That, I believe, supports my statement that Queensland this year has the best Budget of any State in Australia—a situation that has been brought about by our being able to maximise the benefits from a vibrant and strengthening economy. We are able to do that because of sound financial management, and this is respected by the community, by business and by other State Governments throughout Australia. We have engaged in sound planning over many years, while our firm and diversified bases have been systematically and deliberately developed and consolidated.

The Budget documents reflect the very sound state of Queensland's industries, commerce and economic development generally. They do not reflect a state of financial affluence. Funds are adequate to maintain services, cover cost increases and allow for growth, without the imposition of additional or increased taxation measures. In this respect we seem to be unique in Australia. This is of considerable satisfaction to the Government and the reason why over 24 years of coalition Government we have received continuing support, despite the often cynical and disbelieving outbursts of the Opposition.

The Budget is eminently appropriate to the present circumstances in Queensland and to the fulfilment of the dedicated purpose of this Government—the development of this great State to its destiny as the leading State in the Commonwealth in all respects.

Item (Contingencies—His Excellency the Governor) agreed to.

Progress reported.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

## Government's Purchase of Shares in Evans Deakin Industries Ltd and Walkers Ltd

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (10.23 p.m.): As honourable members are aware, the Auditor-General, in his Report to Parliament on Departmental and Other Accounts for the year ended 30 June 1981, indicated that he had doubts about whether the purchase of shares in Evans Deakin Industries Ltd and Walkers Ltd by the Public Trustee was properly authorised.

As I indicated in my recent statement to Parliament, both the Treasury Department and I were firmly of the view that the purchases were made fully within the ambit of existing law, and the purchases were made only after a full examination by very experienced and qualified Treasury officers. Furthermore, as I also indicated in my recent statement, I have obtained the opinion of senior counsel, one Mr J. Thomas, QC.

In his opinion, counsel indicated that, had the investment been made under section 41 of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, he would have agreed with the reservations of the Auditor-General, in that he felt that it was unclear whether section 41 would or would not have authorised such an investment.

However, as I indicated to Parliament, the investment was not made in terms of section 41 of the Financial Administration and Audit Act but instead utilised the investment power of the Public Trustee, which power counsel has indicated was properly available and exercised. In particular, the questions I asked senior counsel and his responses to them are as follows:

(1) Whether the Queensland Industry Investment Fund was correctly established and whether the purpose of the fund was appropriately specified.

Answer: Yes (to both).

(2) Whether approval to overdraw the fund was correctly granted.

Answer: Yes.

(3) Whether authorisation was properly granted for the making of unforeseen expenditure and the charging of such expenditure to the fund.

Answer: Yes.

(4) Whether the Public Trustee was correctly authorised and directed to purchase the shares in question.

Answer: Yes.

(5) Whether shares purchased by the Public Trustee in Evans Deakin Industries Ltd and Walkers Ltd in accordance with directions given by me were a legitimate charge as unforeseen expenditure to the Queensland Industry Investment Fund.

Answer: Yes.

(6) Generally, whether the transactions were legally made.

Answer: Yes.

As the above questions and answers confirm, the Government's action in acquiring shares in Evans Deakin Industries Ltd and Walkers Ltd was taken fully within the ambit of existing law, notwithstanding the reservations expressed by the Auditor-General in his recent audit report.

## RACING AND BETTING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

## Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 13 October (see p. 2561) on Mr Hinze's motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate) (10.26 p.m.): The Bill before us, whilst being relatively small in size, is large in terms of what will be accomplished when it becomes part of the statutes of Queensland. In simple terms it allows the Racing Corporation to acquire property, that being one of the powers not presently provided under section 121 (2) of

the Racing and Betting Act. Honourable members will recall that when the Minister introduced the last amendments to the Racing and Betting Act he, as the Minister, became the corporation. It is interesting to note that section 121 (2) states—

“The Corporation by the name assigned to it by subsection (1) shall have perpetual succession and an official seal and shall be capable in law of suing and being sued, of compounding or proving in a court of competent jurisdiction all debts and sums of money due to it and of acquiring, holding, demising and alienating property and of doing all such other acts and things as bodies corporate may in law do and suffer.”

The responsibility given to the corporation by the current Act is very broad. The Minister is obviously trying to add to the responsibilities of the corporation.

The Bill provides that, if there are insufficient funds in the Racing Development Fund to meet interest and redemption payments on the loan envisaged from the National Bank of Australasia, the Governor in Council may allow an overdraft. In simple terms, the Government intends to secure the loan. On the basis of the input to that fund in recent years and what can be expected this year and in years to come, there would need to be unexpected or unforeseen circumstances to cause the Racing Development Fund to be deficient in funds to meet loan commitments. It is quite obvious from what has been happening that the fund should be reasonably buoyant.

I hope that the Minister will supply substantial information about the program. We have yet to learn just how much will be paid annually from the Racing Development Fund in interest and redemption payments over the approximate 10-year loan period. We will also have to wait to see what money goes into that fund. When we have those two figures, the difference between them will tell us the amount that will be left in the Racing Development Fund to assist other racing clubs throughout the State. I certainly hope that the amount will be substantial. I hope that the Racing Development Fund is not used solely to meet interest and redemption payments.

The other point that I hope the Minister takes on board is this: I have asked for certain information to be supplied by him this evening. His answers will govern to some extent our attitude to the Bill. We would certainly like to know the rate of interest that the National Bank of Australasia will be charging. If what has been occurring is analysed, I think that the Racing Development Fund should be more than able to meet interest and redemption payments. I have asked the Minister to take note of the fact that I have put certain matters to him. For his benefit I repeat that we would like to know the interest rate and the annual repayments on the loan to be made out of the Racing Development Fund. We would like clarification on the amounts of money that he expects to go into the fund so that we can gain some idea of the amount of money that will be left in the fund for other important purposes.

I make it clear that, whilst we are not opposed to the actual contents of the Bill, we certainly have grave misgivings about the state of certain sections of the racing industry and the manner in which the Government has recently applied itself to the industry in a number of ways. In simple terms, so that people can fully understand what will occur under the Bill, I point out that, as I understand what the Minister has said, the Queensland Government will become the owner of the Albion Park racing complex; the National Bank has agreed to provide some \$9m, which is the BATC's sale price for Albion Park, and it is being done that way rather than by the Government providing the money out of consolidated revenue; the Brisbane Amateur Turf Club will relinquish all ownership rights of Albion Park and will immediately through the National Bank, be able to commence the major planned development projects at both Doomben and Deagon racecourses; the Queensland Government, by way of the Racing Development Fund, will repay the National Bank over a period of approximately 10 years; and the final result will be a State Government-owned complex at Albion Park, a new grandstand complex and other improvements at Doomben, a training complex for gallopers at Deagon and a debt being repaid by the Racing Development Fund. That is the clearest indication I can give of my understanding of the Bill.

One can only describe this arrangement as unique; a Tory, free-enterprise Government being the owner of a multimillion dollar racecourse. It is no wonder that Government

members shake their heads in wonderment at their own inconsistencies. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the Government is about to become the owner of a very lucrative business, namely, the Albion Park racecourse.

There are people, including many of my colleagues, who are critical of what the Bill provides, and I believe rightly so. Yesterday we became aware that junior sport in Queensland was to have subsidy payments unmercifully slashed. The junior coaching subsidy has been reduced from 50 to 25 per cent and the ground improvement subsidy has been reduced from 33½ to 20 per cent. This must be one of the most retrograde steps in sport ever taken by this Government. It will put junior sport back 20 years and will have a damaging effect on those junior sporting bodies that are struggling for survival and have planned this year's activities in the expectation that subsidy levels would be maintained. Is it any wonder that those people ask why it is that this Government can arrange transactions for the benefit of the sport of kings but are supposedly unable to find the additional funds necessary to ensure the essential growth and prosperity of junior sport in Queensland? I ask the Minister to advise the Parliament about those matters in due course this evening, in addition to answering the other questions I have put to him about the future of Albion Park and the means by which its future operations are to be financed.

It is very important that this Parliament understands what stage 2 of this program is to be. I have already explained in simple terms my understanding of what stage 1 is; but, once the sale of Albion Park is completed, I think it is fair enough that we in this Parliament and the people of Queensland have an understanding of what stage 2 is all about. What will happen when the Government acquires Albion Park? Are there any deals at this stage with the Albion Park Trotting Club or other organisations? Can we be assured that the complex will be kept for the racing industry? Will trustees be in charge of the Albion Park complex? I believe we need to know the answers to all these questions so we can associate them with what is happening here this evening.

The sale of the Albion Park racecourse has caused quite a bit of concern, and there are many people who doubt the wisdom of that transaction. I suppose I could try to inject some humour into this debate by saying that if this Government runs true to form then no doubt we can look forward to some regular feature races at Albion Park. Perhaps we will see the Evans Deakin-Walkers Improvers or the Flameless Incineration Graduation Stakes. Anything could happen. I simply make the point that there has been some consternation about the sale of Albion Park, and no doubt my colleagues will express their concern later on. I ask the Minister once more to answer the questions that I have put to him.

It is important to place on record that racing is a growth industry, as can be seen from the taxes the Government has received. They have been spoken about in this place on many occasions, and I do not intend to "tax" that situation at this stage to any great extent because the Minister's Estimates are to be discussed shortly and there will then be plenty of opportunity to go into that material thoroughly. However, it is true to say that there has been a gradual improvement in the income to consolidated revenue from taxes on the racing industry over a number of years, particularly from 1975-1976. For example, the totalisator and betting tax rose from approximately \$14m in 1975-76 to approximately \$19m in 1980-81. Bookmakers' turnover tax rose from \$4.1m in 1975-76 to \$6.3m in 1980-81. So it is a very lucrative business, and one can only hope that the steps being taken now by this Government will result in the envisaged improvement and that we will not see any failures. I hope also that the development plans for Doomben are such that, if we are to see a new grandstand complex, the whole of the Doomben complex does not continue to be vacant for most of the year. At this stage I suppose it is not used more than half a day a week. Perhaps it would be less than that over the year.

I do not think that the Government should intervene in the industry to any great extent; but, if it is to provide the sort of money that it has been providing, and if it is to convert loans to grants—this Government has converted loans worth millions of dollars into grants over recent times—then I suggest that it should be making strong suggestions to the people in the racing clubs, particularly at the committee level, who will have to decide how they will use the money that the Minister has assisted them to acquire.

A large new grandstand is to be built at Doomben for the patrons—the ordinary people who frequent the track; the punters, their wives and, in many cases, their children. The grandstand complex should be isolated from the rest of the course so that it can house restaurants and other significant facilities for use by the public. These facilities need not be run by the racing clubs themselves. They could lease the premises to people who are experienced in the restaurant business. That complex could operate on a 7-days-a-week basis.

The International Airport and the Brisbane Airport are handy to Doomben racecourse. In the whole of that area the only place where people can gather in numbers for the purpose of having something to eat and drink after race meetings or some other activity is the Hamilton Hotel. If anyone has tried to get into that hotel at those times, he will know how difficult it is. It is popular and it is the only hotel handy to Doomben racecourse. I would like to see the new grandstand complex as a public utility. That would be to the advantage of the racing club. The complex could be used every day, and I am sure that it would be very popular. I would like to see restaurants catering for whatever category of people might like to use them. If the Minister and the members of the racing club committee think that this proposal could be adopted, surely the designers could be encouraged to incorporate it in the grandstand complex.

Naturally, as one who has pursued the conversion of the Deagon racecourse to a top training track, I can only say that I am elated at the prospect of money being spent on the new training complex there. I say this not for parochial reasons, but because I think that the industry deserves it. It can only improve things for the industry. It will certainly dissipate the cloud that has hung over the racing industry in the Deagon/Sandgate area for the last 10 years. Year after year BATC reports have indicated a loss in revenue from the Deagon racecourse. Year after year there have been rumours that the BATC intended to sell the complex. I think that at one stage even the Minister had some ideas about selling it.

Good common sense has prevailed and the Minister is now talking about converting the Deagon racecourse into a world-class training track. That is better than I originally proposed. I thought that it could be developed into the best training complex in Australia. If the Minister wants to convert it into a world-class training track, he certainly has my support. It is important for that to proceed. The New Zealanders who come here to follow the racing calendar think that the training facilities in that area are the greatest. Their training methods fit in very well with what is provided there. I have spoken to them personally and I believe they will flock to the new complex. If we provide not only a training track but also stabling facilities on or adjacent to the track, they will bring literally hundreds of horses to the area.

Although \$1m has been allocated to the upgrading of the Deagon complex, I am sure all of that sum will be used in the provision of such things as new railings on the course proper and on other courses. It certainly will not go much further than that.

As I have plenty of other opportunities to speak about these things in the Minister's Estimates, I conclude by reiterating that I hope the Minister will make the future of Albion Park clear when he replies this evening.

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (10.46 p.m.): I join with the Labor spokesman on racing (Mr Warburton) in what he has said about the proposed amendments and the reason for their introduction.

As a country representative, I am very concerned that the Brisbane racing industry will take the greatest percentage of money available in the Racing Development Fund. At the outset I must say that I am terribly disappointed that the racing days of Albion Park are virtually over. Some very wonderful horses have been raced there.

Mr Hinze: Auction.

Mr PREST: Yes, that was a wonderful country horse owned and trained by Mr Wall of Winton.

Repshot raced there during the war years. One of the biggest crowds that I personally saw at Albion Park was the day that Eye Liner won the Silver Slipper in Sydney and

beat two other great fillies. However, Albion Park will not be completely lost to racing because the Minister is very interested not only in racing but also in trotting. Albion Park will be made into a magnificent complex to cater for trotting.

The Minister knows that racing has a very big following in the country. In some areas it is one of the few sports that the public can attend on a Saturday afternoon. Country race clubs are a wonderful venue for recreation and social gatherings. At the present time the Gladstone Turf Club is in financial strife. When the Deputy Premier and Treasurer was responsible for racing, the club applied for a loan from the Racing Development Fund but did not receive the expected response. Only recently a couple of committee members virtually gave away a portion of the land in Gladstone that the committee held in trusteeship for racing purposes, without consulting the various members of the committee who found that a road was to go through portion of the racecourse reserve. Of course, that work that was to be done on behalf of the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development and the Gladstone City Council was stopped after approaches were made.

No application had been made to the appropriate Minister to cede the land. There were other reasons attached to it. It would have taken from the Gladstone Turf Club the right of entry into the racecourse. The Main Roads Department had stated that if that road giving access to the industrial area at Clinton came out at Mellefont Street, it would mean that the race club would not be able to gain entry at that point and that it would have to go some hundreds of yards down the track before it could gain access from that road.

It appears that the race club stopped the work in which the Gladstone City Council was participating from taking place. The council has now placed a demolition notice on the race club to pull down the stables. We will have a race club with no stables and no access. I have spoken to officers in the Minister's department. There has been a fresh application made for a loan to carry out certain works to improve the area, particularly the race club. I sincerely hope that all this money that is going into the Racecourse Development Fund is not going to be to the detriment of country racing.

This money is coming from the TAB from fractions, unclaimed dividends and TAB turnover. Virtually it is coming from the punter's pocket. We hear that it is going to go back into racing in a very big way. Complaints have been made that prize-money is not large enough. I do not think that the return to the punter is large enough. It is another form of tax, and I do not see why all the money that is coming out of the TAB should have to be returned to the industry.

The member for Sandgate said that there had been a cut this year in subsidies to junior coaching and junior sporting facilities.

Dr Lockwood: You can't compare that with racing.

Mr PREST: What is the difference? We pay tax in every other field. Why can't some of this money be paid to the punter? Why should it all go to the racing clubs? I do not believe that all this money should be going to the city area. Country racing must be looked after generously. Being a representative of a country area and a punter since I was a young lad—

Mr Burns: Not a very successful one, either.

Mr PREST: I quite agree with that. I am interested in country racing. After all, it takes as much to feed a horse in the country as it takes to feed a horse in the city. Of course, if we are going to put all our eggs in one basket to improve Deagon racecourse to provide better training tracks for the New Zealand contingent that comes over here for our winter racing carnival and takes away the prizes, no wonder it is said that the prize-money is not good enough. It is like going to church—it always wants the people to give more. Once again, the money is coming out of the worker's pocket.

We will be supporting the Bill. I want the Minister to take notice of what I said about the Gladstone Turf Club in relation to its loan from the Racecourse Development Fund. The club has been battling for a long time. I would like to see its facilities upgraded to an acceptable standard.

Mr McLEAN (Bulimba) (10.55 p.m.): I am probably flogging a dead horse, if I might use the term, but I should like to speak again on the closure of the Albion Park galloping track. I feel that once again I must speak on behalf of the owners, trainers and the attendants of the 150-odd horses that race at the track. All those persons will be affected by its closure.

The Government is failing in its obligations to take all aspects of the racing industry into account. Its decision to close Albion Park will have an adverse effect on the livelihood of many battling owners, trainers, jockeys and other people associated with the industry.

I would have thought that, before expenditure of the magnitude envisaged was contemplated, the sport involved would have to prove itself to be viable and accepted by the general public. In view of the progress of trotting over the past few years, that does not appear to be the case. Over the last few years, the support given to trotting has dropped. There is a need for the sport to have a very close look at itself. I do not want to be seen as knocking the trotting industry, but it definitely has lost a great deal of public support.

I want to quote some figures concerning the TAB turnover in the various racing sports. They are as follows:—

Year	Trotting \$	Galloping \$	Greyhound coursing \$
1975	37,386,760	135,000,000	9,000,000
1981	36,274,000	229,000,000	19,000,000

Those figures are very interesting. Whereas the TAB turnover in the trotting industry dropped substantially, the turnover for galloping rose significantly and the figure for greyhound-coursing increased by over 100 per cent. Those figures must be of grave concern to the trotting industry.

The figures for the TAB distribution in the same two years and for the same sports are as follows:—

Year	Trotting \$	Galloping \$	Greyhound coursing \$
1975	1,985,000	4,015,000	250,000
1981	1,084,000	4,183,000	446,000

Those figures prove that the general public are not accepting trotting to the same extent as they are the other two racing sports.

Today I tried to obtain the figures of the TAB turnover for the galloping meetings at Albion Park; however, I was not successful. The figures I looked at were the BATC figures for Albion Park and Doomben.

I suggest that there is still strong support from the small punter for a continuation of the type of racing provided by Albion Park.

If from the total funds that are to be spent the Government was prepared to expend even a small percentage on the provision of lighting and the promotion of night galloping, Albion Park would soon become very popular. A clear case can be put for combining the activities of the proposed trotting complex and the galloping side of the industry. Probably other sporting bodies could be encouraged to use the facilities provided. If they did, the modern amenities that are to be provided could be used more frequently than planned.

The small owner and trainer who presently support the Creek have the opportunity to be part of the racing game at reasonable cost. The trainer can train at Albion Park in all weather and the owner can race his horse there in all weather. The trainer can train without fear of harming his horse, as can occur on other tracks when they are hard, wet or too crowded. The Albion Park trainer's float fees are less and the hardship involved in reaching country tracks is reduced. In general, he can race a horse for far less cost than he will be able to when the Creek track is closed.

For the punter, the person who keeps the game going, where is there an easier place to get to? There is plenty of parking for cars and plenty of buses for anyone who uses

public transport. The track is handy to town and access by taxi is reasonably cheap. The pensioner and small punter find the Creek a cheap, reasonable venue for mid-week racing. Without doubt it is the most popular track in Brisbane for small battling trainers and owners and the small punters.

The Minister will argue that the acceptance figures belie my comments, but I make the point that the uncertainty of the future of the track is responsible.

Mr Hinze: Did Tony Mazzaglia write that for you?

Mr McLEAN: No, he did not. I assure the Minister that many other people's thoughts are similar to mine.

I come now to the obligation of racing clubs, whether they be galloping, trotting or greyhound clubs, to provide for their sport and for the community. As I pointed out in the figures I presented, the trotting industry has not improved its lot since 1975. In fact, it has gone backwards to quite an extent. There must be something wrong with the organisation when that happens, especially in view of the vast steps forward by the greyhound industry in the same time. The greyhound industry is actively involved in supplementing show societies, sporting organisations and so on. The Gabba Greyhound Club is repaying its loan to the Gabba trust and is funding through its operations the development of the area as a sporting complex. It has supplemented the building of the new stand at the complex which is described by some as a white elephant. It is used properly only when an extremely large crowd attends at the Gabba. It is not used, will never be used, to advantage, for greyhound racing. The plain facts are that the greyhound racing has helped to provide the amenities that have been added to the Gabba complex since coursing started there.

In most other areas where greyhounds race the clubs concerned contribute to show societies, etc, and work in conjunction with other sports. Without doubt the greyhound racing industry has proved that it can work in with other community and sporting bodies. The Government is in the process of buying a racing complex. That is a revolutionary step for any Government to take, but more so for the Queensland Government. It is essential that this investment does not become a white elephant to be used only once a week by trotting fans. A golden opportunity exists for the complex to provide modern facilities for the trotting fraternity and its supporters and to provide through this investment overdue facilities for the use of the supporters of galloping.

There must be a way in this day and age to combine both industries for the betterment of both, with decent, modern amenities for the public being provided for both sports.

It would be nothing short of criminal for the Government to spend the money we are talking about and then confine the obvious advantages that will come with the complex to such a small number of people. The amenities must be used in other ways when races are not being held. Provision must be made for community and sporting activities such as squash courts, football fields etc. We all know the present struggle that most sporting bodies have in raising money to exist, let alone build sporting fields and provide good venues.

I welcome an explanation by the Minister of any plans he has to ensure full use of the complex when it is completed, that is, full use by the trotting club, by the community and sporting bodies, including the gallopers.

Once again I ask the Minister, on behalf of many people who rely on the Creek to remain in the racing game, to explore every avenue to see if the two sports can be combined to share the benefits of this very large investment. I also make an appeal on behalf of the small punter, the pensioner and the general public who, for so long, have enjoyed the unique atmosphere of this track. For too long punters in Queensland have received a raw deal on amenities. Any improvements in the lot of the punter and racegoer must be commended.

The Queensland Government has had a long, sad list of racing Ministers, whose main claim to face has been their boasts that they do not bet or attend race meetings. I must say that the present Minister could not be included in that category. Former racing Ministers, by being totally unsuitable for that portfolio and totally ignorant of the needs and wants of the racegoer, certainly retarded the progress of the various racing sports.

I welcome some advances being made but I sincerely hope that the progress is not channelled into any one area at the expense of others. This complex cannot be built on the basis of exclusive use by the trotting club concerned. The lead set by the greyhound clubs throughout Queensland must be followed. Probably the best example would be the Gabba club. The Gabba track has certainly proved my point, and I sincerely hope that the Minister takes note of that example when he changes his mind and allows for the galloping track at the Creek to be part of the complex.

Dr LOCKWOOD (Toowoomba North) (11.6 p.m.): I rise to address myself to this Bill to amend the Racing and Betting Act. I support the idea that the annual contributions to the Racing Development Fund should be used on a once and once only basis, much the same as ordinary people would look at their income and approach a hire-purchase company or similar lending institution to obtain a large sum to undertake a capital expenditure such as buying a car or a house.

From this fund the Minister can provide a great deal of facilities in a very short time for racing patrons, but I think it must be clearly understood that once they are provided, there cannot be a similar contribution within a short time. It has to be understood that these moves will not provide for increased prize-money, and it is prize-money that the people in Toowoomba and on the Darling Downs have been looking for. It is one of the improvements that they see as being essential to promote racing. The provision of more assets by way of stands and other facilities will, I think, lead to increased wages and increased maintenance programs for clubs. In requesting these facilities, they should be very careful to make sure that they will have the patronage to make the facilities worth while.

One of the problems in providing money for which there is no repayment is that people tend to ask for a lot more than they can justify. That tendency will have to be watched very carefully to make sure that facilities applied for will be well and truly used by patrons. No matter what kind of grandstand facilities are provided, the clubs will have to look to midweek meetings to help maximise the use of the facilities so that they are worthwhile capital investments.

In Toowoomba, our concern is that we still have our very antiquated tote. It is so old that nobody can remember its pedigree. It is thought to be by Mechanical Marvel out of Damon Runyon. It goes whirr and bump. It is perhaps the only one of its kind in captivity. More than a year ago the Treasurer said that the club would receive an on-course, computerised tote linked with TAB headquarters.

Mr Hinze: That promise has been honoured.

Dr LOCKWOOD: It has been honoured? Right. The other thing would be a suitable building in which to house it.

The grandstands are very old. The club would welcome access to the Racing Development Fund to replace the grandstands in the fullness of time so that the facilities will continue to attract racegoers.

I support the introduction of the Bill. I think it is a very worthwhile, innovative change to achieve all of this capital funding in a short time by maximising the annual income of the fund much the same as an ordinary citizen would use a hire-purchase company.

Mr FOURAS (South Brisbane) (11.10 p.m.): I am totally dismayed by the content of the Minister's second-reading speech. He is treating this Parliament as something that does not deserve to be given the full facts. He talks about buying the Albion Park racecourse and giving it to the BATC, but he does not mention the price he will pay for it. He talks about borrowing money from the National Bank but does not tell us what interest rate he will pay. He talks about money going into racing through the new Racing Development Fund but does not say how much money will be in the fund or how much money will be allocated to racing. He tries to be all things to all people, but in this instance there will be very few people who gain and a lot who lose.

There is an economic axiom that says that in every situation from which somebody gains, somebody else loses. Everybody knows who will lose. It will not be the Albion Park Trotting Club or the BATC; it will be every other racing club in this State. We have been told that this is manna from heaven and will not cost consolidated revenue anything. That is marvellous. Of course, we have fractions and unpaid dividends. That money does not come

from anybody; it is money that arrives in the fund and is used in this way. I do not believe that that ought to be taken for granted. If I was a member of the Government I would not use that money in that way at all.

Honourable members opposite are always talking about private enterprise. They talk about it till the cows come home, particularly round election-time, but they are agrarian socialists. They like socialising their losses and allowing other people to take the gains. That is exactly what they are on about here. I do not believe in this Bill. I do not believe that the people of South Brisbane, whom I represent, can support this action at a time when we are talking about economic stringency, insufficient money for our hospitals and cutting back subsidies for junior sport from 50 to 25 per cent. Isn't it marvellous that today we glibly sit here and cut back subsidies to junior sport but will support the sport of kings—the sport of the silvertails? It is amazing, is it not? Not a whimper from the Government, and not many people here to see it. I guess that it is an historic day. Mr Hinze has got his baby, it is running through on the rails and will win by a long way. But I want it recorded in "Hansard" that I will not put up with this; I will speak up for the people I represent and say that I believe it is a most unjust Bill.

We are being given the greatest snow job I have ever seen. The document I have here says virtually nothing, gives us no information, yet glibly says that it will cost us nothing. The Bill contains a clause that if things go awry there are Government guarantees backed by consolidated revenue. I suppose that has to appear. I cannot imagine any frugal banker acting just on the premise that the Minister in charge of racing, who throws away millions of dollars, will be in control. There would have to be a guarantee from the Government. Perhaps we will rue this day and have to pay money out of consolidated revenue.

What else has this Government done since Mr Hinze has been the Minister? He has been advancing millions of dollars to racing clubs by way of loans. But that was not enough. He even gave clubs money that should have been loans. They had not received the money, but it had been agreed to, so the Government gave it to them.

If the price of Albion Park is \$9m, on my estimation the Government will have to pay in excess of \$2m a year in interest and redemption charges out of a fund which, I have been told, will contain no more than \$3.8m; so more than 50 per cent of the Racing Development Fund will go into one course. This is all really just to help Mr Hinze's baby. It is really just to get the Albion Park Trotting Club out of the doldrums; to get the investment made by him and his friends up and moving.

Let us face it. As I said in my speech on the Financial Statement, this money will not help very many people. It will certainly not help the punters who go to the TAB offices in my electorate. They will not receive increased dividends. It will not help racing clubs all over Queensland. It will help only the BATC and the Albion Park Trotting Club. Perhaps we will see a new grandstand at Doomben and some nice new facilities at Albion Park. Some patrons might say that that is good enough, but I do not believe this ought to be paid for by punters who do not collect dividends or from fractions. We talk about the user-pays principle—that the person who uses the service ought to pay for it—but in this instance the TAB punter in my electorate who goes across the road from the Melbourne Hotel and invests his couple of dollars every week will pay for it. But what will he get out of it? He does not run racehorses—he will not see the price of his racehorse increase from \$50,000 to \$80,000—yet that is what it is all about. There is a price mechanism. When prize-money goes up, so does the price of horses and breeding stock, and that is what it is all about. We are making a few people richer. This Government is giving to the rich and taking from the poor.

Let us look at the contribution that the racing industry has made to the State of Queensland. In 1975-76, the Government received \$14m from the totalisator and betting tax, and \$4.2m from the bookmakers' tax, making a total of \$18.2m out of a total taxation package of \$321m. The racing industry provided about 6 per cent of the total tax in the Budget in that year. In 1980-81, the Government received \$18.9m from the totalisator and betting tax and \$6.4m from the bookmakers' tax. There was total tax of \$603m in that year. In 1981-82, the totalisator and betting tax is expected to drop to \$18.1m, and the bookmakers' tax will be \$6.5m. The tax from that source in 1981-82 will represent about 3 per cent of total taxation. There has been a decline from 6 per cent to 3 per cent.

What have we given the racing industry in the same years? In 1975-76, the Government provided \$600,000 for the Racecourse Development Assistance Fund, and \$1.6m for the Racing Clubs Turnover Tax Special Fund, making a total of \$2.2m. Since then the Government has been giving more and more to the racing industry, although it has been receiving less and less from the industry. In 1979-80, the Government gave \$4.6m to the racing industry, and in 1980-81 it gave \$5m. In 1981-82, it is expected that the Government will give \$8m to the industry.

In addition, the Government has been giving away millions of dollars to the racing industry by converting loans into grants. There has been an amazing turn-about there. The Government has actually given away to the racing industry more than it has received from it. I know that the time is late, but I want to be recorded in "Hansard" as being totally opposed to this measure. The Racing Minister has a lot of cheek to come into this Parliament with a second-reading speech that does not give us any information at all. He is selling us a pig in a poke. He is sitting there smiling smugly. I guess that the member for Carnarvon is also very pleased about it. I wonder if there is any racing in his area and what the people whom he represents will get in the future. Very little, I presume.

A decision taken by Government can be judged on three factors: whether it is simple and easily understood; whether it is equitable; and whether it is efficient. This is a most inequitable proposition and it is not as efficient as has been stated. It will open up a Pandora's box. We have been conned. This is a Brisbane racing Bill. It is for the Albion Park Trotting Club and the BATC. It is a shame that this free enterprise Government is propping up the trotting industry, which is an ailing industry. It is giving away the people's money. The Government is spending \$500,000 less on welfare than it spent last year.

Mr Bjelke-Petersen: Do you go to the races?

Mr FOURAS: Yes. My favourite race-track is Albion Park—the little man's track. That is where I like to go, and where the little men go to enjoy racing. It has a history and a significance far beyond the dollars and cents that the Government talks about. There is a feeling about the old sand track. I enjoy going to the races there. However, I do not go there too often now. As the Premier knows, when we get into this game we become busy men and we have to find some time to spend with our families. I am not a wower; I like a bet. I go to the TAB, but I cry every time I do so now because I know that the little share of the dividend I do not receive—I back a winner occasionally—will go to this grandiose Hinze plan. I think that is appalling. It is also appalling that more members in this House do not take this attitude and stand up and ask, "What are we? Are we about the sport of kings? Are we about the silvertails with their top hats and long dresses, or are we about running the State to benefit the most people of the State?"

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (11.20 p.m.): As the trotting industry is to be given a great deal of money, we should look at the way it has been run since night trotting commenced. In the days before night trotting, Jack Gregg and four part-time stewards handled the trotting at Cairns, Innisfail, Charters Towers, Townsville, Maryborough (which has now closed), Redcliffe, Rocklea, Ipswich, the Gold Coast and the Darling Downs.

That was before the new board was appointed. The new board will be very much involved in this grandiose scheme at Albion Park. However, at that time the secretary did the accounts and all office work and there was no trotting at Albion Park at all. Today there are eight full-time stewards plus a part-time steward, a full-time registrar, a secretary and an accountant to do the job that was previously handled by one man and four part-timers.

I do not attack the stewards. I have met them all and have worked with them all; they are good fellows. I wonder why the Queensland Trotting Board has to spend so much money from the available funds on these appointments. In the early days the fee to transfer a horse from one owner to another was \$1. Now it is \$25. Does it take any more time or effort? A licence fee used to cost \$1; now it is \$50. At that time the show supervisor conducted trotting at the various agricultural shows and was paid \$40 a day. Now a full-time steward has been appointed to that position. In the old days board members received no expenses but today nobody can really check on the payments that are made.

Instead of Abe Fryberg, Cec Carey, Max Poulter and Artie Belford, the new members of the board have been appointed because of whom they know, not what they know about trotting. A long-standing joke in trotting circles is that one new member of the board was so lacking in trotting knowledge that he did not even know where the car-park at Albion Park was, let alone where the horses ran. The chairman does not have a long background in trotting. When he started, the vice chairman (Peter Burge) had no idea at all and had to ask people all about it. Ted Allen is a partner in the firm that bought out Carl Robertson's car dealership, and that is probably the sum total of his experience. Eric Dobson is a fruit packer from Stanthorpe. Another member is a fellow named Seymour who used to be an employment officer at Albion Park when night trotting started. His background was Blue & White Cabs. I do not know what experience that gives him in trotting. He was also in real estate at Samford. I know that he was able to influence someone so that the Main Roads Department would not put a freeway through his property. I wonder who he saw.

The lack of expertise on the board means that people who are better known for the size of their stomachs than their knowledge of trotting are making decisions that affect a trotting owner or driver's life. A New Zealand steward was brought here but he did not even know how to handicap the horses under the Queensland system. He could not even fill out the forms. He has now been made a PR man to promote Queensland trotting in other States.

Some of the smaller clubs have done very well out of the system that the Minister has introduced, but others have been treated badly even though they have been good managers. An example of that is the Redcliffe Trotting Club, which owns its own ground. It has no big stands and no big debts. The biggest debt that club ever had was for the provision of night lights. What is important is that that club puts its money back into trotting, not into fancy members' rooms or stands. That club has been disadvantaged because it did not take on a large debt. Because that club was not a spendthrift, it has been disadvantaged in comparison with clubs such as Southport, which I will get to in a minute.

The Rocklea ground is owned by the show society. Trotting is conducted by the Metropolitan Trotting Club. Its biggest expense was on a complex that cost \$64,000. To say the least, it is not elaborate.

When the present Minister took on the responsibility of racing, he said that he would have to resign as president of the Gold Coast Trotting Club, a position that he had held since 1976. With the president of the club a Minister of the Crown, obviously that club had the ear of the Minister then responsible for racing. Some years ago that club borrowed approximately \$600,000 at as much as 14 per cent interest from Waltons Ltd, of all people. I tell everybody in my electorate not to borrow other than from banks and building societies because it is not the sort of finance I would accept. However, the Southport Trotting Club borrowed from Waltons at 14 per cent and, after some political activity, the poor old whipping-horse, the socialist tiger (the SGIO) bailed it out of the Waltons deal. Southport has an elaborate members' stand but still does not have a decent race-track. In fact, the club is still talking about altering it.

Ipswich has been operating for about 25 years. Two years ago a dual complex to handle trotting and greyhounds was suggested. Agreement could not be reached but the president of the show society supported greyhound racing and gave the trotting people notice to quit. The Minister responsible for racing promised a large sum of money and the greyhound complex is now under way. The trotting interests are now developing a new track but wanted to race while that development was taking place, so they made arrangements for their trots to be conducted at Redcliffe. Prior to Redcliffe converting to night trotting, they raced on Saturdays and holidays and bet on Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

The Ipswich club is now using that same track on Saturdays and holidays but betting on Brisbane and southern races is not allowed. Why? When the Ipswich Trotting Club returns to its new Ipswich track, betting will still be allowed on Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne races. One of the reasons why the Ipswich club went to Redcliffe was that it was under the impression that it would be able to copy Redcliffe and have betting on interstate races. It seems to me that it has been treated very badly.

At Lawnton, the dog track has been developed by a group of people who, like those at Redcliffe, were frugal and were good managers. They are now losing out because of their good management. Albion Park, Southport and the Gold Coast are all benefiting from loose management. They were prepared to take a big punt on borrowing money; then along came the Minister and said, "This is the way to get you all on side; we'll bail you out."

In the last month or so, the Albion Park Trotting Club has held its annual general meeting, and Mr Lloyd Rees, the club chairman, told the members not to be concerned at the staggering \$101,190 loss last year. He said, "The club has had bigger losses. Next year there will be no rent to pay." That will be as a result of the scheme introduced by the Minister in charge of racing (Mr Hinze). The current landlords, the Brisbane Amateur Turf Club, charge \$107,000 a year for the use of the trotting track and other facilities. But if Mr Lloyd Rees is to be believed, the Government is buying Albion Park for \$9m and the Albion Park Trotting Club will not have to pay a penny in rent next year. I am sure that that is a fact.

Some members of the Albion Park Trotting Club then moved to do something about some members of the committee. A circular was sent out by the Director of the State Emergency Service (Brigadier Kev Whiting), businessman Neil Cremin of Wickham Terrace, and Dr Pat Aldons. They said the committee was "elderly, aloof and not sufficiently in touch with or interested in the average member". They said that "a member's lot, as apart from that of a committee man's, was an abysmal one". They claimed that the committee had allowed the club's day-to-day administration to degenerate. They said, "In an environment where the average member has so little going for him, committee perks simply abound—overseas trips, hired limousines, lavish entertainment—all extravagances of questionable worth but bywords at present." They are the words of members of the Albion Park Trotting Club referring to the club where the Government is spending \$9m to buy the site.

The Government has not yet determined what it will spend on the site. I have been through the Minister's statements and other statements. One said, "\$5m planned for the Creek". The next statement said, "The Albion Park Trotting Club next year will become free tenants of an estimated \$10 million new-look trotting complex."

Then I read in the Press—

"\$9 mil. deal on 'Creek' . . . will be torn apart for an ultra-modern conversion to night trotting worth \$6 million."

In the same Press cutting from the Library I saw—

"The new Albion Park complex will comprise a small motel and a host of other added luxury features at a price tag understood to be in the region of \$15 million."

I remember Tony Mazzaglia being a Liberal spokesman on racing at one stage. He spoke about a "\$24 million white elephant". How much money is really being spent on Albion Park, and why haven't we been told?

On 16 February this year in "The Telegraph", Rod Gallegos estimated that \$13m was to be spent on the Creek. Later someone said that \$4.67m was to be spent on a grandstand. The club has not done badly. The figures have gone from \$24m to \$16m, from \$10m to \$13m on this great complex. Who will run it? Will the Trotting Control Board run it? In the industry, it has a reputation of not having enough knowledge of the industry to run it. The Albion Park Trotting Club committee has been accused by its own members of being a bunch of old fuddy-duddies who look after themselves by giving themselves limousines, overseas trips and other perks. The Government is allegedly handing over the punter's money for their use.

The Minister told the House that he was going to have a new \$304,000 Sires Produce Stakes in Queensland next year. The story was that the Hinze plan provided that more than half the money would be provided by the State Government. The Government was going to contribute \$152,000 towards a series of trotting races to help local breeding of trotters. I am interested in helping the Queensland breeding industry, but figures that I have seen have varied considerably.

The next day, in a newspaper, David Broadbent was reported as saying that the Government was going to make a direct cash grant to boost the prize-money for a glamorous new trotting series to begin next year. It was reported that, to get the series off to a healthy start, the Government would give about \$200,000 to the winners of the new 30-race series. It rose from \$152,000 on one day to \$200,000 the next day—in other words, it rose by \$48,000 in 24 hours.

As to Queensland breeding and training—I remember the Minister's statement when he bought a couple of horses at a dispersal sale on the Gold Coast. He said it was a tax lark. I am sure that he will not deny that. "The Courier-Mail" of 7 April 1981 reported—

"Mr Hinze's \$34,000 purchase of second top-price yearling at the selected sales at the Gold Coast on March 22 was, in fact, a leasing arrangement.

'When you're in the business in as big a way as I am it is an avenue for taxation advantages,' Mr Hinze said."

That has nothing to do with breeding or buying Queensland horses. I wonder how many Queensland-bred trotters and pacers the Minister has in his stable.

When I read of soccer pools millionaires paying \$3.5m for horses and of the Government's reducing subsidies to sport for the kids from 50 per cent to 25 per cent, I wonder whether our priorities are right and whether the honourable member for South Brisbane is not totally correct in what he said.

Australian breeders are not happy with the situation. In "The Australian", I read of the sale by Vince Tobin of the colt that brought an Australian record price of \$500,000 at the Sydney Easter yearling sales. It was a brother of champion two-year-old Full on Aces. Vince Tobin was reported as saying, "My brother and I are humble people, ordinary breeders. We are worried that rich syndicates are shutting the door on small breeders. Half of the people who are buying horses would not know the front end of a horse. These people are getting into syndicates and are shutting the door on people like ourselves."

The Government should not be in the business of helping the big bloke push the little bloke out. Perhaps it is looking after only those at the owners' end of the sport. Perhaps the Minister is looking after only the sport or club in which he is interested. Other trotting clubs, galloping clubs and greyhound clubs are not getting the deal that Albion Park is getting.

I should like to know where all the money is coming from. Where is the \$16m promised by the Minister coming from? Reference is made to giving Bundamba \$4.5m, Deagon \$3m, Eagle Farm \$5m, Doomben \$6m—I hope that is not on top of the \$9m that it is getting—and Albion Park \$3m. As I say, where is all the money coming from? I hope it will not come out of the TAB. If it is, the TAB money that has gone into consolidated revenue will be reduced in the future and the amount of money taken from consolidated revenue to be spent on facilities for the kids, hospitals and other services will be cut back step by step.

Mr Fouras: I think they will have only \$1.8m left over.

Mr BURNS: I would not be surprised if that was correct. The other alternative is to take a higher percentage out of the punters' pockets or a bigger tax share. It appears that, somewhere along the line, the fund will not be able to pay all the money that has been mentioned in the Press in statements attributed to the Minister. I hope that the punter is not made to pay.

I support my colleagues who have spoken about the Creek itself. I have an old friend named Jim McGill. Many honourable members would know him. He is the man who conducts the racing museum at Eagle Farm. The McGill family is probably one of the best known and most respected families in the racing industries. Each year Jim McGill, the QTC and others run a charity licensees day on which all the old trainers, old jockeys, old bookmakers and others associated with racing get together.

Racing must have been a good game in the early days. This year, Jimmy Tedman, an old trainer, celebrated his 100th birthday.

I want to retrace some of the history of Albion Park. Racing was first conducted there in 1854. In those days, horses were handicapped according to their height. In 1910 Albion Park had the distinction of having its ownership change three times on the one day. Jimmy

McGill can remember one race day in 1931 when he counted 61 unregistered bookmakers taking bets at "Palma Rosa", out behind the old ti-trees beside the fence. As Jimmy McGill has said, football and cricket matches used to be played at Albion Park, and pony club meetings were held there.

A number of people have claimed that the facilities at the Creek are too good to be devoted to trotting alone. I have no axe to grind; I have a lot of mates in the trotting industry, and I want to see it prosper. But I support the idea of a dual track and a central sports ground.

Many battlers want the Creek to be used by gallopers. On 11 January 1981, Mr Frost, the secretary of the Albion Park Trotting Club, when speaking about the multi-million dollar three-storey public grandstand, offering ultra-modern facilities, to be built there, said—

"If the glamour grandstand is built followers of both sports will share the best amenities available in Brisbane."

He added that there was no wish to see gallops discontinue there so the complex could become solely a trotting ground.

The secretary of the Albion Park Trotting Club said that he had no objection to the gallops and trots being run there. Who wants this track as a multi-million dollar complex for the trots alone? The people at Redcliffe, Rocklea and elsewhere will not say that they want all the money spent at Albion Park. Other trotting clubs would like a share of the cake.

It seems to me that we should be sticking with the gallopers at Albion Park. It is so close to the centre of the city that pensioners could go down there by bus for 20c. They went to the races on Wednesday afternoon when there were smaller crowds. If the gallopers are to be excluded, they will be forced to go to Eagle Farm, Doomben and elsewhere. People who attend the races at those courses know what transport is like. More difficulty is being put in the way of people who have used the Creek for years. Even now the QTC is talking about spending \$5m on sand tracks at Eagle Farm for the type of racing that is being abolished at Albion Park. The submission made by the honourable member for Bulimba about keeping gallopers at the Creek was quite correct. It should be a dual track.

I am concerned that we seem to be looking after the silvertails. Racing is said to be the sport of kings; but without doubt the people at the top, the men who buy the racehorses, want more money—and they want the punter to pay.

The punter is not attending the races. If a new grandstand is built at Doomben, it will be filled only on Doomben Cup day and on the Rothmans Ten Thousand day. It will be filled only two or three times a year. When I and many other punters go there during the year, we never see the stand full unless it is raining.

If the Government wants to provide better facilities for the punters it should provide covered betting areas similar to those at the trots. The Government should provide better facilities for the punters. I am sure that the TAB punter would rather see his fractions spent on kids' sports than on providing a committee room for some of the top men in the club. The punter would rather see his money spent on providing better facilities at the TAB than on a fancy grandstand and a new trotting complex at Albion Park. Money provided by punters who will not go to the races is being used to bolster those racing clubs that have run their business so badly that they cannot get the punters to attend.

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police) (11.39 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. I will comment briefly on the points that they have made.

Firstly, the honourable member for Sandgate asked questions that I will try to answer as quickly as possible. The fund is running at a level of about \$5m a year. The figures I will give are approximate; I do not want to be tied to specific figures. The \$5m is made up of approximately \$1m in fractions, \$1m in unclaimed dividends and 0.5 per cent of the TAB and on-course totalisator turnover, which brings in about \$3m.

The honourable member also asked about the interest rate on the loan from the National Bank. It is of the order of 16 per cent, fluctuating. The half-yearly repayment is of the order of \$500,000, plus interest on the loan. The amount in the fund today stands at \$3.8m. The amount going into the fund is of the order of \$300,000 a month. Last night figures were released for the first three days this week—

Mr Burns: The \$300,000 a month makes \$3.6m a year?

Mr HINZE: It is a total of about \$5m, taking into account the fractions and the unclaimed dividends. The point I am making is that we are trying to lift the turnover through the TAB. I have to be able to withstand the argument that was put up this evening, that we cannot deprive the little basketball, football or soccer team of funds to be spent on lavish racing development.

Mr Burns: But you are.

Mr HINZE: No. The honourable member is a fair bloke and I am sure I can prove to him that that is not the case. As I said, the half-yearly repayment is of the order of \$500,000 plus interest, over 10 years.

Mr Fouras: So you will pay about \$2.6m or \$2.7m the first year?

Mr HINZE: In the first year we will pay back about \$1.6m or \$1.8m.

The monthly income of the fund is of the order of \$300,000. It is my intention and that of my officers to watch the fund closely. I do not ever want to be in a position of using the overdraft or special loan that would be made available through the Treasury by the Governor in Council. This money will not come from consolidated revenue. It is a determination by the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Treasurer, that the fund be allowed to increase to a certain figure. That will be reimbursed from the Racing Development Fund when it comes into credit.

I repeat that no funds whatever for any of the undertakings to which I have given consideration since I have been the Minister will come from consolidated revenue. We are aiming to earn something like \$30m a year for consolidated revenue. That is our project.

A few minutes ago I was talking about the figures for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, since 4BC started race broadcasts in the south-east corner. Yesterday I answered a question from our friend from Cook. I am not at all happy with the coverage by some of the provincial stations. As time goes on, we will have to try to overcome the problem. Land-lines will be made available free to Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns, etc., so that people in those areas can be given a Government service.

Mr Scott: You had better get Telecom to get it done quickly.

Mr HINZE: Telecom is co-operating with us to the full. Discussions were taking place yesterday. We hope it will be possible to give people right throughout the State the service that we are enjoying in Brisbane. Anybody who has been listening to 4BC this week would have some indication of the renewed vigour in the racing industry. In the first three days of this week the turnover increased by 47 per cent.

An honourable member asked about the future of Albion Park. I make it very clear that it is not proposed to allow the present position to continue, that is, a small club with something like 200 members and a small committee. I will not provide that committee with millions of dollars to provide what the honourable member for Lytton has just been talking about. We will make sure that the membership is increased dramatically.

Mr Burns: And the BATC?

Mr HINZE: And the BATC.

Mr Burns: Albion Park?

Mr HINZE: And Albion Park.

Mr Burns: The QTC?

Mr HINZE: And the QTC.

Mr Burns: What about women members?

Mr HINZE: I believe women are entitled to the same membership rights as men. That is my opinion; what the clubs do is their business.

Mr Burns: You are the Minister; you can whack it in. Legislate for it.

Mr HINZE: The membership of the Gold Coast Turf Club is 1 000, and I cannot see why the membership of the clubs here in Brisbane cannot be of the same order. As I say, this Bill is not designed for some small membership; it is designed for the whole of the racing industry and the small punter, as well as those the honourable member for Lytton refers to as silvertails. I can assure the honourable member that I will be taking an interest in the membership of the various clubs.

I liked the idea of the honourable member for Sandgate about using Albion Park as something more than just a trotting venue. There are about 30 sales that take place in Brisbane annually. There is a very good sales complex on the Gold Coast, but I am giving serious consideration to making provision for a complex at Albion Park so that those 30 sales can be held there. Likewise, I will be discussing the possibility of a first-class restaurant there that can be used daily by people living in the area.

Mr Burns: And a sports ground in the centre?

Mr HINZE: And a sports ground in the centre.

The new course will have a 1 000 metre track and, as I have said so often, it will be the best in Australia. I know of no course of that size in Australia. I know that the Cambridge course in New Zealand has a 1 000 metre track which provides very attractive racing, including the flying mile. Time trials will obviously be held in Brisbane because the track will be better than Harold Park or Mooney Valley. The new track will use most of the area presently occupied by the old sand track.

I also want to refer to stabling at Deagon. I reiterate that it will be one of the best training areas anywhere, specifically because of its proximity to salt water for swimming. The course covers something like 40 acres, and I have had a very good look at it from all angles. First class stables can be built there, and I have said to the BATC, "If you are going to build stables and make them available for sale by way of strata title, that is your business. I cannot give you the funds for that; you will have to do that yourself." But it is obvious that trainers from right throughout Australia would be prepared to purchase strata title stables in order to have facilities permanently available.

The honourable member for Port Curtis referred to the Gladstone Race Club. I will make sure that one of my officers meets him and the members of the club to look into the problems he referred to, particularly the fact that the roads in the area are having a detrimental effect on the club. I assure all members who were concerned that these funds would be spent only in Brisbane that that will not be the case. If we had more time at our disposal I could list the various race-tracks I have attended since I became the responsible Minister, tracks right throughout Queensland, from Coen out to the western border. On every occasion I take a departmental officer with me. I have written to clubs indicating that they should put their requirements in writing so that they can be considered along with all other representations that have been made to us.

The honourable member for Bulimba referred to the closure of Albion Park and suggested that I was propping up the trotting industry because it is more or less in the doldrums. I would point out to him that I attended trials at the Redcliffe trots two nights ago. There were at least 160 horses in 19 trials. Surely that is an indication that the trotting industry is not in the doldrums, as has been suggested. I also give praise to the Gabba coursing club, and I commend it for its public relations efforts. From where I sit, I get all the commendations, and I believe that it is running a pretty good ship.

The member for Toowoomba North (Dr Lockwood) referred to the fact that the clubs must clearly understand that, once funds are provided by way of non-repayable grants, they cannot come back for a second bite of the cherry and that the facilities must be used to the full. We all agree with that. He also referred to the antiquated tote building in Toowoomba and said that a new one is required. I have had a look at the building and agree with what the honourable member said. I leave it to the Toowoomba Turf Club to advise my officers of its requirements in that regard.

It must be remembered that these grandstands are built for the comfort of punters—the people about whom we are concerned. Covered betting ways are provided under most of the new grandstands.

My friend the honourable member for Lytton referred to the problem of not allowing betting on the Brisbane races at the Redcliffe trots. He should immediately see the reason for this. There is coursing at Capalaba and trotting at Redcliffe and Rocklea.

Mr Burns: Why not? You are talking about doing something for the punters.

Mr HINZE: Let us be fair and reasonable about it: we are trying to provide all these facilities in the metropolitan area, and surely people will use them. If similar facilities are to be made available within a 10-mile radius, people will not use the facilities in the metropolitan area. I do not mind if similar facilities are provided 20 miles away, or at some further distance.

Mr Burns: What is the difference between a bloke going to Eagle Farm and a bloke going to Redcliffe?

Mr HINZE: There are arguments both ways. The people in the galloping industry say, "Let every section of the industry stand on its own feet. We stand on our own feet in the galloping area. Surely the coursing and trotting people can do likewise."

The member for Lytton also referred to numerous statements that have been made in the news media.

Mr Burns: By you in the news media.

Mr HINZE: All right. The honourable member knows as well as I do that I am referring to the news media. Most of the racing writers—apart from Keith Noud, who I believe has some intelligence—know the colours of the jockeys' jackets and might know if a horse wins by half a length; but, when it comes to other matters, they just have not got a clue. I have become frustrated in trying to get across the story about what the Government is trying to do for the industry. On practically every occasion, I find it impossible to do that. I do not intend to mention names. I have spoken personally to various racing writers and asked, "Can't you understand?"

I think that I have answered most of the points raised by honourable members.

Motion (Mr Hinze) agreed to.

#### Committee

Mr Row (Hinchinbrook) in the chair

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Hinze, by leave, read a third time.

The House adjourned at 11.56 p.m.