

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 1981**

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

### PAPERS

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

Reports—

Queensland Housing Commission for the year ended 30 June 1981

James Cook University of North Queensland for 1980.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

Industrial Development Act 1963-1979 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923-1979

Harbours Act 1955-1980

Regulations under—

Public Service Act 1922-1978

Irrigation Act 1922-1979.

### RAILWAY PROPOSALS

#### Central Queensland Branch Lines

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) laid on the table working plans, sections and books of reference for construction of branch lines to connect the Boundary Hill mine with the Moura short line, the Curragh mine with the Central Railway and the Riverside and Blair Athol mines each with the Goonyella railway, together with the respective reports of the Commissioner for Railways thereon.

The commissioner's reports were ordered to be printed.

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

#### Allegations of Member for Archerfield

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police) (11.4 a.m.): Last week I was indisposed with influenza to the extent that my doctor advised me that I should spend a couple of days in bed. During that period I understand that the honourable member for Archerfield made some statements in the House, and I want to put the record straight about them.

One of the statements was to the effect that I had spent three days on a boat with somebody who is unknown to me; I cannot remember the person's name, but his name was referred to in the House.

Mr Hooper: Jack Rooklyn.

Mr HINZE: I do not know Jack Rooklyn. I have never met the man. I have never been in his company. I was certainly not on a boat with him.

The other statement was to the effect that I had travelled in America with Kornhauser. Here again, to my knowledge, I have never been in Kornhauser's company anywhere. Again that is a mistake. It is not that there is anything wrong with the man; I believe him to be an honourable gentleman.

I am not seeking any apologies from the honourable member for Archerfield; I am only telling the House that both of the statements to which I have referred were incorrect.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr FOURAS (South Brisbane) (11.6 a.m.), by leave: In a ministerial statement on 12 November, the Minister for Works and Housing, in reply to my statements on welfare housing in the Matters of Public Interest debate on the previous day, said:

"The honourable member made a number of sweeping statements about the Queensland Housing Commission's performance. That statement contained so many inaccuracies that it is important the record be set straight."

There were no inaccuracies or sweeping statements in my speech to the Parliament.

The Minister claimed that my statement about the use of Commonwealth grants by the Queensland Housing Commission was untrue. This is not so. Under the 1978 Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement, Commonwealth money for welfare housing was supplied in two forms:

- (1) as advances (this can be used for both home purchase and rental housing);
- and
- (2) as grants specifically for pensioners, Aborigines and rental housing.

I correctly accused the Queensland Housing Commission of not using any of the Commonwealth advances (or any State funds) over the past two years for rental accommodation. By definition, Commonwealth grants to the States for rental housing are exclusively used for that purpose.

Although Queensland refuses to use Commonwealth advances for rental housing, New South Wales, for example, during the three years 1978-79 to 1980-81, used \$142m for rental accommodation out of total advances of \$211m. Western Australia, out of Commonwealth advances of \$60m, used \$40m towards rental during the same period.

The Minister also misrepresented my statement criticising the situation that has resulted in Queensland's low per capita allocation. Far from praising the Minister, I am appalled that it will be 1990 before Queensland begins to receive a full per capita entitlement for welfare housing. It was this Government's fault, and not that of the Whitlam Government, that Queensland refused welfare housing funding in 1973, setting the scene for low per capita levels for Queensland ever since.

The Minister has accused me of making sweeping statements by using comparisons of the rental stock available in the other States and that of Queensland. In the last year for which interstate comparisons are available (1979-80), South Australia accommodated 5 280 applicants, whereas Queensland accommodated some 3 000. South Australia can do this because it has a stock of 42 000 units compared with about 17 000 in Queensland. On a per capita basis we have less rental housing, we accommodate fewer families, and we increasingly spend less and less on this type of housing. How can the Minister say that we are doing better than anyone else?

The continual use by the Minister of a comparison of waiting-lists as a measure of Queensland's success is a debauchery of statistics. The issue is not the number on the list, but the number who are found housing. In Queensland, people are dissuaded from even placing their names on the waiting-list because of long waiting periods and the lack of housing in the more accessible areas.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! At the moment, I am a little concerned about the statement that the honourable member is making.

Mr FOURAS: I will be another two minutes.

Mr SPEAKER: I want to know how the honourable member has been personally affected. This is not a debate, but the honourable member appears to be debating the issue with the Minister. I seek a clear indication from the honourable member of how he has been personally affected, otherwise I will not permit him to continue.

Mr FOURAS: In a three-page statement the other day, the Minister for Works and Housing said that the statement that I had made the previous day contained sweeping statements and gross inaccuracies. What I am doing in one page is trying to set the record straight. That this State spends less per capita than any other State is appalling.

The Minister has wrongfully castigated a member of the Opposition who wants to rightfully bring the issue before the Parliament and the electorate of Queensland. He has accused me of being inaccurate and making sweeping statements. In conclusion, I challenge the Minister for Works and Housing to a debate in any forum of his choosing.

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: I take a point of order, Mr Speaker. The honourable member is making a speech.

Mr FOURAS: I conclude on the point—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I feel that the member for South Brisbane has concluded his statement. Reference has been made to the points that he felt needed explanation.

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

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

#### 1. Housing Commission Activities

Mr Casey asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) As there have been over a thousand pensioners on Queensland Housing Commission waiting lists each year since 1977, and as he has already conceded that all pensioner units for the years 1978-79, 1979-80 and 1980-81 have been built exclusively with Commonwealth grant money, why has the Government failed to recognise the needs of pensioners by refusing to spend any State money to build urgently required pensioner unit accommodation?

(2) For the years 1976-77, 1977-78, 1978-79, 1979-80, 1980-81 and 1981-82, exclusive of pensioner units and Aboriginal housing how much did Queensland receive under the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement for rental accommodation in each year, and how much from State funds was used for the same purpose for the same years 1976-77 to 1981-82 for each year?

(3) How many rental houses and units were in existence at 30 June in the years 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1981, and how many are there in existence at present?

(4) How many loans were approved for home purchases in the years 1979-80 and 1980-81, and what was the average value of the loans approved, and how many loans have been approved so far in 1981-82 and what is the average loan for this period?

(5) What investigations have been instituted by the Queensland Housing Commission with or without the help of other Government departments to identify how many homeless people there are in Queensland, and, if such a study has not been carried out, will the Government institute one immediately to assess the housing needs of homeless Queenslanders?

Mr Casey: I hope he tells the truth today.

Mr WHARTON: Before I answer the question, I take a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition said that he hopes that I will speak the truth today. I ask him to withdraw that remark because it is defamatory.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw that statement.

Mr CASEY: I am sorry, Mr Speaker. If the Minister is offended because I suggested that he would not be truthful, I withdraw the statement.

*Answer:—*

(1) This question reads more like a propoganda statement than a question, but I will deal with the matters it raises to demonstrate once again how conscious this Government is of the needs of its citizens. The numbers of pensioner applications on hand at 30 June for each of the years 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1981 are respectively 1 376, 1 107, 1 047, 1 021 and 1 163.

Those figures show that placement of applicants is at about the same rate as applications are received. The implication made in the question that they are the same people in 1981 as in 1977 is false. Although the Opposition does not like to acknowledge it, we still have the best placement rate in Australia.

Secondly, State grants for pensioner housing to the extent of \$4.4m are invested in existing units, plus State funds utilised on land for future building programs.

Thirdly, the term "pensioner program" has taken on a more specific meaning in recent years relating it to the earmarked grants from Canberra, to identify and account for the use of money as sought by Canberra. However, as the member should know—and if he does not, I will now tell him—thousands of pensioners are accommodated in rental housing provided from general purpose funds. These cover the full range from single bedroom to four bedroom units and all classes of pensioners. The questioner's colleague, the member for Archerfield, has publicly acclaimed some of these programs on the floor of this House.

Finally, we have to look at Canberra funding. While I have openly stated we have got a poor deal per capita, that is not true in respect of earmarked pensioner funds where we have always got a proper proportion. However, in untied grants and advances we have got about 10 per cent of the funds with over 15 per cent of the population. So in recent years State funds have been directed towards making up the shortfall in Commonwealth funds in areas of deficiencies to bring total funds more in line with resources directed to pensioners by earmarked funds.

Remembering that many of those catered for in the general purpose program are also pensioners, we have tried to improve the imbalance between programs caused by Canberra funds being on a two-tiered percentage.

Would the member have us neglect the single-parent families, the unemployed families, the invalid pensioner families and the low income earner who may aspire to ownership? That is what his statement implies.

(2) Once again the question demonstrates a lack of understanding. Except for totally earmarked funds, and since 1978 an unearmarked general purpose grant for rental, Commonwealth funds are on an either/or basis, that is, rental or ownership. A lot of housing built and rented in the first instance is subsequently sold, as I recently pointed out. Some are sold within a few months of tenancy; some, years later.

Prior to 1978 the long-term vendor finance on those sales to tenants was carried in the one account, basically the rental account. Since then all such sales are for cash. If the tenant wants terms, he is financed by cash transfer from ownership funds (which carry the terms contract) to rental funds. Allowing for small variations caused by price differences, each rental unit now sold is replaced almost on a one-for-one basis by this fund transfer. Money for houses sold now goes direct into rental funds in bulk, not over 25 or 30 years as in the past.

For the reasons set out, the years 1976-77 and 1977-78 are not comparable with later years. In those two years following long established practice, funds were allocated either to erection of houses or to co-operative societies for lending. A lot of houses constructed were sold, together with older houses.

The listings below in respect of those two years are in different format from subsequent years.

	Commonwealth Funds to Construction	State Funds to Construction and Land
	\$	\$
1976-77 .. ..	28,572,000	11,575,372
1977-78 .. ..	30,400,000	9,410,000

(These omit both Commonwealth and State funds allocated directly to ownership through societies or lent by the commission). The effect on rental stock from sales of houses constructed with above funds is better reflected in (3).

Funds applied direct to rental in the first instance:

	Commonwealth	State
	\$	\$
1978-79 .. .. .	10,257,000	12,257,464
1979-80 .. .. .	5,105,000	12,936,901
1980-81 .. .. .	5,310,000	12,841,362
1981-82 .. .. .	4,845,000	20,700,000 (est.)

(These are exclusive of Aboriginal and pensioner).

(3)—

At 30 June:

1976 .. .. .	20 759
1977 .. .. .	21 242
1978 .. .. .	22 178
1979 .. .. .	22 730
1980 .. .. .	23 063
1981 .. .. .	23 581

(4)—

Year	No. of Loans	Average Value
		\$
1979-80 .. .. .	2 482	24,250
1980-81 .. .. .	2 210	24,720
1981-82 (to date) ..	907	24,820

(5) The commission keeps in touch with a body called Queensland Homeless Persons Council under the chairmanship of Mr Doug Schweide of St Vincent de Paul Society. Until the past few months it was an official body sponsored by the Department of Social Security, but has continued as a voluntary body. Between surveys and local committees it has probably the best data available. It is readily available to and availed of by the commission as required.

2 & 3.

#### Illegal Gambling Charges

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

With reference to the answer by him to questions 21, 22, and 23 on 27 October concerning the Licensing Branch raids on premises used for illegal gambling at 142 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley—

What address or addresses were given to police by each of the following persons who were charged with offences by police after raids on the dates mentioned and with respect to which they subsequently failed to appear in court and forfeited bail—(a) Cosimo Rullo on 12 July 1981 and 23 June 1980, (b) Alberto (or Albert) Medora (or Medoro) on 12 July 1981, 24 November 1980, and 19 July 1979, (c) Alberto Giordano (or Giordana) on 12 July 1981, 23 June 1980, and 28 July 1978, (d) Louis (or Lewis) Harsanyi on 12 July 1981 and 19 July 1979, (e) Angelo Palazzo on 23 June 1980, 19 July 1979 and 28 July 1978, (f) Mario Di Chiera on 24 November 1980, (g) Vittorio Conte on 23 June 1980 and 21 October 1977, and (h) Luciano Scognamiglia (or Scognamiglio) on 19 July 1979 and 28 July 1978?

Answer:—

The addresses given to police by each of the persons mentioned when charged with offences by police after raids at 142 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley, are contained in the following schedule—

1. Cosimo Rullo—12-7-81—35 Marsden Street, Clayfield; 23-6-80—58 The Gardens, Alice Street, Brisbane.

2. Alberto Medoro—12-7-81—15 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley; 24-11-80—15 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley; 19-7-79—15 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley.
3. Alberto Giordano—12-7-81—25 Aman Avenue, Hamilton; 23-6-80—354 Winchester Road, Hamilton; 28-7-78—354 Winchester Road, Hamilton.
4. Louis Harsanyi—12-7-81—4/1 Hazel Street, New Farm; 19-7-79—4/1 Hazel Street, New Farm.
5. Angelo Palazzo—23-6-80—27 Rolly Road, Five Dock, Sydney; 19-7-79—46 Fifth Avenue, Wilston; 28-7-78—46 Fifth Avenue, Wilston.
6. Mario Di Chiera—24-11-80—4/163 Baines Street, Kangaroo Point.
7. Vittorio Conte—23-6-80—Unit 58, The Gardens, Alice Street, Brisbane; 21-10-77—23 Hibiscus Street, Everton Hills.
8. Luciano Scognamiglio—19-7-79—50 Henry Street, Chermside; 28-7-78—50 Henry Street, Chermside.

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

With reference to the non-appearance in court to answer police charges by the persons mentioned in the previous question—

What were the various procedures that were available to police, at relevant times, whether by way of application for bench warrants, further complaint and summons or otherwise, if they had wished to prosecute the matter further and bring those who were charged before a court with a view to conviction?

*Answer:—*

The following procedures were available to police when the persons mentioned in the honourable member's previous question forfeited bail:—

(1) The issue of a complaint and summons, or

(2) An application to the court under section 93 of the Justices Act to seek the issue of a mesne warrant, which is in the discretion of the magistrate to issue.

#### 4. Officers in Charge of Police Licensing Branch

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

(1) What are the full names of the police officers who have been in charge of the Licensing Branch between 1 May 1974 and the present and on what dates did each of them take up and relinquish that posting?

(2) Which of those officers are still in the Queensland Police Force and what is the present posting of each?

(3) Did the officer then in charge of the Licensing Branch advise any superior officer or officers, and, if so, who were they, prior to any of the raids, specifying the relevant dates, by the Licensing Branch on premises at 142 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley, that took place on (a) 1 June 1975, (b) 21 October 1977, (c) 28 July 1978, (d) 19 July 1979, (e) 23 June 1980, (f) 24 November 1980 and (g) 12 July 1981?

*Answer:—*

(1) The following police officers have been in charge of the Licensing Branch for the periods stated:—

William Patrick Osborne—5-8-73 to 11-7-74; Arthur Victor Pitts—11-7-74 to 3-2-75; William Patrick Howley—3-2-75 to 9-12-76; William Daniel Alexander Jeppesen—9-12-76 to 13-2-79; Ross Rigney—13-2-79 to 8-1-80; Noel Francis Peter Dwyer—8-1-80 to present.

(2) Inspector Rigney, who is attached to the Fortitude Valley District, and Inspector Dwyer, who is currently in charge of the Licensing Branch.

(3) In respect of the raids conducted on 1 June 1975, 21 October 1977, and 28 July 1978, the then officers in charge of the Licensing Branch have retired from the Queensland Police Force. No record can be located as to whether or not they did or did not advise any superior officer of their intention to conduct raids on premises at 142 Wickham Street. However, it is the policy of the present police administration for the detective inspector in charge of the Licensing Branch to make the decision to raid any premises without advising any superior officer.

#### 5. Displaying of Photographs and Names of Taxi Drivers

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware that there are large numbers of both taxi operators and drivers who are concerned about the introduction of photos and names to be displayed in taxicabs?

(2) What were the reasons for the introduction?

(3) What consultation was there between the Transport Department and other interested bodies?

(4) Is this action an invasion of an operator's civil liberties?

(5) Does he intend to recommend that this type of photo and name regulation be applied to other licence holders who come into contact with the public such as police, bus and truck drivers?

(6) Is he also aware that women taxi-drivers are concerned that by displaying their name publicly they place their safety in jeopardy?

(7) What department, person or organisation recommended this proposal?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 7) The introduction of drivers' photographs in cabs in Queensland was introduced to promote the image of the industry, provide an aid to tourists and improve the accountability of drivers, having regard to the obligations placed on them by the issue of their licences, and in addition it also offered advantages in preventing the subletting of cabs to drivers who are both unlicensed and unqualified to drive.

The overall scheme of identifying drivers in cabs, with the exception of the name, has the support of the Taxi Council of Queensland. Cabinet decided to implement this system having regard to these considerations and the fact that similar systems exist in other States and in many overseas countries.

I do not consider this scheme to be an invasion of civil liberties, as suggested by the honourable member, as employee identification is widespread in the business world, with shop assistants, bank employees and air hostesses as well as various other employees wearing identification labels. In fact every member of this Parliament has his name clearly shown in the telephone directory, and this also applies to many public servants.

Following a recent meeting with representatives of the Taxi Council and following requests by individual drivers. I made a submission to Cabinet which will result in the overall scheme being kept under review during the next 12 months with a view to examining any problems which may occur. Should drivers experience any real difficulties in that period, prompt action will be taken to remove the driver's name from the identification card.

I have always had a keen interest in the taxi industry and I hope that this small difference of opinion will not jeopardise the excellent relationship I have with the taxi industry generally.

#### 6. Free Sunday Public Transport

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware of the Victorian Government's decision to allow free Sunday travel on Melbourne's metropolitan trains, trams and buses during December and January?

(2) Does he support the view of the Victorian Premier that, even though the cost will be in the vicinity of \$500,000, if people are willing to use public transport on Sunday, public transport generally will be increased and the deficit reduced?

(3) Is he aware of any similar ventures overseas?

(4) Will he consider a similar scheme to operate for a trial period in the Brisbane suburban area?

*Answer:—*

(1) Yes, I am aware of the Victorian proposal. Indeed, it was a Liberal promise at the last election that "as part of our commitment to help families, we will introduce free weekend passenger rail travel for children accompanying adults". This policy has not yet been implemented, but I can assure the Parliament that the Treasurer and I have it firmly in mind for the future. I am sure our coalition colleagues would not disagree with the proposal as it will give added emphasis to this Government's commitment to do all it can to assist the family unit. I am pleased that the honourable member sees merit in this proposal and I look forward to the Opposition congratulating the Government when it is introduced.

(2) I can assure the honourable member that any scheme which increases the use of public transport, particularly at off-peak times, will be looked at very carefully by the Railway Department. However, the honourable member should be aware that the profitable segment of the Railway Department's freight operation significantly subsidises metropolitan passenger travel—almost to the extent of \$1 per passenger journey. The Government regards the provision of efficient urban transport as a community service and, to this end, is spending approximately \$300m on the introduction of electric trains. As a result of these forward policies, rail patronage in the Brisbane area has increased substantially by 18 per cent in the last two years, and this success has reaffirmed the Government's commitment to press ahead with its plans to upgrade railway passenger services, including expansion of electrification.

Although free travel on a Sunday will have no significant effect on the fixed costs of operation, operating costs will still have to be met. If additional services were introduced on Sundays, this could further increase the deficit of the public transport undertaking. In Brisbane, of course, we do have private bus operators servicing a substantial part of the Brisbane metropolitan area, and these operators, who are already being subsidised, would no doubt expect further assistance to underwrite additional losses they would incur if free public transport were provided on a Sunday.

(3) My department closely monitors the latest development in public transit systems from all parts of the world. Indeed, some of the advances introduced into Queensland have had their origin overseas. I am not aware of any successful long-term free-passenger project in any major capital city.

(4) The honourable member would no doubt now be aware of the activities of Transport Week, which commenced on Sunday, November 15, and which has been given wide media coverage. On the opening Sunday there was free travel on electric trains all day and the public response was overwhelming. Next Sunday there will be free ferry travel leaving from the Edward Street jetty. As well, the City Council has provided free "down town" bus services for the whole of Transport Week and the Valley Plaza has assisted motorists by providing free parking at their parking station for this week. I am sure the honourable member will agree that these services will help heighten the public's awareness of the various public transport developments which have taken place and encourage them to make even greater use of them in the future.

#### 7. Police Escort for Wide-load Vehicles

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Transport—

Because of the excessive cost of engaging a police escort to accompany wide-load vehicles, will consideration be given to allowing specially trained pilots to carry out these duties, thus reducing costs and releasing police for more important police duties?

*Answer:—*

I am advised that the use of a police escort as a condition of a permit to carry an overdimensional load is at the discretion of a district superintendent or a superintendent of traffic as provided by the Traffic Regulations. In all cases, due regard must be given to the safety and convenience of the public generally. Depending upon the particular circumstances of the wide-load movement, the type of load to be carried, the road problems to be encountered and safety-related aspects, approval, as a condition of a permit, may be given to the use of other than police escort vehicles such as pilot vehicles. Any question of cost in either case must be related to the need to ensure that a greater cost is not imposed on the public generally or on road users in particular by a preventable accident which could occur because of the absence of a police escort for the movement of a wide-load vehicle. Only reasonable costs are charged for the police escort, and these are generally accepted by operators of wide-load vehicles, who recognise that they are a justifiable cost to enable the wide-load movement to be carried out safely. It must also be appreciated that only a police escort has the power to direct traffic generally or to take such steps which are necessary to protect life and property in the movement of overdimensional vehicles or wide loads which necessarily create hazardous conditions for other road users and the public.

As to the question of these costs and their duties, this is a matter for my colleague the Honourable R. J. Hinze, MLA, Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police, to whom this part of the question might be addressed.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I frequently remind members of this. Limited action has been taken to date, but I am becoming increasingly tired of it. There needs to be more co-operation from the members in this Chamber. If this noise continues, I will be asking members to leave the Chamber and to have their discussions outside. I have also received complaints from the Hansard staff that they are having the utmost difficulty in hearing what members are saying. Unless I receive co-operation from honourable members, further action will be necessary.

8. Concessional Registration Rates for Safe Drivers

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware of a scheme recently introduced into South Australia where concessional rates of registration are given to certain people chosen by police as safe, courteous drivers?

(2) Because of the excessively high road toll in Queensland, does he see merit in the introduction of a similar scheme in Queensland as a measure to encourage people to drive more responsibly and so assist in reducing the road toll?

*Answer:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) I will be watching with interest the results of the South Australian scheme as in many respects it is similar to schemes which the Queensland Road Safety Council has undertaken over many years. So far this year the council has issued almost 3 000 safe driving awards and 1 085 defensive driving awards, which is an indication of the encouragement that has been given to road users as an incentive to encourage more responsible driving.

An added incentive to safe driving is also provided by at least one major insurance group, which offers an insurance premium reduction of 5 per cent to graduates of the Queensland Road Safety Council's defensive driving course.

Apart from these ongoing awards, a courtesy driver award scheme will be run in conjunction with radio station 4BH as part of the Queensland Road Safety Council's activities during Transport Week, which commenced last Sunday, 15 November. I invite honourable members to participate in it.

Each day a driver will be selected by Queensland Road Safety Council field officers and the announcement of the winning driver will be made each day over 4BH. It will be my pleasure this Friday to present in the Valley Centre Plaza, to each courtesy driver selected, a suitably inscribed watch as an award.

I am sure that, with the support of the media, the road safety activities of Transport Week will bring home to drivers a greater appreciation of the need for a more responsible approach to the driving task.

9. Government Financial Assistance for Junior Sport

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

With reference to the Annual Report of the Department of Sport, which shows that subsidy payments from the Consolidated Revenue Fund are still being directed towards such projects as new bowling greens and floodlighting for bowling greens, new greens, tees, fairways and sand-bunkers at golf clubs and new facilities at some yacht clubs—

(1) Is he aware that money gifts to bowling and golf clubs alone for the year ended June 1981 totalled \$156,000?

(2) In view of this large gift of money from public funds going to mainly licensed clubs, most of which are well able to afford to pay for the projects, how can he allow this situation to continue when at the same time he is prepared to cut savagely payments to junior sport in Queensland?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) The honourable member's inability to understand the well-documented assistance to sport schemes administered within my portfolio is matched only by his prejudice against licensed bowls, golf and yacht clubs. He knows full well that many, if not all, such clubs are by no means wealthy or exclusive in their membership. Indeed, I understand he himself is a member—I trust a financial member—of a bowls club. That sport is played by over half a million Australians in some 2 135 clubs throughout the nation. Golf is played by 400 000 Australians. In Queensland, 345 bowls clubs have 70 000 members and 190 registered golf clubs cater for 43 000 members. To suggest that approximately \$156,00 spread over 535 clubs and 113 000 Queenslanders is some form of unwarranted assistance is absolute nonsense. To further suggest that this comparatively small sum from the total sports provision of \$3.3m in 1980-81 was to the prejudice of junior coaching projects is just as fanciful. In 1980-81 no less than \$1.1m was spent on junior coaching exclusively. Already in 1981-82 \$1.3m has been approved for junior coaching; so that there has been no reduction in expected expenditure for this financial year. What has happened is that the percentage subsidy rate was reduced because of the explosion in the number of applications. The cake available must be cut fairly and equitably for all concerned and this is being done without any reduction in the total amount junior coaching will receive in 1981-82.

I might add that the honourable member is no junior, but if he requires some bowls coaching he might make representations to his club to see what it can do on his behalf.

10. Fertiliser Supply Monopoly

Mr McKechnie asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Has he seen an article entitled "Peter Elworthy—the 'Gumboot Director!'" in the publication "Agribusiness Executive"—Volume 1 in which it is explained how New Zealand farmers gained control of a \$55m fertiliser business for a farmer contribution of \$2m and, if so, did the farmers break a fertiliser supply monopoly?

(2) Is there a monopoly on fertiliser supply in Queensland?

(3) Will he refer the article I have mentioned to farm organisation in Queensland so that they can make their own judgments as to whether or not they wish to endeavour to follow the New Zealand example?

*Answer:—*

(1) I am aware of an article entitled "Peter Elworthy—the 'Gumboot Director' " in the publication "Agribusiness Executive".

The take-over of the New Zealand chemical firm Kempthorne Prosser by the farmers' Ravensdown Fertilizer Co-operative has added a new dimension to the fertiliser supply trade in that country. As it is reported, New Zealand farmers gained control of a \$20m fertiliser business for an outlay of \$2m. According to the article, this was done by farmer shareholders of the Ravensdown Supply Company forming an alliance with New Zealand Farmers Fertilizer, who as Ravensdown Fertilizer Co-operative took 40 per cent of the shares in the fertiliser company. The farmers retained control through the appointment of their own chairman with a casting vote.

I am not aware of the reported action by Ravensdown Fertilizer Co-operative being in breach of any New Zealand fertiliser supply monopoly.

(2) The marketing of fertilisers in Queensland is competitive, with several firms competing with one another for the fertiliser supply trade. There are, however, only two chemical firms manufacturing fertilisers in Queensland. They are Consolidated Fertilizers Limited and General Fertilizers Limited. Shareholdings of these companies may be obtained by searching the Register of Companies held in the office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs.

(3) I have referred this matter to the Council of Agriculture for its consideration and for the information of its member bodies.

11. Ramps for Wheelchairs

Mr McKechnie asked the Minister for Welfare Services—

As parents of handicapped people are given assistance to alter homes in regard to the provision of ramps for wheelchairs, why is this assistance not given to these people when they are building new homes?

*Answer:—*

I understand that the assistance to which the honourable member refers is available under a Commonwealth funded scheme for which the State Department of Health acts as the agent and I would suggest that the honourable member redirect his question to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Health.

Mr McKechnie: I do so accordingly.

12. Spinal Unit, Princess Alexandra Hospital

Mr McKechnie asked the Minister for Health—

(1) What plans has the Government to improve housing of the spinal unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane?

(2) When will these improvements become a reality?

*Answer:—*

(1) Sketch plans for a new spinal injuries unit at Princess Alexandra Hospital have been prepared and are being reviewed.

(2) Construction of the proposed building will be dependent upon the time taken to finalise documentation after approval of sketch plans and on the availability of loan funds.

13. Blackwater-Comet Section, Capricorn Highway

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

Will improvements be made to that section of the Capricorn Highway between Blackwater and Comet and, if so, when will these improvements take place?

*Answer:—*

The Main Roads Department will upgrade the section between Blackwater and the Curragh mine turn-off in early 1982 as part of works associated with the Curragh project.

14. Medical Services, Central Queensland Gemfields

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Health—

Will he arrange for a departmental officer to visit the gemfields to ascertain the need for improved medical services in that important area, and, if so, when will this visit take place?

*Answer:—*

A departmental officer will be visiting the gemfields on 26 and 27 November this year.

15. Blackwater Hospital

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Health—

When is it anticipated that extensions to Blackwater Hospital will be completed, and what new services will these new extensions offer?

*Answer:—*

The Emerald Hospitals Board has advised that it is anticipated that the extensions to the Blackwater Hospital will be completed by the end of November this year. The extensions will provide an additional 10 beds which will be adequately serviced by existing facilities.

16. Public Access to Leased Land, Manly Boat Harbour

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

With reference to the lease granted to Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron of an area previously known as Flagstaff Street at Manly Boat Harbour, and to the unequivocal assurances given by Government spokesmen, including the Premier, that public access to the area would continue, and as for some time now a sign has been placed on the fence erected across this street stating that public access is prohibited—

(1) Why has no action been taken to have this sign removed?

(2) Why has no work been carried out on the provision of a path for fishermen as promised?

(3) Is public access to this area still guaranteed as promised, or is its use now restricted to Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron members, as the sign states?

*Answer:—*

(1) The sign referred to displays the wording "ROYAL QUEENSLAND YACHT SQUADRON—STRICTLY MEMBERS ONLY". It was erected by the squadron to inform the public that access to the squadron's lease area is limited.

Access by fishermen to the eastern breakwater at Manly can be obtained at all times along a strip, one metre wide, located on the edge of the boulder wall east of the eastern extremity of the fence which extends across Flagship Road. In addition I understand that access is also permitted by the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron through the gate across Flagship Road when it is open, although there is no obligation upon the squadron in this respect.

(2) The present condition of the access provided for fishermen, while not good, is considered adequate for fishermen who know the area and have used the breakwater over a period. It was for these fishermen that provision was made for access.

(3) This right of access will be guaranteed by lease conditions, but for the full length of the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron lease area it applies only to a strip one metre wide extending along the eastern edge of the eastern breakwater.

17. Convalescent Hospital, Whites Road, Lota

Mr Shaw asked the Minister for Health—

As the convalescent hospital in Whites Road, Lota, has now been completed for some four months and was officially opened one month ago, how long will this building be allowed to stand idle, and, is he familiar with a television program entitled "Yes Minister" in which the argument was advanced that the best and cheapest way to run a hospital is without patients?

*Answer:—*

The South Brisbane Hospitals Board is currently engaging staff for the hospital and it is anticipated that the first patients will be admitted in early January 1982

18. Psychiatric Treatment, North Queensland

Mr Katter asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Will he advise what treatment programs exist at North Queensland's only long-term mental hospital, Mosman Hall?

(2) Why are the numerous programs that are available as treatment at Baillie Henderson and Wolston Park not available in North Queensland?

(3) Is he aware that a continuing transfer away from, and non-replacement at, Mosman Hall of trained psychiatric nurses as well as a fall in patient numbers at Baillie Henderson resulted not in the transfer of psychiatric nurses from Baillie Henderson to Charters Towers but rather in North Queensland patients being transferred 1200 miles away from their home areas, friends and relatives to the southern institutions?

(4) Is not this irrefutable evidence that the south-eastern corner institutions are the favoured sisters and North Queensland once again plays the role of Cinderella?

*Answer:—*

(1) Mosman Hall provides a wide range of treatment programs for its long-term residents and the small number of patients admitted each year. It has developed special programs for the treatment of patients admitted with illnesses associated with the excessive use of alcohol.

(2) Mosman Hall does not provide a regional service for the treatment of the acutely disturbed psychiatric patient. It provides long-term care only and therefore cannot be compared to either Baillie Henderson Hospital or Wolston Park Hospital.

(3) The honourable member's attention is drawn to my answer of the 9 September 1981 in regard to the transfer of 20 patients from Mosman Hall to Baillie Henderson Hospital.

The patients recently transferred were, by and large, patients previously transferred to Mosman Hall from southern hospitals.

(4) No.

19. Residential Allotments, Collinsville

Mr Katter asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

(1) Will he give details of the proposed long-overdue land development for Collinsville?

(2) How many houses will be made available by way of public auction to (a) the public, (b) Mount Isa Mines and (c) QEGB?

(3) Will he explain why the rumoured reserve price of \$12,500 is as high as private developments of three-acre allotments within 13 miles of Townsville?

*Answer:—*

(1) Tenders have been called for the development of the first stage of 179 allotments at Collinsville. These close at 12 noon on Monday, 23 November 1981.

(2) At this stage it is proposed to allocate at least 140 allotments to Collinsville Coal Co., QEGB and Government instrumentalities with the balance to be offered for sale to the public at auction.

(3) The estimates available at this time have been prepared by consultants for comparison purposes with tenders received for construction of the project. When construction has been completed and overall costs known, upset prices may be determined. The development will provide for standards set by the local authority which include bitumen roads, drainage, kerbing and channelling and water and sewerage reticulation, which are costly items taking into consideration the contours of the area being developed.

20. Toowoomba Homemaker Services

Mr Warner asked the Minister for Welfare Services—

(1) Is he aware that the Family Support Services Program funding of projects will be so depleted by December that without immediate further funding the Toowoomba Homemaker Service may have to cease operating?

(2) Will he give some indication of further funding to the Toowoomba Homemaker Service so that project workers can organise and plan future support for families with whom they work?

*Answer:—*

(1) I am aware that the first cycle of funding for the Family Support Services Program ceases 31 December 1981, and I can assure the honourable member that the Toowoomba Homemaker Service will be funded until then.

(2) Prior to receiving the honourable member's question, an appointment had been made for me to meet the joint Commonwealth/State Officer Committee, which oversees the program, at an early date. At that meeting, decisions will be made regarding the board priorities for funding for the next cycle of the program. It therefore would be inappropriate for me to give an undertaking at this stage that any particular program will be funded again.

The honourable member may be assured that I will advise him and the management committee of the program to which he refers as soon as possible.

21. Dental Clinic for Toowoomba Schools

Mr Warner asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is he aware that St Anthony's Primary School, Darling Heights Primary School, Concordia Primary School, Harristown Primary School and the Hamewith Special School in Toowoomba still do not have the services of a static or a mobile dental clinic?

(2) Will he confirm that land recently purchased by the Works Department on behalf of the Health Department will be the site for a static dental clinic to service these schools?

(3) If so, when will this clinic be built?

(4) If not, for what purpose was the land purchased and when will full mobile dental services be available to these schools, taking into account the urgent need for such a service?

*Answer:—*

(1) No School Dental Service has, as yet, been provided for St Anthony's Primary School, Concordia Primary School or Harristown State Primary School. However, a mobile clinic service has been provided to Darling Heights State Primary School this year and special arrangements made to treat children from Hamewith Special School at another school.

(2 to 4) I am not aware of any land acquired by the State Works Department in this area on the initiative of the Health Department. It is intended to provide mobile clinic services to St Anthony's Primary School, Concordia Primary School and Harristown Primary School and this service is expected to be introduced early in the 1982 school year.

22. Operational Problems, Mary Kathleen Mine

Mr Mackenroth asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) Was his department advised by the Deputy Prime Minister that the Uranium Advisory Council had found operational problems at the Mary Kathleen mine site?

(2) If so, on what date?

(3) If his department was advised of these problems, what action has been taken to rectify them?

*Answer:—*

(1) No. The situation, notwithstanding this, is that the Department of Mines has maintained surveillance of the conditions applying to mining leases at Mary Kathleen for many years now and is not dependent on advice from the Uranium Advisory Council in order to carry out its responsibilities.

(2 & 3) See (1).

23. Departmental Payments for Private Surveying and Mapping Contracts

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

Will he table a report showing the surveying firms which received payments from the Department of Mapping and Surveying in 1980-81 for surveying and mapping contracts and consultancies, and the amounts received by each, in the same way as the Minister for Justice does for barristers and solicitors receiving payments from the Justice Department?

*Answer:—*

The information sought by the honourable member about the payments made by the Department of Mapping and Surveying to surveying firms in 1980-81 is as follows:—

Firms Which Received Payments From Department of Mapping And Surveying For Surveying And Mapping Contracts And Consultancies In The 1980/1981 Financial Year

Name	Amount
	\$
Aerometrex . . . . .	15,060.00
A. J. & M. K. Hoffman Pty Ltd . . . . .	37,656.06
Arnold & Arnold (Gold Coast) Pty Ltd . . . . .	1,289.25
Australasian Mapping Services . . . . .	69,716.64
Australian Aerial Mapping . . . . .	11,610.00
Baird K. & Hayes . . . . .	6,125.75
Barry Obst & Partners Ltd . . . . .	25,625.54
Bennett & Bennett . . . . .	12,358.92
Bennett & Francis Pty Ltd . . . . .	140,688.41
Beresford, J. G. . . . .	8,182.23
B. J. Lynch Pty Ltd . . . . .	4,970.85
B.K.S. Surveys . . . . .	7,229.50
Blain, K. J. . . . .	782.90
Blair, J. . . . .	96.00
Boddy, Axtell & Wood . . . . .	14,125.50
Brian G. Moore Holdings Pty Ltd . . . . .	7,585.05
Booth, B. J. . . . .	2,690.20

Name	Amount
	\$
Brian Wrigley & Associates .. .. .	1,986.00
Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd .. .. .	11,830.00
Brown & Pluthera Pty Ltd .. .. .	2,286.50
Buckle, R. H. .. .. .	7,003.20
Byrne, R. A. .. .. .	30,920.80
Capricorn Survey Consultants .. .. .	2,835.11
C. E. O' Neill & Associates .. .. .	4,150.10
Chapmao & Balderson .. .. .	932.55
Coman, J. T. .. .. .	515.00
Connolly, T. M. .. .. .	658.00
Cook, J. S. .. .. .	1,328.00
C. R. Schlencker & Associates .. .. .	6,962.52
C. W. Edmonston & Associates .. .. .	7,108.50
D. A. Cole & Associates .. .. .	93.10
Daly, J. D. .. .. .	4,448.10
Dawson, A. R. .. .. .	2,698.38
Dawson, D. S. .. .. .	11,116.95
D. B. Thorsby & Associates .. .. .	1,696.30
Dee & Trent .. .. .	7,510.95
Denis & O'Neill Pty Ltd .. .. .	9,312.50
D. I. Grieve & Associates .. .. .	3,404.75
Edwards, G. .. .. .	1,813.40
Egerton, Hudson & Associates .. .. .	6,411.45
E. J. Ian Hargreaves & Associates .. .. .	10,510.20
Evan Westlake & Associates .. .. .	8,047.40
Garnet Lincoln & Associates .. .. .	7,631.25
G. D. Heilbronn Associates Pty Ltd .. .. .	19,136.95
Glover, C. C. .. .. .	1,469.48
Gow, R. A. .. .. .	750.00
Graham Edwards & Associates .. .. .	536.60
Gutteridge, Haskins & Davey Pty .. .. .	6,334.21
Hanger, R. .. .. .	969.30
Heilbronn Waterson Associates .. .. .	10,477.40
Hillhouse & Hillhouse .. .. .	1,161.00
H. J. Law & Associates .. .. .	34,603.85
Hoffman, P. D. .. .. .	6,728.50
Hunter, C. R. .. .. .	1,634.66
Ian Dougal & Partners .. .. .	1,670.00
Ian Keilar & Associates .. .. .	4,629.00
I. A. McGhie & Associates .. .. .	31,578.00
J. A. Hay Associates .. .. .	15,935.50
J. A. Straughair & Associates .. .. .	22,741.81
J. B. Goodwin & Associates .. .. .	6,877.15
J. E. Macarthy & Associates .. .. .	4,867.60
Jensen & Bowers .. .. .	1,106.00
J. F. H. Murray & Associates .. .. .	14,051.84
John MacIsaac & Associates .. .. .	9,762.55
John Wilson & Partners .. .. .	2,634.29
Jolly Sharpe & Skehan Pty Ltd .. .. .	8,431.18
Jones, Flint & Pike .. .. .	781,694.99
J. V. Kane & Associates .. .. .	1,109.84
J. V. Lawson & Associates .. .. .	25,991.50
Keilar Fox & McGhie Pty Ltd .. .. .	22,481.00
Keiler McGhie & Associates Pty Ltd .. .. .	67,668.50
K. E. Michel & Associates .. .. .	1,604.10
Ken Hicks & Associates .. .. .	2,386.90
Kevron Aerial Surveys .. .. .	1,645.91
K. G. Norris & Associates .. .. .	2,197.00
K. G. Orford Pty Ltd .. .. .	990.65
K. H. Lawrence & Partners .. .. .	2,356.00
K. & J. A. Rogers Drafting Service .. .. .	143.00

Name	Amount
	\$
Mapmakers .. .. .	19,546.40
Matheson Buckley & Associates Pty Ltd ..	733.70
Matheson, D. J. .. .. .	19,737.60
M. D. Arnold & Associates .. .. .	5,425.65
M. E. Gray & Associates .. .. .	2,466.75
Mellon, B. L. .. .. .	69.00
Miller & Waterson .. .. .	8,487.20
M. J. Hedges & Associates .. .. .	6,389.86
Mott, J. W. .. .. .	33,360.47
McConnell, B. .. .. .	3,392.00
McIntyre & Associates .. .. .	2,366.68
McLean, G. D. R. .. .. .	8,555.99
McLeary, M. V. .. .. .	8,468.45
McLennan Gray & Associates .. .. .	5,563.80
N. J. Paskins & Associates .. .. .	12,066.12
Orthophoto Mapping Services .. .. .	842.00
Parkinson, B. I. .. .. .	1,646.55
Parkinson & Parkinson .. .. .	7,574.00
Paul Crawford & Associates .. .. .	2,901.82
Paul Valery & Associates .. .. .	3,010.70
P. I. Karhula & Associates .. .. .	6,452.50
Pike & Miris Pty Ltd .. .. .	16,670.16
Pike & Partners .. .. .	17,421.70
P. R. O'Donogue & Associates Pty Ltd ..	3,311.75
QASCO Pty Ltd .. .. .	45,792.50
Ray Pinkham Pty Ltd .. .. .	8,537.20
R. C. Todd & Associates Pty Ltd .. .. .	19,311.51
Reprographics Pty Ltd .. .. .	209,070.10
Reynolds, J. W. .. .. .	3,707.10
R. G. Bell & Associates .. .. .	3,373.20
Richard T. Hume & Associates .. .. .	2,847.19
R. K. Ferguson Pty Ltd .. .. .	15,151.00
Rogers, K. & J. A. .. .. .	1,886.20
Ross, J. J. .. .. .	600.00
Rundle, J. W. .. .. .	1,486.47
Saunders Havill & Associates .. .. .	41,257.58
Serisier, J. B. .. .. .	605.00
Shong, A. M. .. .. .	1,242.14
Skett, R. E. .. .. .	7,459.00
Stackman, A. R. .. .. .	303.00
Stopford, P. .. .. .	3,259.25
Street, P. A. .. .. .	586.00
Trousdell, R. T. .. .. .	1,984.30
T. J. Cunningham & Associates .. .. .	540.50
T. J. Lavercombe & Associates .. .. .	10,776.50
Ullman & Nolan .. .. .	400.10
Wilson, B. R. .. .. .	4,893.40
Wise, J. A. .. .. .	2,795.68
Wrigley, B. .. .. .	1,940.00
W. S. Cominsky & Co. Pty Ltd .. .. .	24,430.21
Yang, A. .. .. .	1,994.39
Young, A. .. .. .	320.00
<b>TOTAL .. .. .</b>	<b>\$2,358,966.58</b>

## 24. Director of Nursing Services

Mr Mackenroth asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Has Miss Abell had her new position as Director of Nursing Services upgraded from a I-24 to a I-26?

(2) Has her title been changed to Director-General of Nursing, thus giving her control over all nurses in Queensland?

(3) Has she ordered extensive and expensive alterations to her new office?

(4) Does she now not answer to the Director-General of Health but directly to the Health Minister?

(5) Does he consider her administrative actions to be appropriate?

*Answer:—*

(1) Senior positions within the Department of Health have recently been reviewed. The position of Director of Nursing Services was upgraded to I-26 level as part of that review.

(2) No.

(3) Action is being taken to provide accommodation appropriate to the status of the position of Director of Nursing Services which does involve some minor alterations.

(4) The Director of Nursing Services, as head of the Nursing Services Branch, has direct access to the Under Secretary.

(5) In light of the context of questions (1) to (4) and the answers given, question (5) would appear to be inappropriate.

## 25. Banana-Rannes Road

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

(1) Does a road such as that between Banana and Rannes, being unsealed and having a very rough surface, not induce traffic volume despite its being a major link in an otherwise sealed highway between Southern, Inland, and Central Queensland and coastal and northern centres?

(2) If so, was this a consideration in his decision to allocate the amount of one million dollars annually, exclusive of bridge work, to the upgrading of the Banana-Rannes Road?

(3) As this road is really an extension of the Leichhardt Highway, will he declare it part of that highway?

*Answer:—*

(1) It is recognised that through traffic uses the unsealed section of the Banana-Dululu Road even though there is an alternative bitumen-surfaced route.

(2) It is proposed to undertake construction of the road under a three-year planning program following completion of current and committed works in Banana Shire.

(3) Yes.

## 26. Legal and Navigational Responsibility of Masters of Ships under Pilotage

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

What are the legal responsibilities of the master, captain or commanding officer of a merchant ship entering Queensland ports in regard to navigation and accidents

which may occur, with particular regard to ships which have taken on board a pilot from his department and/or which have tug assistance?

*Answer:—*

It is not the practice to provide legal interpretations in answer to questions.

27. Railway Containers for Perishable Goods

Mr Harper asked the Minister for Transport—

As it would be highly desirable to encourage maximum use of railway containers for the transit of perishable foods within Queensland, and to southern States, both from the point of view of increasing economic returns to the Queensland Government Railways and to assist in minimising an increasing volume of heavy road vehicles being used in the transit of such perishables, will his department take action to provide a realistic quantity of suitable containers and, in particular, increase the present number of refrigerated containers available for such traffic?

*Answer:—*

I am advised by the Commissioner for Railways that during the 1981 season the Railway Department had available for interstate fruit traffic 100 SRC refrigerated containers jointly owned by the Queensland and New South Wales railway systems. In addition, 491 VC type ventilated containers owned by the New South Wales railway system were available for interstate traffic generally and a high proportion of these were utilised for the conveyance of fruit.

To meet the total demand, it is estimated the requirement during the peak of the season is an additional 300 SRC containers and 1 000 VC containers. Unfortunately, neither the Queensland nor the New South Wales system has the necessary finance at this stage. However, the Queensland railway system has called tenders for an additional 50 SRC refrigerated containers, and it is expected that these will be available for the peak of the 1982 season. As further funds become available, additional containers will be acquired.

28. Crown Land, Rainbow Beach

Mr Stephan asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

With reference to the release of Crown land at Rainbow Beach due to be auctioned later this year—

(1) When will this sale be held?

(2) What will be the terms set for the successful buyers of these blocks of land?

*Answer:—*

(1) I intend to withhold all sales of land until proposals for amendment of the Land Act in this respect are passed by Parliament. Should the amendments be passed in the present session, it is most likely that the sale will take place early in April 1982.

(2) Future sales of Crown land will be made on a cash basis, with terms being available in some localities over five years with interest payable at a rate fixed by the Governor in Council by Order in Council.

29. Gympie TAFE College

Mr Stephan asked the Minister for Education—

With the Sunshine Coast Technical and Further Education College commencing operations in Nambour in 1982, will the TAFE centre in Gympie remain at the present level of classes, and will the officer attachment to Gympie remain at the present level?

*Answer:—*

At this time it is not expected that there will be any reduction in TAFE classes in Gympie caused by the operation of a TAFE College in Nambour in 1982. There is no proposal at this time to alter the level of TAFE representation in Gympie.

30. Traffic Branch, Gympie Police Station

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

As a traffic branch section has recently been attached to the Gympie Police Station with just two staff members to operate this section, will consideration be given to a staff of four to be attached to this section, without taking any members away from existing staff at this station to carry out adequately the functions of this branch of police work?

*Answer:—*

Until recently no formal traffic branch has existed at Gympie, with traffic enforcement matters being carried out by various officers at the Gympie station. In order to formalise traffic matters at Gympie and to bring the Gympie station into line with other district headquarters throughout the State, the Commissioner of Police recently approved that a traffic branch be established at the Gympie station. Initially this will be staffed by a sergeant second-class and one constable.

Staffing needs of the Gympie station will be kept under review, and the allocation of additional staff for the traffic branch will be determined in conjunction with staffing needs at other stations throughout the State.

31 & 32. Rail Transport of Coal

Mr Vaughan asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) For the years 1977-78, 1978-79, 1979-80 and 1980-81—(a) what was the total amount of diesel fuel used by diesel electric locomotives on the Goonyella, Peak Downs, Saraji and Norwich Park railway lines and (b) what was the tonnage of coal carried on those lines?

(2) Has the Railway Department investigated the feasibility of electrifying this line?

(3) If so, what were the results of that investigation?

*Answer:—*

(1)—

(a) The total amount of fuel used by diesel electric locomotives is as follows:—

					litres
1977-78	..	..	..	..	16 173 630
1978-79	..	..	..	..	17 489 110
1979-80	..	..	..	..	20 034 756
1980-81	..	..	..	..	21 102 681

(b) The total tonnage of coal carried on those lines is—

					tonnes
1977-78	..	..	..	..	13 291 289
1978-79	..	..	..	..	13 721 184
1979-80	..	..	..	..	14 795 557
1980-81	..	..	..	..	15 817 652

I should add that these impressive tonnage figures are as a result of the positive policies carried out by the Queensland Government in opening up and developing our

vast coal reserves. This has been achieved in many instances by using overseas investment. It is well known that the Government's policies in this regard are the envy of all other Australian States.

(2) The Railway Department has investigated the feasibility of electrifying the Goonyella, Peak Downs, Saraji and Norwich Park lines.

(3) The economics of electrifying the Goonyella railway system are very favourable and it is included in the Government's plans for future main-line electrification. The actual timing will be dependent on the availability of funds.

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Mr Vaughan asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) How many tonnes of steaming coal were transported from Collinsville to the Mica Creek Power Station at Mt Isa in 1979-80 and 1980-81?

(2) What freight per tonne did the Railway Department charge for the transport of this coal in 1979-80 and 1980-81?

*Answer:—*

(1) 328 053 tonnes in 1979-80 and 371 238 tonnes in 1980-81.

(2) Freight rates negotiated between the commissioner and his customers are regarded as being confidential as between the parties.

33. Mining Leases, Moreton Island

Mr Vaughan asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to "The Courier-Mail" of 25 June on page one in which he was quoted as saying that mining companies holding leases on Moreton Island had given a verbal undertaking to relinquish leases not included in 6.4 per cent of the island recommended by the Cook Report if they were allowed to mine the area covered by the 6.4 per cent and that such companies held leases covering up to 40 per cent of the island which otherwise would cost the Government \$80m or \$90m if mining was banned—

(1) What undertakings have been given to the Government by the mining companies?

(2) Is \$80m to \$90m compensation involved if the leases, which were only renewed on 14 January 1980, are cancelled?

*Answer:—*

(1) Although verbal undertakings were given these have not been confirmed in writing to date.

(2) The Government has decided to adhere to the Cook Report and officials are presently looking into the legal implications that are involved. Consequently it is not known, at this stage, what the extent of compensation will be.

34. Nursing Home, Warwick Hospital

Mr Booth asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the nursing home to be constructed at the Warwick Hospital, will he give an indication as to when the hospital board will be allowed to call tenders for the construction of the nursing home?

*Answer:—*

Approval has been given for the board to invite tenders for the Warwick nursing home.

## 35. Weighing of Double-decker Transport Trucks

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

(1) Is he aware of the problems associated with the weighing of double-decker transport trucks, as facilities for weighing are not available on most properties?

(2) Will he have the matter investigated to see if it is possible to give approval on a volume basis rather than a weight basis?

*Answer:—*

(1 & 2) I am aware of the problems mentioned by the honourable member. Extensive investigations have already been carried out and I do not intend to pursue the matter on a volume basis rather than vehicle mass.

The critical issue in the preservation of road pavements and bridges is vehicle mass and the associated axle and wheel loadings, irrespective of the nature of the goods being carried.

Recent weighings of multi-decked, semi-trailer livestock transports show a significant trend towards loads resulting in all-up mass of 46 to 48 tonnes. This grossly exceeds the legal mass limit of 38 tonnes for such vehicles and is surely well outside any reasonable error which might result from having to estimate livestock weight at the point of loading.

It would appear that the livestock transport industry may be unaware of the destructive effect and shortened pavement life caused by the operators of such vehicles.

I am concerned about these recent trends, and I remind all involved that I have an obligation to ensure the preservation of our road assets.

## 36. Soil Conservation Committee

Mr Booth asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to his press release of 3 November in regard to the appointment of a Soil Conservation Committee—Will the farm community, either as groups or as individuals, have the opportunity to place submissions before the Committee?

*Answer:—*

The inaugural meeting of the Planning Committee for Soil Conservation agreed that the committee would be pleased to accept submissions relating to its terms of reference from individuals and from organisations. As the study progresses, submissions may be sought from specific organisation or groups of organisations but comments and suggestions from any members of the farming community will be welcomed.

## 37. Groundsel Control

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

What research is being carried out to control or eradicate groundsel which infests South-east Queensland?

*Answer:—*

Active research into the control and eradication of groundsel bush has been carried out almost continuously since 1949. Numerous herbicides have been tested but 2, 4-D has demonstrated that it is the most economical, effective chemical presently available for controlling this plant.

Recent research by the Alan Fletcher Research Station has led to the development of two new 2, 4-D acid formulations, that is AF-201 and Basal Coat, which are used in the basal treatment of groundsel bush stems. This method enables landholders to treat safely groundsel bush growing adjacent to sensitive crops such as pineapples, bananas, tomatoes, cucumbers, etc.

Biological control investigations commenced in 1960 resulted in the first groundsel bush insect being introduced into Queensland in 1968. Since that time 20 different insect species have been introduced into quarantine, but only four have been established in the field.

Because control by these released insects is not yet satisfactory, biological control investigations are continuing and it has recently been approved to establish a new field research station in northern America, which should facilitate further research into this method of controlling groundsel bush. Operations in relation to this new field research station are due to commence early in 1982. In the meanwhile some members of the Alan Fletcher Research Station are engaged full time on research into biological, chemical and other methods of control.

38. Supply of Dentures, Public Hospitals

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to question No. 11 or 21 October—What is the waiting time for dentures at the following hospitals:—(a) Royal Brisbane Hospital, (b) Princess Alexandra Hospital, (c) Queen Elizabeth II, (d) Nambour, (e) Southport, (f) Ipswich, (g) Toowoomba, (h) Gympie, (i) Bundaberg, (j) Maryborough, (k) Gladstone, (l) Rockhampton, (m) Mackay, (n) Townsville, (o) Cairns, (p) Dalby and (q) Mt Isa?

Answer:—

The waiting time for dentures at the following hospitals is—

	Months
Brisbane Dental Hospital .. .. .	3
South Brisbane Dental Hospital .. .. .	13
QE II Jubilee Hospital .. .. .	7½
Nambour Hospital .. .. .	15-18
Southport Hospital .. .. .	16
Ipswich Hospital .. .. .	6
Toowoomba Hospital .. .. .	14
Gympie Hospital .. .. .	8
Bundaberg Hospital .. .. .	10-11
Maryborough Hospital .. .. .	6
Gladstone Hospital .. .. .	12
Rockhampton Hospital .. .. .	3
Mackay Hospital .. .. .	8
Townsville Hospital .. .. .	Nil
Cairns Hospital .. .. .	6
Dalby Hospital .. .. .	1
Mount Isa Hospital .. .. .	5

It is pointed out that, before any patient's name is added to a waiting-list for dentures, that patient is examined by the dentist. Where genuine cases of real urgency exist special arrangements are made. Often minor adjustments are made to existing dentures to make them more acceptable during waiting periods.

39. Private Tree-planting

Mr Simpson asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

(1) What encouragement is given to private land-owners to plant or replant hardwood or softwood trees?

(2) What service is provided, and at what charge to the public, for ornamental trees and shrubs?

(3) Is advice available for major private tree plantings?

*Answer:—*

(1) A service is provided by the Department of Forestry to private landholders by means of the forest plot scheme, which includes supply of plants at concessional rates and advice on establishment and management of both native and exotic forest species.

(2) Advice is given to the public on species, type of stock and site preparation. A range of suitable species is available at prices which include a small margin over costs of production.

(3) Similar advice is provided by the Department of Forestry for major private tree-plantings, covering larger proposals of over 50 ha. Seeding prices for this purpose include a small margin over costs of production.

40. New Bayview/Woree High School

Mr Jones asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

Further to his answer to my question of 12 March concerning the Works Department's program setting priorities to include the Bayview/Woree High School as a new school in the South Cairns area—

Has the forward planning, including preparation and design plans, been completed at this date and, if not, when is it now anticipated that provisional funds will become available and the building program commence?

*Answer:—*

The reply given by the Honourable Minister for Education to question 10 of 12 March 1981 indicated that design and construction procedures would commence when funds were available. No planning has been put in hand but this project will receive further consideration when the capital works program for 1982-83 is being formulated having regard to available funds and the priority given the project at that time by the Department of Education.

41. Victualling, Hospitality and Catering Section, Cairns TAFE College

Mr Jones asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Have plans been drawn up, and/or have Federal funds been allocated and received, for the construction of the victualling, hospitality and catering section for the Cairns College of Technical and Further Education?

(2) Has extra staffing been provisionally included for the introduction of service-type certificate courses and, if so, to what extent have these requirements been determined?

(3) If not, what stage has the project reached and when is it anticipated that funding will be made available to encompass these facilities for a rapidly expanding tourist industry in the far-northern area of this State?

*Answer:—*

(1) No building plans have been prepared nor has any Federal funding been allocated or received for the construction of a catering and hospitality section at the Cairns College of TAFE.

(2) At this time, no consideration has been given to the provision of staff to conduct certificate courses. Modest facilities to provide courses in restaurant and hospitality practices have been established under the Commonwealth-funded School to Work Transition Program. If Commonwealth funding is made available to continue offering these courses in 1982, it is proposed to appoint two full-time technical teachers with the appropriate qualifications to service the area.

(3) There are no plans to construct a school of catering and hospitality services at the Cairns College of TAFE in the near future. The needs of the tourist industry of North Queensland will be serviced by a school of catering and hospitality services to be constructed in Townsville in 1983.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### Binna-Burra Lodge Limited; Carnarvon National Park Development

Mr CASEY: I ask the Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts: In relation to the proposal to lease, sell or swap approximately 8 hectares of the Carnarvon National Park by a company known as Binna-Burra Lodge Limited for the establishment of a tourist lodge, as the non-alienation of national park lands for use as private purposes is normally sacrosanct, were public tenders called for the establishment of that tourist development, as is normal in Queensland for tourist developments on public land? If so, when and what applications were received other than that from Binna-Burra Lodge Limited? If tenders were not called for the development, why not, and why has that company been given preferential treatment for the establishment of a tourist lodge within what is becoming one of Queensland's most popular national park areas?

Mr ELLIOTT: The first point that must be very clearly made is that Binna-Burra is in the process of buying out a former tourist establishment in the Carnarvon area and this Government has every confidence in Binna-Burra.

Any fair-minded person who has visited Binna-Burra lodge would realise that it is of the highest standard. The work done by the operators has given them probably the best record of any company or any group with which I have had to deal.

The proposal in relation to Carnarvon is in the formative stage. An impact study will be carried out, and I hope to obtain the results of that study by early next year. After that, the persons responsible for the proposal will return to the Government part of the existing lease. They will undertake to operate in a fashion similar to that used by operators in other national parks in Queensland.

Tourist facilities are available on many islands. Lindeman Island is one such island that comes to mind. There will be no departure from existing principles in proposed development.

Later I will be taking to Cabinet a submission in relation to Lakefield National Park, and there is a potential role for private enterprise at the Lakefield National Park. At Carnarvon, the company is taking over an existing company. Therefore, the situation is different from that applying at Lakefield. No facilities are provided at the Lakefield National Park at the moment. I see the two roles as separate.

Mr Casey: Would the Government call tenders at Lakefield?

Mr ELLIOTT: The Government probably will call tenders. The two proposals are quite different. No precedent has been established for the utilisation of national parks for tourist facilities, and the Government does not run away from that. It believes in private enterprise. The provision of additional facilities at Carnarvon by private enterprise will overcome some of the problems experienced in peak periods, particularly the need for the provision of additional toilet facilities. I will not run away from the subject, because it is very important.

A recent "Nationwide" program provided the most shocking example of unethical journalism that I have seen for a long time. It could only be described as the stealing of a document. A document was taken from an office at Redcliffe and screened without permission. It was an inter-office document between the department and a Minister. That document was virtually stolen and used. In the eyes of any fair-minded person, those concerned stand condemned for their actions.

The Government is not about to run away from its national parks program. It does not set any precedent. Leases over national parks have been given to other tourist operators. That enhances the program and gives people an opportunity to see national parks. What is the use of national parks if people are not allowed to use them?

At 12 noon,

*In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, the House went into Committee of Supply.*

## SUPPLY

Resumption of Committee—Estimates—Thirteenth and Fourteenth Allotted Days

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

Estimates-in-Chief, 1981-82

Employment and Labour Relations

Chief Office

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Employment and Labour Relations)  
(12.1 p.m.): I move—

“That \$4,216,538 be granted for ‘Department of Employment and Labour Relations—Chief Office’.”

It is with pleasure that I present the Estimates for the Department of Employment and Labour Relations and invite constructive debate on them.

At the outset, I pay a tribute to my predecessor, the Honourable Fred Campbell, who retired from office during the course of the past financial year. I place on record the Government’s appreciation of the magnificent service that he rendered to this Parliament and to this State, in latter years as Minister administering the portfolio the responsibilities of which I am about to outline.

These Estimates will provide for the continuation and expansion of the important and many-faceted functions of the department. The wide diversity of the extremely vital services offered by the department to the people and industry of Queensland are highlighted by the titles of its six major subdepartments, namely, the Workers Compensation Board of Queensland, the Division of Occupational Safety, the Industry and Commerce Training Commission, the Industrial and Factories and Shops Inspectorate, the Consumer Affairs Bureau and the Industrial Registrar’s Office.

In particular, the recent past has seen increasing strain and activity in the industrial relations arena. This, of course, has always been a highly volatile area. The prevention of industrial disputation has undoubtedly become a major concern of all industrial organisations, both employer and employee. However, where prevention does not prove possible, all efforts and skill must be concentrated on the expeditious solution of disputes. In an endeavour to curtail as far as practicable the possibility of industrial disputation, the department has recently been giving greater emphasis to grievance-settling procedures.

Another major initiative recently implemented in the industrial sphere is a departmental review of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. This legislation, which has not been completely revised for over 20 years, is in need of critical examination. A large number of interested groups and individuals have been approached seeking comments and submissions upon the Act. The replies are presently being examined and a compendium is to be prepared for circulation to all who have made submissions. I hope to be able to introduce legislation arising from the review at this time next year.

We are all aware of the explosion which has taken place in industrial development in Queensland in recent times. The functions of the Department of Employment and Labour Relations are intrinsically bound to this vast expansion of industry. This is through its involvement in industrial safety; the statutory inspection of machinery, construction work, commercial motor vehicles, etc; the licensing and training of various operators for industry; ensuring that the demands of industry are met so far as trained personnel are concerned; handling workers’ compensation policies and claims; plus many other areas.

Accordingly, it is obvious that the work-load of the department has increased proportionately with the upsurge in industrial development. However, if staff ceilings continue to be fixed as they are at present, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the quality and/or extent of services to which industry has been accustomed. Accordingly, the need for extra staff within the department becomes more urgent every day. In

most areas the additional officers would have to be highly competent and experienced in their particular fields. Examples would be inspectors of machinery, inspectors of construction work, training consultants, inspectors of the Industry and Commerce Training Commission and industrial inspectors—not to mention the need for efficient and suitably qualified administrative personnel. All of these officers require high levels of skill and responsibilities.

The necessity for increased departmental staff, of course, clearly implies that many officers at present are bearing a heavier burden of work than would be expected of them under normal circumstances. All of these officers, many of whom have difficult and sometimes unpopular tasks to perform, carry out their jobs with dedication and loyalty, and I place on record my sincere appreciation and thanks to them for this.

I turn now to the particular subdepartments and sections of the department to examine in some detail what each one is achieving. In addition, I refer honourable members to the annual reports of these departments for a detailed breakdown of statistics.

#### Chief Office

In addition to its administration, financial, personnel and supervisory responsibilities for the overall department, the Chief Office also becomes involved in a wide variety of other undertakings. One recent example of this was the organisation in connection with the meeting of interstate Ministers for Labour which I hosted in Townsville during July.

In the past the State has largely depended upon Commonwealth agencies for the provision of statistical services on its behalf. However, because of the changing attitude of such agencies in the past five years, Queensland has been accepting an increasing role in this most important area which is so essential to good management and planning. In 1976 the State Government established the Queensland State Statistics Co-ordinating Committee. This is a permanent inter-departmental standing committee under the chairmanship of the Under Secretary of my department and which, inter alia, is charged with the responsibility of identifying and reviewing statistical needs of State Government departments and instrumentalities, and ensuring compatibility and possible integration of statistical systems.

In 1980 a position of statistical co-ordinator was created within the department. The main function of this officer is to carry out the numerous research and secretarial duties associated with the standing committee. The activities of the department's research section include the preparation of material to assist in top-level decision-making and intervention on behalf of the Queensland Government in national wage case hearings and conferences. The research section also Acts in the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission where it is felt Commonwealth award provisions are unduly intruding into safety, health and welfare and training matters generally recognised as State responsibilities.

As part of a State Labour Relations Department one of the responsibilities of the research section is the processing of International Labour Office reports and requests and liaison with the Commonwealth Department of Industrial Relations on possible ratification of conventions.

A further point of interest is that as a result of a Queensland initiative there is to be an Australiawide examination of the extent and scope of equity participation by employees in the companies for which they work.

#### Industry and Commerce Training Commission

The Industry and Commerce Training Act 1979-1980 became operational as from 19 November 1979. From that date the Industry and Commerce Training Commission replaced the former Apprenticeship Executive. The establishment of the commission heralded a wider approach to industrial-training legislation in Queensland.

Under the provisions of the Industry and Commerce Training Act the commission has the responsibility to provide, monitor and oversight training in order that sufficient qualified personnel are available to meet the needs of this State. As from 21 August 1981 the commission's appointed representation was enlarged from six to 12 members with an additional three employers' representatives and three union representatives.

The functions of the commission are oversighted by the relevant industry and commerce advisory committees. The role of each committee is to make recommendations to the

commission concerning the training needs within its respective industry. It is proposed to revamp these committees to ensure all sectors of training for industry and commerce will be controlled by the commission.

Regional advisory committees are established as the need arises in cities and large towns outside Brisbane. These report to the commission on the training needs of the local area. Since its inception, the commission has held meetings in Townsville, Gladstone and Rockhampton.

As a positive step to considering the future needs of industry in relation to a skilled work-force, my department in 1980 initiated the establishment of a working party through the Departments of Labour Advisory Committee (DOLAC). This approach was aimed at setting the present-day skill shortages in Australia as well as the projected needs of the future, particularly in relation to major development projects.

A significant area of concern when projecting the number of skilled tradesmen that will be available, is the loss of tradesmen who, on completion of an apprenticeship, enter a different career. In order to ascertain the extent of these losses and to ensure that more accurate predictions are made as to the needs of industry in the future, a random survey of the tradesmen who completed their time in the years 1970-71, 1975-76 and 1977-78 has been undertaken.

As a result of the findings of the Manpower Planning Branch and discussions with DOLAC, the following action was instituted this year—

- (a) A door-knock campaign of industry to increase the intake of apprentices in Queensland;
- (b) The Commonwealth agreed to offer \$1,000 cash payment to employers who engaged apprentices additional to the number employed in the corresponding period from 1 December 1980 to 30 June 1981 in the metal, electrical and building trades;
- (c) Group apprenticeship training schemes were encouraged.

Officers of the Industry and Commerce Training Commission in conjunction with officers of the Department of Employment and Youth Affairs were involved in publicising these three courses of action. As a result of their efforts a record number of persons commenced an apprenticeship in 1980-81. In addition the commission provides a field consultancy service to employers, trainees and apprentices.

Since 1971 Queensland has been actively engaged in the promotion of apprenticeships, and more recently the promotion of training in all sectors of industry and commerce. Promotion officers stationed in Brisbane and Townsville regularly address Rotary clubs, service organisations, employers' associations, high school students and parents on the necessity for training in all walks of life.

Apprentices who are required to reside away from their normal place of employment to attend college are provided with free rail travel, or with free air passage if they would have to travel for more than 48 hours.

Furthermore, apprentices who must live away from home are paid subsidies to assist in defraying accommodation expenses.

The establishment of the Industry and Commerce Training Commission came at a time of increasing economic activity and development of the State's resources. The economic growth of Queensland is essential to the expansion of employment prospects within this State. In the 10 years to August 1980, almost a quarter of the jobs created in Australia were in Queensland.

In order that Australia will have sufficient skilled tradesmen to capitalise on its natural resources it is now Government policy that proponents of new major mining, mineral processing and industrial development undertake proper training programs to ensure that this need is met. The Manpower Planning Branch is co-ordinating such programs.

As is evidenced by the brief details I have outlined, the functions and responsibilities of the commission and its officers have been greatly enlarged with the advent of the current legislation. This response reflects the established need for the planning of manpower and training in Queensland for future years.

### Workers Compensation Board

It is more than three years since all workers' compensation business passed from the control of the State Government Insurance Office (Queensland), under the administration of the Treasurer, to the Workers Compensation Board of Queensland. As such it now forms part of the portfolio of the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations. It was while I held another office that that policy initiative was undertaken.

The board has continued to function efficiently and give excellent service to the public. Benefits have been maintained at a level comparable to other Australian States. Queensland's premium rates, however, are accepted as being generally the lowest in Australia.

For the year 1980-81 the board has again succeeded in showing a surplus. In a continuing recognition of the efforts of safety conscious employers, merit bonuses of up to 60 per cent have been allowed where the individual claims/premium ratio has been satisfactory. In addition to the generous merit bonus scheme, a general bonus of 7½ per cent has been allowed to all employers. A further reduction of 5 per cent of premiums is allowed to those employers who provide an acceptable ambulance service on their premises. Since its introduction in 1962, the merit bonus scheme has been a tremendous incentive for employers to promote safety on their premises.

In addition, grants totalling \$485,000 were made during the year to organisations actively involved in the field of safety. Regardless of precautions taken, accidents do and will continue to occur. In cases of injury, it is the responsibility of the board to ensure that adequate medical and ancillary services are available. To this end \$18,000 was granted to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, \$33,500 to the QATB and \$1,120,000 to the Health Department (Public Hospitals).

The number of new claims registered during 1980-81 increased by 5.7 per cent while total claims pay-out rose by approximately 16.85 per cent. This substantial increase in pay-out can be attributed to the increase in award payments, higher awards under common law actions and a general increase in payments to doctors.

A developing area of great importance to the board is the rehabilitation of injured workers. Activity in this field has been on the increase and will continue to be given priority. An injured worker has the right to expect that every endeavour will be made to return him to his former employment. If this is not possible, then he should be given the opportunity to learn other skills to enable him to be placed in alternative employment.

During the past three years, \$448,000 has been spent on rehabilitation, and the rehabilitation section of the board liaises extensively with the Commonwealth facilities in this area. The section has been extended and now includes a full-time medical officer and two counsellors. Their efforts will contribute substantially to the early return to work of injured persons, and result in considerable savings to the Workers Compensation Fund.

As from 1 January 1978, premium rates were reduced overall by 10 per cent. Since that date, the fund has operated without any increase to these basic rates. Undoubtedly, the increase in the Queensland work-force has contributed to the steady rise in injuries and subsequent compensation claims.

The benefit payable to an injured employee is equal to his award wage for the first 26 weeks of incapacity. This enables such a worker to concentrate solely on recovery without the additional worry of income reduction during the time he is off work because of his injury. The majority of claims are for periods of less than 26 weeks.

The Workers Compensation Board looks to the future with optimism, confident that it can maintain a superior service to injured workers and employers, at a minimum cost to industry.

### Industrial Registrar

On 12 May 1980 the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961-1980 was amended to provide for the appointment of an additional commissioner. As a consequence, a sixth commissioner was appointed for a term of seven years from 18 July 1980.

Late last year the Industrial Court, the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and the registrar's office moved into new accommodation provided on the 6th

Floor, State Government Building, Anzac Square. This has allowed for additional court and conference rooms to be available to cater for the needs of the court and commission in the foreseeable future.

Following upon the decision by the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission to abandon the wage indexation system, a similar application was recently heard by the State commission. In a decision of 26 October the commission set aside the principles of wage determination.

#### Industrial and Factories and Shops Inspectorate

The main work of the Industrial Inspection Branch arises from the administration of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (including awards and orders made under it), the Factories and Shops Act, the Workers' Accommodation Act and the Pastoral Workers' Accommodation Act.

Inspectors are empowered to check time and wages records and if necessary require an employer to adjust wages to the award rate. Should a dispute arise as to the entitlement of an employee to wages or other payment under the award, or if an employer refuses to meet the claim made by an inspector, legal proceedings may be instituted against the employer. Proceedings can be taken on behalf of employees in respect of wages, overtime, sick pay, annual leave payment or long service leave.

Furthermore, industrial inspectors are also appointed as inspectors for the purposes of the Consumer Affairs Act. As such, they are required to investigate complaints on behalf of the Consumer Affairs Bureau, mainly in country areas.

To enforce the trading hours orders of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, it is necessary for industrial inspectors to conduct inspections both during and after the times fixed for trading.

In most country centres the district industrial inspector is appointed as chairman of the regional advisory committee established under the Industry and Commerce Training Act. Also, if there is no commission inspector in the area, the industrial inspector is required to carry out inspections on behalf of the Industry and Commerce Training Commission.

Over the past six years, the inspectorate has conducted appreciation courses for industrial personnel. This course covers matters such as holiday and leave entitlements, termination of employment and various aspects of the Acts administered by the inspectorate. Ten courses are conducted each year. These consist of four sessions of approximately four hours each. Each course is booked ahead and inquiries have been received from interstate.

Numerous complaints are received by the department in relation to amenities required to be provided for employees under the rules made pursuant to the Factories and Shops Act.

In country areas industrial inspectors carry out inspections in relation to accommodation for employees to ensure compliance with the Workers' Accommodation Act and the Pastoral Workers' Accommodation Act, mainly on sheep and cattle stations and cane farms.

It is interesting to note that a considerable number of employees are not members of unions. Therefore, in the event of a dispute, the relevant union will not always represent them in approaches to employers. Without the services of the inspectorate, many employees would not receive their lawful entitlements under the award or legislation.

#### Division of Occupational Safety

It is the role of the Division of Occupational Safety to ensure that prescribed safety measures in industry are carried out, and that adequate education is provided for persons at all levels in industry in the principles and practice of safety. Vast industrial expansion is currently taking place throughout the State, particularly at Gladstone. In addition, there are presently under construction major projects such as the Wivenhoe Dam and the Tarong Power Station. With this upsurge in building activity, the need for safe working conditions and safe practices has never been more paramount. The division is doing its utmost to maintain the high level of safety in industry that has been achieved over the years.

An office of the Machinery Inspection Branch was opened at Tarong in January this year so that the attention of an inspector can be devoted as fully as possible to the power-station project.

### Construction Safety Branch

There was a dramatic increase in the value of building work being undertaken during 1980-81 compared to the previous year. The figures are \$1,748.5m and \$754.6m respectively. In 1960-61 the value of work inspected was only approximately \$120m. Last year the biggest increase by far was at Gladstone, where the value rose to over \$540m. This was, of course, due to the vast industrial activity at that centre. At the Gold Coast, building operations continue to boom. An increase of almost 60 per cent over the previous year brought the value of construction there to in excess of \$200m. During the year inspectors of construction work carried out 40 649 inspections at building and construction sites.

Two very comprehensive publications have been produced by the branch recently. These are books on "Scaffolding" and "Formwork and Falsework". They are highly informative and well-illustrated publications, and should be of immense value to personnel in the building industry. Copies are available from the Government Printing Office.

### Motor Vehicle Inspection Section

During the past 12 months 114 968 motor vehicles were inspected. Most of these inspections were in respect of vehicles used for commercial purposes. However, there were also inspections of private motor vehicles where inspectors had considered such vehicles were being used in unroadworthy conditions. Furthermore, inspections were made of vehicles for sale in premises of used car dealers. There were, in addition, 2 357 cases where police officers had considered the condition of the vehicles to be suspect and had directed the owners to produce them for inspection.

Approximately 10 per cent of all vehicles inspected were required to be presented for reinspections following some form of repair. This clearly indicates the necessity for prescribed measures to be maintained to ensure the safe use of this form of locomotion.

The Occupational Safety Division provides a very comprehensive safety service for supervisory personnel and workers throughout the State. Among the duties of field officers are the presentation of safety talks, the conduct of safety surveys and appearances as guest speakers at functions of various clubs and associations. In an endeavour to improve safety within Government employment, a code of general principles was printed. 3 500 copies of this code have been purchased by the various Government departments.

A very comprehensive library of films on safety is kept by the branch. These are in popular demand by organisations and groups. They are also used quite extensively by field officers during their talks and lectures.

The Building Construction Industry Safety Council, a tripartite body constituted under section 63 of the Construction Safety Act, continues to function in an efficient and co-operative manner. The other four safety councils were also active during the 1980-81 year. These bodies cover the meat, timber, metal and land transport industries. All of these industry safety councils comprise representatives of employer and employee organisations as well as Government departments. Their objective is to examine ways and means of improving safe working conditions and practices within their particular industry.

The Division of Occupational Safety is constantly aware of the need for improved office accommodation and motor vehicle inspection facilities throughout the State. This is not only to create a better working environment for officers but also to provide improved facilities for the convenience of industry and the public. Accordingly, it is proposed to establish a new district office at Bundaberg as soon as possible and a modern motor vehicle inspection centre at Yandina. Consideration is also being given to the provision of new facilities at other centres throughout the State. At Southport a large complex occupied jointly by officers of the Department of Transport and inspectors of motor vehicles was opened during the last financial year, while at Mt Isa a large building was renovated for occupation as a district office and motor vehicle inspection centre. The construction of a new motor vehicle inspection centre at Gympie was recently completed and will be officially opened by me in early December.

### Consumer Affairs Bureau

During the year ended 30 June 1981, the Consumer Affairs Bureau received 3 439 formal written complaints and dealt with approximately 29 000 telephone inquiries and personal calls by consumers who visited the bureau seeking advice or assistance. Although

there has been an increase in the number of telephone inquiries received, the number of formal written complaints has steadily decreased during the past four years. This is seen as a reflection of the bureau's consumer education program. Further evidence of this is an increasing number of consumers approaching the bureau for pre-purchase information. To complement the willingness of consumers to seek this information, later this year the bureau is to embark on a newspaper advertising campaign that will provide positive guidelines for consumers' purchases.

During the year the bureau has been particularly active in the schools area. Under an agreement reached some time ago at a meeting of Commonwealth, State and Territory education officers, Queensland completed a course in consumer education for primary schools. The course is unique in Australia and has now been distributed in other States for possible inclusion in school curricula on a national basis. Queensland's lead in this facet of consumer protection is evidenced by the many requests and compliments received for its numerous publications. In addition, the education section has participated with such organisations as the Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Credit Union League Ltd in encouraging and promoting consumer education content in schools.

In an endeavour to ensure that consumers make full use of alternative means of assistance in the community, the bureau has increased its contacts with community information centres and has organised seminars to assist electorate secretaries in their counselling capacity. There has been increased contact with business organisations through presentations of papers at conferences and address to industry meetings as a means of ensuring a better understanding of the bureau's role in the market-place. For some time now, the bureau has had a reference library, the first such facility in Australia. This has been developed to the extent where it is now a valuable research asset for members of the public, teachers, academics and students.

#### The Weights and Measures Branch

The Weights and Measures Branch of the bureau is responsible for ensuring that a fair and just basis of trade exists not only between the retailer and the consumer but also between the wholesaler and the retailer. This not only embraces the corner store and supermarkets but also includes pharmacies, garages, aircraft refuelling, packing houses and, in fact, any industry involving weighing and measuring for trade purposes. As a testing authority, the branch is quite regularly requested to certify to the accuracy and correctness of weighing and measuring instruments used in the non-trade application. Outside organisations are frequently calling on the technical ability of the staff for instructional purposes in technical and practical aspects of metrology. With the appointment of a senior inspector of packaging, the branch has recognised the vast growth in this area, which necessitates a greater involvement in consumer protection.

As the volume of work in the Toowoomba, Rockhampton and Cairns districts has increased, it has been found necessary to transfer a second officer to each of those districts. This has required more equipment to be issued to those centres. Furthermore, owing to industrial expansion, an officer has now been stationed on a full-time basis at Southport. With the rapid development in the Sunshine Coast area, it may shortly be necessary to assess the desirability of stationing an officer on a full-time basis in that region. Despite the vastness of the State and the dramatic increase in industry, the branch has been able to provide a 5 per cent increase in the number of visits carried out in the financial year ended 30 June 1981. The value of the fees collected has increased from \$276,245 in the previous year to \$351,375 in the financial year just ended.

#### Conclusion

The record of my department and its subdepartments in serving the people and industry of Queensland has been well proven over the years. The areas they cover are diverse and often complex in nature. The vital importance of the services provided to our State is without question. As I have stated previously, one of the greatest problems facing my department is being able to maintain the high standard of service at a time of dynamic industrial development.

A department of the nature and size of the Employment and Labour Relations Department could not continue to function effectively without the dedication of officers from the highest level down. These officers perform their duties with efficiency and courtesy.

This is very important, especially bearing in mind the close contact which so many sections of the department have with members of industry and the general public, often in very sensitive areas. Because of Queensland's vast natural resources its future is assured. This, of course, has resulted in an unprecedented boom in industrial expansion within the State. Although this upsurge in activity is placing great strain on my department, I am extremely optimistic and confident that it will meet the increased challenges which are being placed before it.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Powell): Order! I desire to inform honourable members that, on the Vote proposed, I will allow a full discussion on all of the Minister's departmental Estimates (Consolidated Revenue and Trust and Special Funds).

For the information of honourable members, I point out that the administrative acts of the department are open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply.

Mr YEWDAL (Rockhampton North) (12.32 p.m.): I firmly believe that the responsibilities of the Minister for Labour Relations are most important ones. Of course, one must categorise its function in the top bracket in the Cabinet. Having said that, I would proceed to say that it is not treated as such by the Government, even though senior Ministers have always held the position. My impression of its function is that when any issue arises, the Premier and his National Party colleagues use it as a whipping-post to denigrate the trade union movement and, in many cases, the Industrial Commission in this State. I qualify that by citing some instances within Queensland.

The volume of legislation emanating from the department is fairly low, but when the occasion arises it is mostly to restrict the unions, as exemplified in the infamous Essential Services Act. One does not need to elaborate on the introduction and aftermath of that legislation. Labour relations, to my mind, and to that of my colleagues, is the creation of some rapport and liaison between employer, employee and the Government. That has not been evidenced in Queensland. Despite the genuine efforts by some Ministers who have been responsible for that portfolio, the National Party inevitably steps in and sabotages any likely chance of reaching mutual finality to problems. The most recent classic example relates to long service leave for building workers in this State. The circumstances were such that the then Minister for Labour Relations (Mr Campbell) publicly committed himself and the Government to legislate for this long-overdue provision for workers in the building industry. Unjustified lobbying by National and Liberal Party back-benchers and business interests, aided and abetted by the Premier, caused renegeing on the issue.

The Master Builders Association of Queensland was, and still is, in accord with proposals to grant long service leave to building workers. It is important to mention that such a provision applies in most other States. Queensland is virtually the odd State out.

I highlight the total lack of labour relations emanating from the Government. An example is to be found in the power industry, in which honourable members saw a classic illustration of brinkmanship before the resolution of the issue around the conference table. The trade union movement in Queensland would be responsive to an invitation to take part in ongoing discussions concerning issues that affect the work-force. If the Minister and his department are genuine in their desire to maintain good labour relations, he should initiate discussions with the trade union movement on that very matter.

The Minister is responsible for ensuring safety in industry. That is a very important aspect of his portfolio and of the Government's responsibilities. I suggest some guide-lines that should be incorporated in our legislation for the purpose of providing safety for workers in industry and of reducing the number of problems that confront the Workers Compensation Board.

The health and safety of workers can be properly protected only if they and their unions are actively involved in the formulation and implementation of safety policy both in the work-place and in industry generally. This latter objective would be attained largely through the tripartite structure of the health and safety commission, with its central role in the formulation and implementation of safety standards.

In other words, everybody must be involved. I believe that everybody is prepared to be involved. However, stringent guide-lines must be laid down in order to achieve the objective.

Next, all employers should be required to prepare and keep under review a statement of safety policy. This statement should set out the employer's policy on the safety of the work-force and the means for the time being in force of giving effect to that policy. This statement and any revision of it should be issued to all members of the work-force. Where English is not the first language of a substantial proportion of the work-force, the statement could be issued in a translated form.

Further, where a safety committee has been established, the statement should be drawn up by the committee and revised as and when appropriate. Failure on the part of the employer to observe the standards set out in the statement would not be an offence in itself but would be admissible in evidence in any legal proceedings whether under the Act or otherwise.

I suggest that the Government could adopt those guide-lines in legislation to ensure the safety of workers in Queensland.

As to the general management of the Minister's department—the Auditor-General's report has revealed shocking details concerning the inspection of safety and machinery on industrial sites. This aspect is part of the overall picture of road safety, industrial safety and, perhaps most importantly, the safety of workers. The Minister virtually admitted in his speech that difficulties have arisen across the board in the staffing of his department, particularly in the areas to which I have referred.

When speaking of safety, one's thoughts naturally turn to workers' compensation. I would suggest that the Workers Compensation Board suffers from a lack of staff, particularly in the provincial cities. Both as a trade union official and as a member of Parliament, I have had many dealings with the board's officers. Like the majority of public servants, no matter in which department they are employed, they are courteous, co-operative and willing to assist in making our lives easier. The big "but" is, of course, the limitation imposed upon the staff in carrying out their duties and the frustration caused by the lack of staff and expertise. The Minister referred to that.

Workers' compensation is a volatile area. It involves people in the industrial movement who tend to become volatile when their well-being is threatened. They tend to become volatile because of the conditioning that they have received in the trade union movement. I do not advocate or support that. Nevertheless, public servants are sometimes subject to abuse from members of the public on the other side of the counter. That is particularly so in Workers Compensation Board offices. Many of the arguments could be avoided if the board's offices were allowed to function much more efficiently and smoothly than they are—in other words, if they were provided with more staff. Problems arise, for example, as the result of undue delays in the reopening of claims. For many years this has been a bugbear in the board.

As far as I know, when claims are finalised the files have still to be sent to Brisbane to be held for future reference. Frequently the reopening of a claim means that the file has to be sent from the Brisbane office to the local office for determination. Some better system should be devised to provide easier access to files in the first few years after a claim has been decided.

There are extensive waiting-lists of workers seeking interviews with the various medical boards. The Orthopaedic Board, which is the main board, is virtually bombarded by workers suffering from broken bones and injured joints. It is the busiest medical board in Queensland; it is overworked. I have not calculated the economics of the suggestion, but it should be possible to establish medical boards, particularly orthopaedic boards, in towns such as Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns, Maryborough and Gladstone. All workers who want to appear before the orthopaedic board have to travel to Brisbane. If the service was decentralised, the cost of air fares, accommodation, taxis and meals could be avoided to a large extent. An orthopaedic board could be established at Rockhampton in Central Queensland, where intense mining activity is carried on and where workers are prone to suffer injuries. The Minister should look carefully at providing board facilities other than in Brisbane for injured workers. On the economics of the situation, the Government would obviously finish in front, and life would be made much easier for the injured workers who would not have to travel to the metropolitan area.

My suggestion is worth investigation, even if only on a trial basis, at Rockhampton and Townsville, the two major provincial cities on the coast. The city of Townsville has 95 000 persons on the roll, and obviously a lot of industry is carried on in and around that city. There is much projected industrial activity in the Central Queensland area.

Unfortunately a policy of negative inquiries about injuries has been adopted. I use that term because the compensation board generally says to workers, "We will pay compensation for your injuries if they are bona fide injuries".

After listening attentively to the Minister, I am still of the opinion that too little is done by the department to prevent injuries. The department and the Workers Compensation Board should be doing much more to try to prevent injury. Although money is allocated to certain areas, much more needs to be done. Many employers do not concern themselves with safety until there is a cessation of work.

A waterfront award, which is a Commonwealth responsibility—I keep using it because of my personal involvement—provided that when a safety issue arose the employees had the right to cease work pending its investigation. If the decision was contrary to the attitude of the employees the lost time was deducted from their wages. If their claim was accepted they were paid for the time they stood by waiting for the decision. Probably the clause was over-used to some extent, but it afforded protection. On many occasions the decision of the men at job level was upheld.

The waterfront is a place where danger arises much more often than in the workplace of almost any other industry, particularly when men are working in the deep holds of ships, on cranes, etc., I believe that more should be done to improve safety.

I also criticise the Minister and the Government generally on their approach to the question of manpower and the growing introduction of technology. I heard the Minister speak about the projected need for labour throughout Queensland and the obtaining of such statistics. I know that departments have to obtain that information, but it seems to me that in recent years the Federal Government, in particular, has been lacking in manpower planning. We are faced with a rather serious situation in this State and nation through having had to import thousands upon thousands of skilled migrants to take up the slack in our work-force. That is a ridiculous situation. One can justifiably condemn the Federal Government for its approach in this instance, and this State Government, too, in not undertaking any forward planning.

When hundreds upon hundreds of young people complete their education only to go straight into dole queues, it is obvious that the private sector in Queensland does not have the confidence of either the State or the Commonwealth Government. On the one hand they are training insufficient people in the trades, while on the other Governments are saying that we have to import skilled tradesmen. I am the last person to adopt a racist attitude and object to migrants, but it seems to me that while we have extremely long dole queues, a shortage of housing right throughout the Commonwealth—I do not want to labour that point—and a shortage of schools and other facilities for young people, why the hell should we talk about bringing in thousands of migrants to take up the slack in industry brought about by mistakes in not undertaking forward planning? The Minister referred to development and how this wonderful State is expanding. One has to accept that we are expanding, but by the same token we have missed the boat in a number of areas, particularly manpower.

On another aspect of technology, the Government is closing its eyes to the way the technology is being imposed on the work-force in this State. There is very little consultation—there is probably none—between the Government and employers in respect of new technology. Unions have made fairly detailed studies of new technology and its effect on the work-force, particularly the question of redundancy and the replacement of workers, but the Government has again failed to take the initiative in respect of new technology. As a party, we have evolved a policy under which we will impose a certain financial commitment on employers in respect of new technology to be put towards the retraining of people displaced by its introduction. Whether we like it or not there will be an increase in the use of new technology across the board. Nobody, including the unions, argues with that. The employers want it and big business wants it. It is a highly competitive field. But unless we take stock and look at the effect of new technology

on the work-force, its introduction will run rampant and we will end up with longer and longer dole queues of young people and middle-aged people who have been forced out of their jobs by its introduction.

Mr Jennings: Did you say you would impose that on the employers or the employees?

Mr YEWDAL: I said that we will impose a levy on the employers so that the returns from the introduction of new technology are put back into industry to compensate employees who lose their jobs, to create work and to retrain people and put them back into some useful occupation rather than push them aside with a golden handshake. It seems that at the moment profits are put before people.

I wish to refer briefly to the Prices Office. It is a no-no. There is talk about controlling prices that affect the community at large, but why isn't something done about it in a positive manner? The price of some of the major consumer products is controlled. However, according to the Government, Queensland operates under a free-enterprise system, and businesses can charge what they like or what the community will pay.

In that regard, I refer to the setting up by legislation of the Bread Industry Committee. What an abortion of a job it has done! Ever since it was formed, there has been a greater monopoly in the bread industry in Queensland and regular increases in the price of bread. Last week in this Chamber I asked the Minister for Primary Industries a question about the criteria submitted by the people in the bread industry who wanted an increase in the price of bread. In his reply he said that that material was confidential and that he would not release it. He said that the information was made available to the Bread Industry Committee and that he would maintain the confidentiality.

If the workers who buy the bread want an increase in wages, they have to justify that increase before an industrial tribunal. They have to employ people to undertake research and then they have to give to the industrial tribunal their reasons for seeking an increase in wages. The Bread Industry Committee simply says that it has received a submission, it has accepted it, and there will be an increase in the price of bread. No justification is given for the increase. If the Minister is to exercise any control over prices in Queensland, he should look at the policy of his own Bread Industry Committee, which increases the price of bread at its own whim.

I am concerned about the domination of flour mills and about representatives from them being appointed to the Bread Industry Committee. It is virtually an appeal from Caesar to Caesar. They are applying to themselves for an increase in the price of a product that they produce. The dirty linen should be washed and the whole matter should be brought out into the open.

In the last minute remaining, I refer to the Consumer Affairs Bureau. The Minister indicated that there has been a slow-down in the number of written complaints but an increase in the number of telephone complaints that the bureau receives. Many people in the community find it difficult to put their views in writing. They feel that they are unable to express themselves properly. They find it much more convenient to ring up and lodge a complaint. I do not argue about that, because at least they make their complaint.

Recently the member for Rockhampton and I took strong objection when an officer from the Minister's department came to Rockhampton and criticised the honourable member and me for interfering in consumer complaints in Rockhampton. I rang the Minister's office in Rockhampton and spoke to the staff. They denied that they had made any complaints about us. In fact, they were complimentary. They said that we liaised with them as much as we possibly could.

(Time expired.)

Mrs NELSON (Aspley) (12.52 p.m.): I rise to support the Minister in the presentation of his Estimates and his report to the Chamber. I congratulate him on the manner in which he has administered his portfolio. I congratulate his officers on the way in which they have administered the department. I thank them for the courteous way in which they have dealt with me in the 12 months that I have been a member of this Parliament.

I wish to address myself to a number of matters pertaining to the Minister's portfolio. I commence by mentioning a number of the areas in which the Minister has taken a special interest this year. I congratulate him on calling a meeting of representatives from

industry, unions and the media earlier this year. It was addressed by people such as Cliff Dolan, Quentin Dempster from the Australian Journalists Association and a representative from the employers whom Mr Polites sent along. That meeting made a very worthwhile contribution to improving industrial relations in Queensland, and in fact in Australia. That is the sort of thing that Ministers of the Crown and their officers ought to be doing more. They should be encouraging various groups in the community to get together and resolve their differences of opinion, and dispel some of the myths that many of us hold about unions, employers and the media. I found this meeting to be a worthwhile exercise, and I thank the Minister for giving me the opportunity to attend it.

I wish to comment on the prompt action that the Minister has taken on two matters that very seriously affect my electorate. The first was the attempt by oil companies to introduce convenience shops at some petrol stations. The Government took fairly prompt action in that matter. I hope that that matter has been buried deep, never to be seen again. It was a back-door manoeuvre to get 24-hour petrol trading. Had the oil companies been able to go ahead with what they had so cleverly planned, they would have certainly destroyed several small convenience shops in my electorate. I commend the Minister and the Government for their prompt action in this area.

Linked with that in a somewhat tenuous way is the issue of extended trading hours. I congratulate the Government on the stance it has taken on this issue. Many emotional statements have been made by groups such as the Housewives Association (Qld) about their right to shop at any time they wish. They ignore the fact that Australia has a population of only 15 million. Over the years we have worked very hard to ensure that workers receive a fair rate of pay for a fair day's work. We do not want to return to the old days when people had to work seven days a week at the whim of some wealthy and greedy individuals.

The three groups which are proposing the change in trading hours are extremely wealthy. Two of them certainly do not have a large percentage of Australian shareholders. In the last two years the three groups—Woolworths, Coles and Myers—have already eroded the small business section of the market by 13 per cent. Frankly, it is a greedy attempt by them to obtain an even bigger share of the market when they already have the bulk of it.

The employment record of those groups is very poor. They tend to employ very young people and tip them out the minute they turn 18. They have a very poor attitude to their staff and have no compassion or sensitivity for them. The Government has a responsibility to guarantee and protect the thousands of small businesses that employ many people of all ages for long periods, who regard their employees as part of their family in the business, and treat them well. In this way it will also protect the jobs of their employees.

Now that I have said some nice things about the Minister's portfolio, I will say some things that are perhaps not so nice. Two matters concern me about the Workers Compensation Board. One is the steady stream of complaints that I get about discourtesy being shown to people who are in fact ill. A number of people in my electorate have contacted me about the very discourteous, almost arrogant, way they have been dealt with over the counter and on the telephone. In this day and age no public servant should deal discourteously or arrogantly with any member of the public. It is even less tolerable and acceptable when those members of the public are ill. The staff of the Workers Compensation Board clearly do not accept that the people they deal with are ill. People who have a psychological illness, a physical illness or a trauma do not behave normally. Very often they behave irrationally and they ought to be handled with far more sensitivity and courtesy.

My second point about the Workers Compensation Board is its apparent lack of concern about its efficiency. I know the Minister has made great efforts this year to see that cheques are dispatched on time and that delays are avoided. I thank him for the occasions when I have had to seek his assistance on behalf of people in my electorate who were in very great and acute financial distress. However, far too many complaints are received from all over the State about people receiving their money late or being treated in a very cavalier fashion when they have asked for immediate assistance. A member of Parliament should not have to become involved to ensure that people who are really in desperate straits get money.

My third point is that the Workers Compensation Board really needs to do something about the Medical Board, which needs to be dragged screaming into the 20th century.

Some weeks ago in this place I had occasion to speak about asbestosis. I spoke with a number of prominent people in the medical profession in Queensland about that matter and the attitude of the Workers Compensation Board and the Medical Board to it. In that speech I quoted the remarks of the board pertaining to one of my constituents. The board quite fallaciously claimed that the constituent was paid the invalid pension because of a trauma that he received to his chest wall and that the asbestosis was incidental. The simple fact is that the asbestosis was discovered when he received the chest trauma. In fact, had it not been for the trauma, he may well have died on the job. He had been ill for some years and it was not until he had his chest x-rayed as a result of the injury that the asbestosis was diagnosed.

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

Mrs NELSON: Prior to the luncheon recess I was dealing with asbestosis and what seems to be the antediluvian attitudes of the Medical Board and the Workers Compensation Board. Throughout the rest of the Western World—and indeed in some of the Eastern industrialised nations—asbestosis has been the subject of research for some years. It is accepted by medical boards for various workers' compensation authorities throughout the rest of the world that asbestosis is a condition which can injure health and destroy life if a person is in contact with the fine hairs of asbestos for a considerable period. In Queensland there seems to be a marked reluctance to accept that, and there is a very conservative approach to it by the medical authorities, not those in the practice of medicine but those on the Medical Board associated with the Workers Compensation Board.

That leads me to the subject of back injuries. Admittedly, a significant argument and debate rages in Australian society about the incidence of back injuries, both in industry and in the home. Again, there seems to be a remarkable lack of modern thinking on the part of the Medical Board about back injuries. It is the biggest single contributor to workers' compensation pay-out. That is evident from the article in "The Bulletin" a few weeks ago on the subject of what constitutes a back injury, how it is effectively diagnosed, how it is effectively treated and how it is adequately compensated for when the injury may or may not be permanent. The Minister ought to ask his department to look into the membership of the Medical Board, the experience of those members and their practice of medicine, and how long they have served on the board. I would be very interested to know who makes up the Medical Board of the Workers Compensation Board, and I would be very interested to learn whether it is a lifetime appointment or for a short term, whether there is a need to bring people with a different attitude to modern-day illness and its treatment into the decision-making processes of the board.

This is one area in which the Government comes in for a great deal of criticism. It is not fair for people with names other than "Smith" or "Brown"—those that are not easily pronounced—to be classified as, "Oh, here's another back-injury bludger." I have heard such expressions used in connection with workers' compensation cases.

There is a large body of evidence throughout the Western World and the Eastern industrialised nations about back injuries—the lack of proper attitudes to work and so on. The Minister has attempted to have classes and other measures introduced to instruct workers on how to properly lift and carry. I applaud him for that. However, when somebody has an injury, whether it is permanent or temporary, the Workers Compensation Board staff and the Medical Board have an obligation to treat that person courteously and not to prejudge his condition—not to prejudge that the person is trying to avoid work and to get himself onto compensation.

I had a very sad experience in my electorate late last year. While I was door-knocking during the election campaign a lady introduced me to her husband who had been treated quite shabbily by the Workers Compensation Board. I hope that the Minister will take on board the comments I have made about the lack of good manners of the Workers Compensation Board. I hope that he also takes on board my statement about those who are involved in the decision-making processes about what is a very important matter in a person's life.

I thank the Minister for his involvement in the industrial relations courses which are conducted at various institutions throughout the State. In particular, I thank him for his support of the course at the North Brisbane College of Advanced Education. It was with a

great deal of gratitude that the college received the donation of the fittings from the old Industrial Court. That donation will be a great help in assisting the students to learn the practices and procedures of the Industrial Court and how the decisions are arrived at.

I turn now to the Occupational Safety Division, which was brought to the attention of the Parliament in the Auditor-General's Report. I refer honourable members to that report and to the Minister's speech.

Page 7 of the Auditor-General's Report referred to the inadequate number of inspections because of staff shortages. The report also made the point that it appeared that a significant number of construction contractors were not notifying authorities that they intended to proceed with construction and that, therefore, no inspections were taking place on their building sites. The Minister has a responsibility to examine that matter very seriously.

In his speech, the Minister referred to the need for greater staff numbers. He should do something about that. I am aware that applicants for positions must be suitably qualified.

A ghastly accident took place recently in York Street, Sydney. Only three or four days ago there was an equally horrific accident in Melbourne. In Brisbane, a fatal accident took place when a man drove off the fourth floor of the Wintergarten demolition site. The number of inspectors in the construction industry in Australia is not adequate. I am very surprised that the union movement has not taken a tougher stand to ensure that people are able to work safely on construction sites, that those living near them are able to live there safely and that members of the public are able to walk safely down adjacent streets. All those people have a right to expect Government at all levels to ensure their safety, certainly before it protects the profits of the construction company.

I turn now to employment, an area in which the Minister deserves a great deal of commendation. Firstly, I express my support for the use of a door-knock for apprentices. The introduction of that program was laudable. As a result of that doorknock, the Minister has been very successful in increasing the number of employers who have been prepared to employ apprentices. He has also been successful in placing other young people in employment.

Secondly, I support the idea of people talking to various groups in the community, including high school students and service clubs. The service clubs in my electorate support very strongly the Minister's activities. They also support the activities of the Education Department in the area of work experience, which has a tenuous link with this matter. That is the type of thing that Governments ought to be doing instead of setting up authorities and bodies to create artificial employment.

I am convinced that there are two groups of people in our community, one seeking work, the other trying to find employees. A great inadequacy in the present system is its failure to bring the two groups together. The Minister has certainly taken a great step forward by trying to bring them together. He has taken up where Mr Campbell left off in his understanding of the great need for more apprentices and skilled tradesmen in our community.

I agree with the honourable member for Rockhampton North that we ought not to be encouraging great numbers of migrants to come here when thousands of young Queenslanders want to do apprenticeships and later work as skilled tradesmen in our own society. Our first obligation is to place the young people of Queensland in employment. Obviously, when a temporary shortage exists, people with specific skills must be brought here. However, this problem has been ignored for too long. I am very pleased that the Minister has expanded the concept of the former Minister in this field.

The Minister's departmental officers work very efficiently. I have had very good personal relationships with them during the past year; I look forward to working equally well with them next year.

Mr POWELL (Isis) (2.24 p.m.): The Estimates of the Department of Employment and Labour Relations that are before the Committee are particularly important to Queensland and to every person in this State. The Minister is to be commended for visiting all areas of the State.

The Opposition spokesman expressed the belief that the Government held this portfolio in low esteem. On the contrary, by having Sir William Knox in charge of this portfolio, the Government has shown that it holds it in high esteem.

Mr Davis: Why is that?

Mr POWELL: Because of the Minister's experience and the manner in which he undertakes his duties. As I have said, it is clear that the Government regards this portfolio highly.

In earlier debates members of the Opposition complained because, generally speaking, Government members congratulated Ministers on the work that they do. Opposition members are interested only in condemning. I congratulate the Minister on the work that he has done in cementing relations between people.

In his own quiet way, he has travelled throughout the State. I make particular reference to his visits to the part of the State that I represent. I thank him for the friendly manner in which he has greeted people and talked with them on their own level. He must have carried out a great deal of research to be able to do that. On behalf of all those people with whom he spoke, I thank him for the interest that he has shown in their work.

Most of my remarks will relate to apprenticeship, because I believe that the Government should be paying very close attention to the training of people for employment in jobs in Queensland. With the introduction in December 1978 of the Industry and Commerce Training Act and the setting up in November 1979 of the Industry and Commerce Training Commission, there was a change in emphasis but really not in fact. During the debate on the setting up of the commission, a number of honourable members referred to the way in which apprentices are recruited and trained in Queensland. There is a great need for innovation in this field.

Recently I wrote to the Minister—I suppose other members have done likewise—asking for the establishment of an apprenticeship in pneumatics and hydraulics. This field is left out of apprenticeship training, simply because when apprenticeships were introduced very little work was done in hydraulics and pneumatics. Today, of course, the situation is entirely different. Honourable members may not realise that many cane harvesters are driven by hydraulics. Their efficiency far exceeds that of machines fitted with the traditional transmissions. Hydraulic transmissions are extremely efficient. The downtime involved in their repair and maintenance is much less than that of machines fitted with traditional transmissions. In spite of that, there is no apprenticeship in hydraulics and pneumatics.

I have put forward to the Minister a proposal for the creation of an hydraulics and pneumatics pilot course at the Bundaberg TAFE college. I know that the Minister, in his usual fashion, will examine that proposal very carefully. Anyone who has had anything to do with the Bundaberg TAFE college would speak very highly of its principal and staff, all of whom are innovative and display a great deal of initiative. Of course, they should be encouraged to do so.

The Bundaberg district contains a wide range of industries involving pneumatics and hydraulics. Many people who are skilled in those fields do not possess formal qualifications in them. This is simply because no formal qualifications are available. Those people have worked in and helped develop this field in Australia.

The Bundaberg college is ideally suited for a pilot course in this very important field and, as a Government, we should support it.

The block release training scheme presents a few difficulties, especially for small country employers.

Mr Vaughan: It was designed to help the people in the country areas.

Mr POWELL: If that is so I can only say that it has not helped them. It may assist some of the larger employers but the smaller employer is greatly disadvantaged by the program. The apprentices are out of the work-place for far too long. With the development of annexes to TAFE colleges in many parts of Queensland, the colleges are no longer remote educational institutions. That is as it should be, especially for apprentices. The block release program disadvantages the small workshop to such an extent that the small employer is loath to take on apprentices.

The Government, through the Apprenticeship Office, has undertaken many schemes to attract apprentices. It recognises the importance of training people to take a leading part in technology in years to come. I see no lack of enthusiasm on the Government's part in this field, but it should be looking much more closely at the block release program and its effect on apprentices and the employment situation. We must move with the times and be far more flexible than we have been in the past in relation to apprenticeships and apprenticeship training.

The Minister referred to the group training program. Flexibility has been introduced into this program to good effect with the result that many of the problems I have referred to have been overcome. This program should be encouraged because it has helped the small workshops to give apprentices wide experience in their chosen trades.

The Minister is in charge of the Consumer Affairs Bureau which provides a real service for Queenslanders. Unfortunately, many people do not make use of that service when it could be of assistance to them. I pay particular tribute to the bureau's education officer, namely, Jan Taylor, on the work that she has done in spreading the gospel of consumerism in Queensland. I do not know if members have read the tremendous number of pamphlets available through the Consumer Affairs Bureau, each of which is worth reading. Indeed, they should be compulsory reading for those who are contemplating buying goods. Certainly there is an opportunity within the education system for the pamphlets to be used for various courses. Most high schools of which I have knowledge use the pamphlets to great effect.

We still have the problem in the community of people buying unwisely or on impulse. I do not believe that any amount of legislation that this or any other Parliament passes will ever stop some people being foolish to themselves. From time to time one comes across instances where it would appear that businesses have been downright shady in their dealings, and as a result people have lost their money. In most cases when complaints have been made to me, by contacting business heads I have been able to negotiate a deal that was acceptable to both parties. But problems occur when a person goes out of business suddenly and he cannot be found. That occurred recently in my area.

A company called Genesis Pine Pty Ltd took deposits from people, in some cases large deposits. I will mention the problems that were caused because I believe they ought to be highlighted. In one case a deposit of \$200 was paid on furniture in the belief that it would be delivered by Christmas when the balance of \$700 was to be paid. Soon after the agreement was reached, which was in the last 10 days, the company went out of business. I have tried both numbers listed in the telephone book but received no answer. Yesterday I went to the Bundaberg address of the company and found that the premises were locked up. There was no possibility of contacting anybody connected with the company. In the second case, a person paid a deposit of \$131 on a pine bed, expecting it to be delivered within the next fortnight. When he went to the Hervey Bay office of the company to check on the actual delivery date he found that the shop was shut and the people had gone. Like the Arabs, they had folded their tents and crept away in the night.

Mr Vaughan: That is not new, of course.

Mr POWELL: I know it is not new; I am merely relating it because I believe we have to publicise such occurrences in an endeavour to make people wary.

Mr Vaughan: Why don't you fix it up?

Mr POWELL: There is no possibility of fixing it up; we cannot legislate to protect people against themselves.

Mr Vaughan: If you put a deposit down, surely there is some security on it?

Mr POWELL: That is exactly what I am trying to point out. The Consumer Affairs Bureau is trying to track down the people involved. The people who paid the deposit have apparently been taken down. I use the word "apparently" because one cannot yet say whether they have. I want to highlight the fact that the officers of the Consumer Affairs Bureau are doing all they can within the law to try to protect these people.

Mention was made earlier of the Workers Compensation Board. Too often we hear people condemning the Workers Compensation Board and its employees. I must say that the people in the office to whom I have spoken, particularly the manager (Mr Turton) and

staff of the Bundaberg office, have shown me the utmost courtesy, which is in stark contrast to the officers of some other Government departments. The performance of the people who work for the Workers Compensation Board, particularly in my electorate, is exemplary. I congratulate them, because in some cases they have had some pretty hard problems to deal with. Their courtesy and patience certainly warrants commendation.

The honourable member for Rockhampton North mentioned the way the Orthopaedic Board is structured. I certainly have to agree with what he said. The majority of cases with which the officers of the Workers Compensation Board have to deal apparently concern back or back-related injuries, and the people involved ultimately have to appear before the Orthopaedic Board. One of my constituents who was injured in a railway accident some years ago is still trying to get what he believes is justice. He has taken the case to court, and a decision has been made.

Some people who ultimately appear before the relevant medical boards have a great deal of dissatisfaction with the arbitrary decisions that are given. There should be some sort of appeal procedure so that a second opinion could be obtained. I hasten to add that the Minister extended to me the opportunity to meet some members of the Orthopaedic Board to hear their side of the story. I confess immediately that I have not heard their side of the story. Some people are unhappy that no appeal procedure is available.

The member for Rockhampton North suggested that the Orthopaedic Board should sit in various country areas, and I certainly support that proposal. People with back injuries find it uncomfortable to travel, particularly by bus, motor vehicle or train, from the far-flung areas of Queensland to Brisbane. In spite of what some people think, many parts of Queensland do not have an air service. Therefore, people have to travel by road to appear before the Orthopaedic Board or other boards in Brisbane.

Most of the people involved in workers' compensation cases are genuinely ill. Maybe they are not ill from the work injury about which they are complaining, but they are certainly ill. People who are ill are uncomfortable in travelling long distances to appear before boards in Brisbane. That creates physical and psychological problems. If the boards could sit in the larger centres along the coast, such as Maryborough, Rockhampton and Mackay, I am sure that applicants for compensation would be much better served.

With those few remarks, I once again thank the Minister for his courtesy and for the work that he does in this portfolio. We can be sure that if he makes a statement, a lot of research has gone into it. I commend the Estimates to the Committee and trust that they will be agreed to.

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (2.43 p.m.): We are at the dawn of the era of the smart machine—an information age that will change for ever the way the entire Australian nation works, plays, travels and even thinks. The next 20 years will be part of a revolution that will make the first industrial revolution of the steam-engine pale into insignificance.

The difference between 1 January 1980 and 1 January 2000 will be this: at the first date there were virtually no microcomputers in Australian homes; by the second date there will be virtually no homes without microcomputers. Our life, our work, our education and our relaxation will be influenced and controlled by the silicone chip, computers, robots, etc. Along with the microprocessor, the home computer, connected by telephone to the central computer, will come the credit card or cashless society.

Already it is virtually here, but a person's credit card in the future will come with its own microprocessor built-in; and when he places his card in the slot whilst shopping, it will check his balance, pay his accounts, and even accept deposits and withdrawals whilst he is still in the supermarket. The credit card will do away not only with cash but also with people. Shop assistants will disappear, as will the bank tellers. Of course, that will mean the end of many middle-management jobs, because if there are no workers, there is no one for the manager to manage and his job will also disappear.

A further example of major changes facing our new society will be the effect of integrated communication systems. This is the ultimate development in information transfer, using computer land-lines, satellites and fibroptical conductors capable of transferring unimaginable quantities of information from one place to another.

In the near future, the Australian domestic communication satellite will become a fact of life. Computer terminals for the home will be available at approximately \$200. We will be able to sit at home and set our computer to tell the major central computer terminal in town to transfer money from our accounts to pay various bills.

It will be possible for large office blocks in the city to close, to become empty caverns, as more and more work is undertaken at home on computer terminals. People will not be able to loaf, because the computer will clock up how many minutes' work they have done during the day and a central check on the computer in town will tell if they have done their job.

With next year's introduction of Telecom's new data communication service, Austpak, the cost for one computer terminal in Brisbane to be connected to one in Perth will be exactly the same as the cost of connecting it to another terminal in Brisbane. Distance will make no difference. That will allow big southern businesses to do away with local branch offices. Country towns will not have branch offices; computers will connect direct to head office in Melbourne or Sydney.

Home computer terminals could do away with massive spending on public transport and office blocks, and transform business areas that are lively and exciting during office hours into empty, unused caverns 24 hours a day. Schools and teachers may suffer a similar fate. On my home computer, I could program my own educational system by the use of cassettes or discs. I could use the computer to pose questions and check my answers. The only difference would be that the computer would never get tired, cross or angry. If I faced up to a program and got it wrong nine times out of nine, the computer would just ask me the same question the tenth time, while a teacher could decide I was beyond redemption and take things into his own hands.

Our entertainment will also change. One only has to watch the local slot machine parlour to see how involved people become with Star Wars and other computer games. In Japan, games have been produced to be used in conjunction with television sets and a home computer. They take three or four months to complete. The players use the game each night and record the position reached. The game can then be restarted from that position. The games are very interesting. A person can be a knight of the round table saving damsels in distress and battling dragons and black knights. The player has to work out how to defeat his opponents and how to avoid the pitfalls and problems that the computer has put in his way.

In Japan, the new breed of industrial robots has stirred some unions into action as workers fear for their jobs. The "thinking" robots can be taught to copy human actions by the use of TV cameras, photocell sensors and microprocessor memories. The new robots will work at twice the speed of present machines with 10 times the accuracy. They will work 24 hours a day without lighting or air conditioning, while they increase production and reduce factory costs.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: I hope they never replace the fairer sex.

Mr BURNS: No, they will not do that, but people will be able to vote by machine. In future there will be no more rorts at the ballot-box; people will be able to vote at home.

As larger and smarter machines do jobs better and quicker, workers in rural industries will also come under threat. What the mechanical harvester did to cane cutters, the super mill will do to sugar-mill workers. Already the Farleigh mill near Mackay is reported to be planning a new super mill capable of crushing 16 000 tonnes of cane per day, compared with the 11 000 tonne limit of the existing five-roller machines. The introduction of mechanical harvesters was a blow to the population of many small coastal towns; the development of the super mill will reduce the population and the jobs available even further.

Our homes will change. People will not need a key to the door; locks will be programmed to recognise the owner's voice and let him in. In the morning people will be able to tell their oven the menu for the evening and the kitchen robot will assist it and, when they arrive home, pour them a beer as they enter the door. What I am saying is not unusual or beyond comprehension; I am stating the facts of the silicon-chip revolution.

The revolution will pose a threat to our privacy from despotic governments. The Government's taxation computer will talk to bank computers and check with various computers that handle our credit cards. Any unusual expenditure in our account or any of our family's accounts will be passed back through the system. The computer society will keep very close tabs on our activities.

It will also bring us closer and closer to the rest of the world. Modern communication will show the poor and starving of the world how the rich half lives. The threat of press-button wars will increase as technology produces more and more horrific weapons, such as those designed to kill people and save buildings.

I could go on to talk of paperless offices, of cars with microprocessors that automatically adjust fuel use, engine performance and speak to the driver to advise him when something goes wrong; of factories and assembly lines 2 km long that are already operating controlled fully by microprocessors and robots.

I have highlighted the massive changes we face in the next 10 to 20 years. They will be tough, but exciting, times. Those of us who cannot cope with the computerised society will be like those men and women in the 60s who could not read or write. It will be up to the Government and our education system to help us and educate us to cope.

What worries me is that in the Minister's presentation of his Estimates today I did not hear one word about technological change. When he spoke about research, I did not hear about any research being undertaken into the social consequences; into the fundamental responsibility of Government to monitor the process of technological innovation; into ensuring the maximisation of its positive attributes and the mitigation of the adverse social effects; and into the achievement of equitable distribution of the benefits of the new technology.

The Labor Party, I am proud to say, has a policy on it. I have sought your permission, Mr Row, to have included in "Hansard" a very small section of that policy.

(Leave granted.)

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

1. Appoint a Minister for Science and Technology.
2. Establish a Science and Technology Commission, comprised of representatives from a wide range of community interest groups. Its purpose will be essentially to advise the Minister/Government on matters relating to the question of technological change, and to recommend on the options available.
3. Establish within the Department an information and research section with the following broad aims:
  - (a) to work with public and private organisations to answer the many demands for information;
  - (b) achieve an understanding of the issues involved in technological change;
  - (c) to disseminate information to unions, employers, community groups and interested individuals;
  - (d) to continually monitor the impact of technological change on the level and quality of employment;
  - (e) to assist in the development of government policies by suggesting priorities and appropriate forms of constructive government action;
  - (f) in particular, to carry out research and develop proposals for job creation schemes, and alternative patterns of work;
  - (g) to modify the education system to bring it into line with the needs of a post-industrial society;
  - (h) to assist unions and employers to monitor the effects of the introduction of new technology;
  - (i) to collaborate with other State Governments to encourage the restructuring and expansion of the Australian Science and Technology Advisory Council, to incorporate Queensland's guidelines.
4. Use the financial resources and power available to government to provide selective incentives to foster modern industries with employment growth potential. These will include high technology industries currently not established in Australia.

Mr BURNS: That section refers only to the appointment of a Minister for Science and Technology and the establishment of a department for information and research with certain basic aims. I believe that that is important.

Neither this Parliament nor any other Australian Parliament can be excused for failing to act on this most pressing problem. Australia's politicians have been warned for 10 to 15 years about social problems, invasion of privacy, dehumanisation and future shock. We have all done very little about it. It is to our discredit collectively—Oppositions and Governments—on this issue. If the introduction of computer technology continues without long and short-term planning, if workers are not involved in decision-making, if we continue to show a heartless indifference to technology's victims—the unemployed—then we will see disunity, dismay and despair that will turn into such frustration and anger as we have seen in many of the working-class cities in Britain. We cannot expect the ordinary working men and women to accept being treated as virtual criminals for being out of work when it is not their fault; when society has done little or nothing for them. Today, unfortunately—and we only have to turn to the newspapers for proof—for some reason or other those thousands of people still out of work are now ignored. The Federal Government has been able to change the way the figures are collected, re-arrange them and feed them into the system in such a way that they are very rarely highlighted.

Technology and the changes it brings must be used to plan a better future. We must urgently address the problems of youth employment, the special problems of migrants in the work-force and of Aborigines, the unskilled, women and the middle-aged unemployed. Unemployment is Queensland's most serious social problem. Too often by using statistics and the comparison of one year with another or one month with another, Governments and the public servants involved speak as though ordinary men, women and kids were not involved. Somehow or other they become cyphers. They become numbers. Ministers cry "Oh, we are a little bit better off than we were last year." They forget the human suffering. They forget the loss of dignity. They forget the family break-ups and the other resulting problems.

Governments have created a situation where unemployed persons must really despair that anyone cares or is concerned. Those people must feel helpless and powerless when they realise that very few really care and worry about their plight. It is a political truism that the only people who are concerned are those out of work and their families. The Government says that there are no votes in it. I believe that it goes deeper than that. One of the great tests of those who talk about Christianity and compassion for others is their real concern for those less privileged than themselves. The unemployed deserve proper assistance. They deserve more than they are getting today.

It is time the rich State of Queensland made a commitment to help our unemployed obtain justice. In addition to those registered as unemployed there are thousands of other victims of the lack of jobs. I refer to the handicapped people who were employable but are no longer able to get jobs because of the availability of hundreds of unemployed; the women who no longer try for a job because they do not want to stop a youngster from getting a start; the older people forced into retirement before their time because the boss always takes a younger man; the youngsters who return to school because it is better to be there than hanging around the streets looking for a job; the migrant attracted to Australia by the promises of work and security, who because of language difficulties, lack of acceptable skills and knowledge of his rights, is exploited by penny-pinching businessmen; the Aborigine who is sadly disadvantaged by lack of education and intolerance; and the unskilled who make up the largest percentage of Queensland's alarming unemployment figures.

A family man out of work and on the dole has the same needs as those in full-time work. His family needs food, housing, health care, education, power, transport and so on. But the Government says that his family must suffer and go without.

It is time that we stopped that unfair discrimination. Despite all the fights that Mr Bjelke-Petersen has with the Federal Government over whose responsibility it is to look after the Great Barrier Reef, mining interests or Aborigines, he never argues in support of the rights of the unemployed. He always says that providing assistance for the unemployed is Canberra's responsibility. It is always somebody else's responsibility. I wonder why this Government shows such little concern?

Mr Moore: How do you account for the positions vacant advertised in Saturday's newspaper that are never filled?

Mr BURNS: I will tell the member for Windsor how. I was involved very much with some young kids in my area. I sent a worksheet to employers on their behalf, and I went with some of them. I remember writing to a Minister about a Government position that was advertised some time ago. The position was advertised on Saturday, and on Monday morning the applicant was told that the position was filled. The officer from the department said to me, "Tom, that was filled before the ad went in. We knew who was going to get the position, but we had to place the advertisement in the newspaper." However, the kids queued up for interviews.

A number of young people go to employers and are told, "We will ring you back." They do not receive a reply. The Commonwealth Employment Service send 10 people to the same place, knowing that nine of them will be knocked back. They are going to be a little more depressed, a little more demeaned and have a feeling of rejection. Positions are advertised for massage parlour operators; people advertise for housekeepers; blokes want girls to be photographic models or public relations men to knock on doors on commission only. They do not want to pay the wages and offer the conditions that everyone in the community demands.

Unemployment benefits should be examined and improved to a level at the very least above the poverty line. How can we say to someone who is out of work through the fault of the Government, that he should live below the poverty line? He has not done anything wrong. He probably voted for the Government, and it is probably the biggest mistake he has made in his life. Because he is out of work, we say to his children that they should receive dole like a second-rate charity. Those persons are being treated as charitable objects.

Let us take the case where someone installs a machine and eliminates jobs. For example, the manager of the Fish Board said to the staff, "You're out. We've decided to reorganise and we are going to reduce the staff from 90 to 30. All of the part-time workers are finished." When the employer was asked for redundancy benefits, he said, "No. There is no redundancy payment for you. We do not have any money".

If the boss installs a machine that saves the wages of 10 employees at \$10,000 a year, we do not say to him, "What about a share of the \$100,000 for the workers you are throwing out of work?" We say, "He is a smart businessman." The Government refers to the 10 redundant employees as dole bludgers. Its supporters attack them and treat them as though they are demanding charity from the community.

It is time that the amount of money that unemployed persons can earn in addition to the unemployment benefit was increased substantially. Unemployment is a major cause of violence, crime, vandalism, marriage and family break-ups, alcoholism, drug abuse, loss of self respect, anxiety and insecurity. We do not need any inquiry to discover that; there is sufficient evidence of it from church, youth and community groups.

Mr Hansen: Vandalism?

Mr BURNS: Yes, all of those things. They have time to waste after they have looked for a position in the morning. They spend the rest of the day hanging around the pub and street corners. Although the CYSS scheme was operating successfully, the Government was going to cut that out. At least that gave the unemployed some place where they got together and felt as though they were receiving some support. I am pleased that in that instance the protest provoked some response from the Federal Government.

In relation to mismanagement and lack of planning, I referred briefly to the Queensland Fish Board. I am concerned at the way in which workers of the board were treated. I am also concerned at the way in which the workers at Borthwicks were treated. Borthwicks is a private enterprise company that lost \$20m on its operations and, as a result, decided to close its Moreton plant. But at least its treatment of its casual workers was far better than that meted out to the workers of the Government-sponsored Fish Board. The management of Borthwicks was prepared to negotiate with the workers on the basis that none of them had been permanent in the sense that they may not have worked a 48-week year or a five-day week. Its meatworkers had been available on call to work whenever the management wanted them to work. On that basis, Borthwicks was prepared to pay a day per year to the workers, not on the basis of a full year's work but on the basis of available work. Borthwicks paid it. As I

have said, Borthwicks lost \$20m. But when a similar proposal was put in relation to the Fish Board—which, I understand, is in debt to the tune of \$5m or \$6m—I received a letter from the Minister saying that the Government could not afford to do it.

Right now the Government should include the provision of redundancy payments in its industrial laws. It should provide that when Inghams sack a couple of hundred men at their chicken-plucking plant those men receive redundancy payments. They have worked for the company for years. Similarly, workers who lost their jobs at the margarine plants and at Hancock & Gore should be given redundancy payments. The community has gained experience of the effects of closures such as those at PTL, various abattoirs and so on. As a result of them, people are suffering.

Mr Powell: How are you going to handle Casey when he becomes redundant?

Mr BURNS: I will say this about Ed Casey: while people such as the honourable member for Isis are on the Government side of the Chamber, he will never become redundant. Mr Casey will be around when Labor is in government, and he will be part of a Labor Government, which will do a lot more for the workers and the unemployed than this Government has done.

It is passing strange that in Estimates debates Government members, such as the honourable member for Isis, speak for five minutes about what is wrong with the system, but they never do anything about it. They tell us what is wrong with someone in the home-cladding business, but they do not take any action to stop him ripping off people, closing his business today, setting up a new company tomorrow, ripping off another 20 people, closing down his business again, and setting up a new one. The Government will not do anything to stop him. If Labor members ask the Government to take action, it says, "We cannot find him."

Mr Vaughan: That's free enterprise.

Mr BURNS: It is what is claimed to be free enterprise. The worst feature of the free enterprise system is that, whereas the Government is prepared to regulate many of the decent business operators, it is not prepared to do anything to regulate the little penny-ante crooks or the two dollar crooks. A host of regulations govern the workings of BHP and Mount Isa Mines, but no regulations control the crook wall-cladder or the penny-ante robber who, day after day, rips off the pensioners and lone mothers. He goes around door to door conning the little people to enter into crooked contracts. The Minister warns the community, "A fellow is going round selling wills. Don't deal with him," or, "Don't have anything to do with so and so, who went broke the other day in his mail-order business." Why doesn't the Government outlaw operations such as that? Isn't it time the Government deprived them of the opportunity to operate again?

(Time expired.)

Mr BERTONI (Mt Isa) (3.4 p.m.): I pay a tribute to the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations, who is completely at home in any portfolio that he administers. He is handling his present portfolio in a most decent and respectable manner. I am sure that most honourable members appreciate his efforts.

I want to comment firstly on the Workers Compensation Board. Recently a review was conducted with particular reference to categories of employers. I have spoken to the Minister concerning this matter. I am somewhat concerned at the fact that the board was advised to review employers who pay workers' compensation premiums with a view to reclassifying them into categories. The purpose was to obtain more revenue for the Government. I lodged an objection against this proposal with the Workers Compensation Board's office in Mt Isa. I must say that the officer to whom I spoke was most co-operative. He told me that certain people were reclassified—I will give an example of that in a moment—and that the increases were imposed to make that category payable within the workers' compensation system.

I am referring particularly to the removal of chiropractors from the medical section and the placing of them with physiotherapists. When that was done their contribution increased from 35c in \$100 for medical practitioners to \$1.18 in every \$100. That meant an

increase of between 300 per cent and 400 per cent. When I asked the Minister the number of claims made by physiotherapists and chiropractors in the last three years, I was told that in 1979-80 there were only three claims in respect of which \$3,173 was paid. That amounts to just over \$1,000 a claim, which seems to be quite satisfactory.

There are approximately 150 chiropractors in Queensland. On a wage of approximately \$18,000 for each employee, each chiropractor pays about \$212 by way of workers' compensation premiums. That means 150 chiropractors pay about \$32,000 to the Workers Compensation Board for a pay-out by the board for both physiotherapists and chiropractors, of \$3,173. Something is wrong when so much is contributed to the system. It seems to me that it is purely money-making when so many classifications are changed. I strongly object to that. The Minister may care to comment on my suggestion that the Government intends to make each category self-sufficient. I may have miscalculated, but I do not think so.

I welcome the Minister's recent announcement of a complete review of industrial problems and a complete updating of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. That is in distinct contrast with the dismal performance of the Federal Government in the industrial relations field. All interested parties are still awaiting Mr Viner's announcement about the Commonwealth inquiry into industrial relations and industrial legislation. I am sure that honourable members have read many comments attributed to Mr Viner about Australians not being able to live with so many strikes and disputes. After many months we are still waiting for Mr Viner to announce the terms of inquiry and what he intends to do. All that Mr Viner has done in industrial relations is to let the employers down. The quicker the Commonwealth gets out of the industrial relations field the better it will be for Australia, because Mr Viner is trying to interfere with matters that concern Queensland.

Mr Kruger: Mr Viner is really incompetent.

Mr BERTONI: I make it clear that he does not have a very good name. He is not handling his portfolio properly. If our Minister for Employment and Labour Relations took over his responsibilities he would achieve far better results.

One has only to look through today's "Telegraph" to see the present number of disputes and strikes. The metal trades, a security group and the undertakers are all going on strike in the next few weeks for one reason or another.

One of the main reasons why people are disappointed with the Industrial Commission is the lack of speed with which it acts. Perhaps we should look at that area and attempt to improve its efficiency. If I put the blame anywhere, I would have to say that one of the greatest problems with industrial relations is interference by Governments. I cite the problems within the power industry. The State Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission was handling the recent dispute because it was within its jurisdiction. But what did this Government do? It appointed a tribunal and took it right—

Mr Vaughan: Your Premier did that.

Mr BERTONI: I do not care who did it, it was done. As far as I am concerned, that was completely wrong. If a dispute is placed in the hands of the commission, it should remain there. But the Government appointed a tribunal. It was really saying that the commission was no good. The Government said, "Let's appoint a tribunal because we can get a decision quicker, and it will be what we are really looking for." But what are the results of such action?

Workers outside the power industry have no respect for the commission because they know quite well that if they stand their ground and refuse to give in the Government will interfere on their behalf. There is a grave fear in the community that this is what will happen, and may have already happened. The workers say, "Oh, well, give the commission away; it doesn't make any difference. The Government will come in and appoint a tribunal which will give us exactly what we want." No-one can convince me that a worker driving a turbine in a powerhouse is worth as much as the pilot of a 747 jet. Obviously it is completely incorrect to say that the driver of a turbine is just as responsible as a pilot with many years of training, yet the tribunal decided to pay him roughly the same wage.

Several other examples of what I am saying appear in this morning's newspaper. I have here an article headed, "\$20 rise for rail workers". Although I am citing that case as an example, it is not because I do not think the rail workers were entitled to an increase—that is a matter for the commission. The article states—

"In their decision, the commissioners said: 'In normal circumstances the claims should not and would not have been processed until claims under other parent awards had been finally determined.

'However, bearing in mind the attitude of the respondent (the Railway Department, which did not oppose an increase) and the fact that the Commission is not required to make a final determination of the claims, we are of the opinion that it would not be in the public interest to refuse to grant wage increases of \$20 a week or the hourly or annual equivalent thereto.'"

That is exactly what happens. Before the commission is permitted to fulfil its role within the system, the Government intervenes. Negotiations are conducted between Government departments and the unions, agreement is reached and the commission is forced to accept that agreement as something that is inevitable. But what happens then is that there is an immediate flow-on. Because the Government in its wisdom has once again interfered in the workings of the commission—

Mr Vaughan: You are a bit boxed up, aren't you?

Mr BERTONI: No. I am not boxed up.

Mr Vaughan: The Government did not give in on that.

Mr BERTONI: Yes, it did. The Commissioner for Railways made a decision, and the commission had to accept it.

Mr Vaughan: He was the other respondent.

Mr BERTONI: Yes, but the Commissioner for Railways intervened, and the commission was forced to rule in that way before bringing down its decision on parent awards.

Mr Kruger: What you are saying is that the general public are the meat in the sandwich; they cop it all the time.

Mr BERTONI: I agree with the honourable member.

I shall deal with that matter later when I refer to an article in today's "Telegraph" about brewery workers being given a shorter working week.

Industrial strikes and disturbances in Australia are of major concern. On many occasions they could be averted if better relationships based on trust and integrity existed between employers and employees.

Mr Vaughan: What does the chairman of your industrial committee, Vince Lester, feel about that?

Mr BERTONI: He feels as I do about it. If co-operation is to take place between employers and employees, a grievance-handling procedure should be provided.

Mr Vaughan: We have that already.

Mr BERTONI: No. There is only a partial grievance-handling procedure.

Mr Vaughan: It is written into the Essential Services Act.

Mr BERTONI: Not completely. It does not apply from the factory floor up to the management. If a grievance-handling procedure could be provided throughout the system, there would be more success in settling disputes. Many disputes arise on the spur of the moment when somebody becomes pig-headed or perhaps does not communicate with the next person along the line. Problems arise and people take sides. If a complete grievance-handling procedure was provided in awards, many problems would be solved before they became serious.

I must praise the good relationship that exists between certain companies and employees. In my own area, I cite Mount Isa Mines Limited. It enters into two-yearly agreements with the workers. The important point is that in Mt Isa there are good union leaders and

management who respect the agreements. They engage in quite a lot of bartering, but once an agreement is reached the unions and the company stick to it. In that respect, they are a good example to many other employers and employees.

The other point I wish to raise relates to the 35-hour week. When it was first mooted, there was a great cry in Australia. Some people said, "We are not going to allow a 35-hour week. No way in the world will we allow that." Now it is part of the norm. Recently I read an article by Mr Laurie Carmichael in which he said, "The 35-hour week is gone, it is no longer of any interest to us. We will now go for 27 hours a week." That is typical of what is happening.

I said earlier that I would refer to an article in today's "Telegraph" headed "Beer union's short week". It reads—

"Shorter working week negotiations just finalised provide for an immediate 38-hour week, to be reduced to 36 from February 1 next year."

What will be the result of that shorter working week? The article then states—

"Liquor industry officials have tipped that cost increases caused by the improved wages and working hours would be passed on to the consumer."

There will be an increase not in productivity but in the cost of the product because of the introduction of the 35-hour week. The mining industry operates three 8-hour shifts a day. The introduction of a 35-hour week will mean that the industry will have to reprogram its operations—

Mr Vaughan: Are you talking about the coal-mining industry?

Mr BERTONI: I am talking about the mining industry in general. It will have to consider the introduction of a nine-day fortnight. It will have to review its whole operation. There will have to be an increase in the number of employees to cover the reduction in the working week.

Mr Vaughan: The coal-mining industry already has a 35-hour week.

Mr BERTONI: Yes, but it is flowing on to other industries. There is an increase in the number of employees, but there is no corresponding increase in productivity.

Companies in the mining industry and other industries have to compete on the world market. The introduction of a 35-hour week—some mention has been made of a campaign for a 27-hour week—will have a disastrous effect on the economy of Queensland and Australia. Because their products will become dearer, companies will not be able to compete on the world market.

I express some concern about last year's introduction of the one-year training system for apprentices. Once an apprentice moves from a country town to a bigger city—in my area, that would be from Richmond, Julia Creek or Cloncurry to Mt Isa—for one year, he will be lost to the smaller country town. When a young apprentice spends a year in a city with better amenities and a far different environment than the one that he is used to, he will become accustomed to life in that city and will find it difficult to return to a small country town to complete his apprenticeship.

Bringing young apprentices to larger cities to attend TAFE colleges or colleges for apprentices also creates problems in relation to accommodation. In some areas the Government has purchased motels for the use of students who attend colleges. That can be a viable proposition because the accommodation can later be used as an additional teaching area. Students from country areas have immense difficulty in finding accommodation in Mt Isa. The Government must look very carefully at that problem.

At one stage, the Government suggested the introduction of a one-year course of 50 weeks instead of the present 42 weeks. Because of climatic conditions and other environmental problems, that could have caused problems in country areas. In its wisdom, the Government has reverted to the one-year course of 42 weeks. Country people support that decision.

I welcome the introduction to places such as Mt Isa of prevocational student schemes. The high schools have been notified that their students can attend prevocational courses so that they may gain an understanding of the profession they might wish to enter in the

future. However, students from such places as Burketown, Julia Creek and Richmond cannot obtain accommodation in Mt Isa when they attend such courses. The Government should seriously consider supplying that much needed accommodation.

Dr LOCKWOOD (Toowoomba North) (3.23 p.m.): In addressing myself to these Estimates, I shall deal first with some consumer problems.

This State needs a full-scale consumer-alert system so that the Minister, under parliamentary privilege, may denounce shady traders. They should be denounced immediately their practices are discovered. Despite the best of efforts, the same names are continually associated with consumer problems.

I ask the Minister to pursue complaints about Vincenzo Festa and his brother, Tony Festa.

Mr Bertoni: He is a crook.

Dr LOCKWOOD: They are both crooks.

The member for Townsville South has raised this matter in the Parliament and pointed out that Tony Festa trades as V. and N. Home Improvements Pty Ltd. They are now operating in Toowoomba. They are trading under the name of John Amati Painting Services and give their address as Post Office Box 43, Kingaroy. I point out that a registered letter has been sent to that post office box and returned unclaimed to the sender. So it is quite clear that they can operate out of a post office box at their will. I would not doubt for one minute that they never turn up during trading hours to see the post office staff. They would take the mail they chose out of the box and leave the rest for Australia Post to return.

In Toowoomba recently John Amati Painting Services quoted \$3,125 to treat a house with a product called Climatex. The present contract says that Climatex is registered and carries a 15-year warranty by the manufacturer. However, John Amati does not mention the manufacturer by name. The product as applied has been known to crack and fail after three years. There we have a product three times the cost of conventional painting that lasts only half as long; so it has a price disadvantage when compared with normal paint of at least 6 to 1. However, these people, who have been in business before, are still in business in this State. They trade in breach of the law. They break the Contractors' Trust Accounts Act as often as they can. They take deposits without providing services and fail to deposit the money in a holding trust account. They also fail to provide a schedule stating the purchaser's right to terminate the agreement.

The fact that they are still operating—and from a motel room in Toowoomba—is a great pity. They will not be in that motel room when people want to complain about them; nor will they be residing snugly in a little box—Post Office Box 43—at Kingaroy; nor will they be in Kingaroy or anywhere else on the Downs. They will have skipped again. What is needed is very swift consultation between the Consumer Affairs Bureau, the Corporate Affairs Commission and the police to apprehend itinerant traders who breach the law, change their name and move on. We need to stop those fellows. Perhaps the various Ministers ought to have a round-table conference to decide exactly how to do it. They will also have to insist in Cabinet that they get sufficient funding to do it. Certainly there are complaints. I could take members of Cabinet to a motel in Toowoomba where those people are operating today. They have “rooked” people before. They are still there. It is not good enough knowing that they are there; it is not good enough for members of Parliament to alert the consumer. We have to charge some of these people and have them convicted of their crimes.

The consumer's most important purchase is undoubtedly his home. Some consumers, of course, make major purchases in addition to their homes in the form of business premises, a garage or a shed. The Australian Federation of Consumer Organisations (known as AFCO) discussed at its Canberra conference in the last two weeks concern at the Commonwealth decision to cut funding for the building material research section. That is the only section in Australia which provides on-shore, detailed, independent research into building materials and methods. It is true that research is being conducted into special projects at the James Cook University on the type of building that is needed to resist cyclones and the types of fixtures and fittings, claddings and roofings necessary to resist cyclones of various strengths. That research is necessary and has to continue.

It is also true that the Queensland Institute of Technology, which is adjacent to Parliament House, prides itself on the information that it disseminates about the methods of fixing—whether materials should be affixed by welding, riveting or some other process. It prides itself on the information it disseminates to the building industry, to those training as engineers, and to those who advise the building industry.

On the recommendation of the razor gang, the funds of the building standards testing laboratory—the one body in Australia that can provide an overall independent service—are to be cut back.

If we do not have an onshore body, we will be totally reliant on one manufacturer's claims and other manufacturers' counter-claims. The consumers will include both the purchasers of homes and the builders. They will be open to deceptive advertising. It will require major stresses on buildings to prove that the advertising has been deceptive.

In the absence of onshore research, consumers will become reliant on research published in other English-speaking nations, probably the United Kingdom or America. Their building materials will be totally different from ours. For example, their materials may not be of metric sizes and we will be left in a great and hopeless dither. This forum can point out to the Commonwealth that the laboratory needs to be funded. It is worth its weight in gold to the Australian consumer and the Australian building industry.

If the razor gang is looking for where it can reduce funds in the building industry, it can cancel the \$500,000-odd provided out of the same Federal Minister's Vote to promote a trailer-home in competition with commercial enterprise. The Commonwealth has entered this sphere which rightly belongs to private enterprise; it has no justification for being in that area. It is promoting trailer-homes in direct competition with industry and commerce which are engaged in building and selling them. The \$500,000 taken from that project would be better applied to the maintenance of the building standards testing laboratory in Australia.

I congratulate the Workers Compensation Board for providing an excellent service to the injured. Many people grumble about the service offered. The services provided in this State are far better than those provided in other States. Admittedly the service in Queensland could be improved. The vast majority of claimants receive a cheque within four weeks. Nevertheless, there needs to be a quicker decision to accept or reject claims from those workers who have recurrent injuries or injuries which are obscure and may not readily attract compensation, such as the bad back injury. There would not be one member who has not had a worker come to him for assistance in having a decision made one way or the other to compensate him or not so that he at least knows whether he is to be paid compensation or whether he has to apply to the Commonwealth Department of Social Security for unemployment benefits.

Mr Davis: What is the answer to that?

Dr LOCKWOOD: The answer is for the board to make up its mind more quickly.

Mr Davis: What is the answer?

Dr LOCKWOOD: That is the answer. There is a need to speed up the decision-making process.

The abolition of the two-day waiting period was a mistake. As a result, a huge pay-out has been made for minor injuries—complaints in the two, three or four-day category, including minor cuts and sprains. It is a pity that such an immense amount of compensation is spent on minor injuries when a vast number of sufferers of major injuries are not being compensated after the compensation period has elapsed.

The Government needs to have discussions with the unions and to engage in a trade-off with them. In return for a policy of having workers remain at work wherever they can and of coping with light duties, the Government should be prepared to pay large benefits for serious injuries. I believe that such a policy could be sold to the workers.

A worker who suffers massive burns to body, face and limb, even though rehabilitated, can no longer work in the heat or direct sunlight. He suffers a lifelong disability. That fact needs to be recognised by the Workers Compensation Board and considered for the remainder of his life.

Such an injured worker undergoes a complete change in his social life. No longer is he able to play tennis or golf or to go fishing out in the sunlight. He has to become a mole, as it were, and come out of buildings only at sunset. If he is to remain a person of the world, he has to reverse his entire life cycle. Close attention should be paid to the needs of persons who suffer such injuries. Similarly with amputees; they should be established in a new life-style. The problems confronting people who suffer multiple injuries not in the short term but for the whole of their lives, should be taken to the Workers Compensation Board.

It is good to see that rehabilitation has become a State responsibility. It is a heavy responsibility. Rehabilitation should commence at work. It is no good saying to a man after he has had three or four years of compensation, "Right, that's it. That is the end of your workers' compensation. Now for rehabilitation." That simply will not work. After four years of unemployment, whether it be as a result of injury or simply because the person is unemployable, he cannot return to the work-force unaided.

All employers, particularly those with more than just a few staff, need to have a policy for the re-employment of injured workers, for their relocation within the work-force. I am afraid that without such a policy a great deal cannot be achieved by the Workers Compensation Board. Many jobs throughout industry and commerce can be done by people who suffer some physical limitation as the result of injury.

Rehabilitation needs to be commenced in the ambulance, it needs to be accentuated in the hospital and it needs to be perfected in the rehabilitation centre. As I said before, I am pleased to see that the Workers Compensation Board has entered this field. It has done so in Brisbane, and it needs to be active in it in every major centre throughout the State. That will require a great deal of money. For some time the expenditure of more money on rehabilitation might be seen as a losing battle. However, industry incurs a heavy cost by injuring workers, and it is only by implementing a total system of rehabilitation and of accepting men back into the work-force that the cost can be lessened.

The Workers Compensation Board needs to accept responsibility for workers who become long-term incapacitated or permanently partially incapacitated. At present those people float in limbo between workers' compensation, unemployment benefits and Department of Social Security invalid pensions. They are not invalid pensioners in the strict sense. It should be recognised that they possess many residual skills. Although it might be true that their back injury, for example, prevents them from returning to their former employment, they possess skills and abilities and they have strengths and weaknesses. The Government together with the Department of Social Security should work to relocate that huge group of persons in employment. It should be done, even if their re-employment has to be subsidised, with the consent of employer groups and the unions.

A huge area in which they could gain employment is in sheltered workshops. They could be appointed as group leaders. Their intelligence and expertise would be of great benefit to workers who do need direction in such sheltered workshops from hour to hour or even from minute to minute.

The Workers Compensation Board has given incentives to employers to reduce the number of accidents and injuries at work.

Mr Davis: But you still had 58 000 last year.

Dr LOCKWOOD: That is so.

To be fully effective the incentives must be given to employees as well. A careful employee, of course, can count his blessings; he can count 10 fingers and 10 toes. If we are to get good co-operation from the workers we must be realistic and encourage them to make suggestions. Any benefits so gained must flow back to the workers in some way or other.

The department has done a great deal about publicising what can be done to reduce the number of accidents in the work-force. This area should be examined because it can bring great benefits to the Workers Compensation Board, employers, industry, commerce and the workers themselves.

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (3.41 p.m.): In this debate on the Employment and Labour Relations Estimates, I will deal first of all with labour relations. The Minister said, ". . . the recent past has seen increasing strain and activity in the industrial relations arena." How

true that is. He then said, "The prevention of industrial disputation has undoubtedly become a major concern of all industrial organisations, both employer and employee." I am very concerned about the way industrial relations are heading in our State and nation, without advantage for either party.

All too often we see reports in the media about industrial disputation in industry throughout our State and nation. It is true that the majority of disputes are over wage or salary increases. The people involved in the disputes are motivated by their desire to maintain their purchasing power in a highly inflationary economy and their desire for a greater share in the prosperity that exists throughout our nation.

From time to time wages and salaries are increased but the big price increases raise a big question about whether the workers are any better off. Even if we had to take our wages home in a wheelbarrow, we would be no better off if the money did not buy enough. Some people are better off, and workers in key industries, who are in the minority, are substantially better off. Much has been spoken about the haves and have-nots. I am concerned about the have-nots.

As has been said, we live in an I'm-all-right-Jack society. That is all very well for those who work in an industry where they can get their employers on side, but those who are not in such industries have to rely on the increases granted by the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The workers without bargaining power are disadvantaged.

On 31 July, when the Minister referred to alternative wage-fixing procedures, including collective bargaining, he was quoted as saying—

"The view that all strikes are caused by bloody-minded trade union officials or bosses exploiting employees belongs to an era long past."

I agree. All too often the reports that appear in the Press create that impression in the minds of members of the community.

The Minister later said—

"Many of today's industrial problems result from a wage-fixing system in need of improvement."

Again, I could not agree more. There is need for a drastic improvement in our wage-fixing systems. I confess from the outset that I am a great believer in the existing arbitration system. I believe that it can be made to work, and work really well.

I want now to reflect on the development of the wage-fixing system, particularly in this State. Because of the confused situation, I will not refer to the systems in other States or federally.

Back in the early 1960s we had what was virtually a basic wage and margin system.

Mr Davis: It was a better system.

Mr VAUGHAN: I believe that it was. It was a more equitable system for most workers.

Mr Davis: We had fewer problems with it.

Mr VAUGHAN: We certainly did.

I did not agree with the basic wage in those days, because it was a false wage, but I will deal with that later on. In those days the unions would decide to conduct a campaign to improve the wage rates of the community at large. The entire community was part of the basic wage campaign. An application was made to the commission and, through the weight of the campaign by the trade-union movement, the wage rates of the entire community were subsequently lifted. That was before the appearance of Federal awards in this State; they came a little later. Queensland was a predominantly State-award State, and everybody benefited from movements in the basic wage; everybody had a stake in them.

There was a movement away from the basic wage margin area, and to some extent that occurred at the insistence of a number of employers who moved for an extension of the Federal Metal Trades Award into Queensland. That changed the whole scene in this State, because there was a greater emphasis on direct negotiation or collective bargaining. I do not like to use the term "collective bargaining", because most people do not know what it means. With the advent of the Metal Trades Award and its extension

into Queensland, the whole ball game changed. At the same time, we moved into the era of the construction boom and workers being imported from southern States. They knew there was a different method of operation and they introduced direct negotiation and collective bargaining.

From there there was a movement to the total-wage concept. The employers were of the opinion that they had to get away from the basic wage margins system, under which the unions had two bites at the cherry. They received a basic wage increase and then made an application for increased margins. So the employers decided to change to the total-wage system. Their idea was that the workers would then get only one bite at the cherry, that is, they would go for an increase in the total wage and that would be it. But that was false premise, too, because with the introduction of the total-wage system there were not only movements in wages but also work-value cases.

Wage indexation was the next step. Quite frankly, I do not think that wage indexation was really fair, because again it gave the haves a greater share of the cake than the have-nots. Possibly it was not a bad thing that it finally came to an end.

In his speech the Minister said—

“In a decision of 26 October the commission set aside the principles of wage determination. Employer organisations and unions of employees are, however, still conferring with respect to the formulation of a possible wages policy.”

I suggest that we should return to the old basic wage-margins formula. I see that as the only equitable wage system. Of course, there will always be agreements that provide for amounts over and above the basic wage.

As I said initially, the basic wage should be the minimum wage to which margins should be added. To illustrate what I am saying—the basic wage in this State is \$97.10. It would be impossible for anybody to live on that. The minimum wage is \$145.60. Even that is well below the poverty line. The figure of \$200 comes to my mind as being the proper minimum wage in our society today. That is the minimum amount that a man needs to earn to enable his family to enjoy a reasonable standard of living.

That \$200 should be included in everybody's wage—not just that of the manual worker but also that of the wage and salary earner. That is the amount that should be indexed from time to time, and it should be tax free. What is the point in determining the minimum wage on which a man and his family can live and then taking tax out of it and putting them below the poverty line? I believe that \$200 would not be an unreal component in everyone's wage and, as the average weekly wage is \$279.80, the average person would receive a margin of \$79.80.

To support that contention, I refer to a statement made by Mr Justice Staples in August last year, when that judge was involved in quite a bit of controversy. He called for a minimum wage based on fair basic living standards and suggested that such a wage could be fixed at a “tolerable proportion” of average weekly earnings. That is the point I am making. A minimum wage based on fair living standards would help to reduce the present incidence of industrial disputation. The judge said in August last year—

“Under the conditions in our society at this point, adult citizens taking home less than \$160 per week or so are, in my observations, subjected to an undue degree of strain and denial in keeping body and soul together, in making plans and in keeping self-respect on high.”

How true! He went on to say—

“Such persons at this time appear, in my view, to be denied even the pretence of a fair and equitable share of their nation's wealth.”

That is happening in our society today. There are the haves and the have-nots. As I said, margins and over-award payments could be incorporated in industrial agreements.

On the 5th of this month a Federal Minister was quoted in the Press as referring to collective bargaining. I do not go along with the present system of collective bargaining because it is not a true system. In July this year my attention was drawn to statements by the Premier and the Deputy Premier about the disputes in the power industry at that time. In the “Telegraph” of Monday, 13 July, they said they would support a new system of collective bargaining with power unions.

Quite frankly, I do not believe that the Premier or the Deputy Premier knew what he was talking about. A system of collective bargaining, particularly in the power industry, brings about a period of relative peace, but when the agreement is due to be renegotiated, as occurs now in America, the two parties slog it out. It is not advisable to bring about those sorts of circumstances in the Queensland power industry.

The Premier and Deputy Premier spoke about a continuity of supply agreement, which would exempt the electricity industry from strikes or bans for a two-year period. The fact of the matter is that a continuity of supply agreement already exists but, because of its wording, it does not work very well. Following the re-organisation of the power industry in July 1977 a great deal of disagreement and confrontation occurred. On a wrong premise and in a pretty feeble attempt the Government tried to overcome the problem with the introduction of the Essential Services Bill. What it should have done was to correct the mistakes that had been made in the re-organisation of the power industry and dot all the i's and cross all the t's.

The member for Mt Isa criticised the Federal Government's attitude to industrial relations. The State Government's attitude certainly leaves a lot to be desired. The Essential Services Bill, which was introduced in 1979, was supposed to provide the complete answer to the problem. At that time what I believe to be shocking advertisements appeared in the Press. The Government spoke about trying to improve industrial relations, but it was so far off the mark that it didn't matter. Those advertisements, which would have cost the Government a considerable amount of money, were headed "Strike me, enough's enough." They mentioned the sick, but they were sick advertisements. The advertisements read—

"When the new Essential Services Bill becomes law as proposed we'll all be protected from irresponsible and unnecessary strike action."

The Essential Services Act became law in 1979 but the Government has been loath to use it. So it ought to be; it is the wrong sort of legislation. The legislation was introduced merely as a propaganda exercise. At that time we on this side of the Assembly said that there was no way in the world the provisions of the Bill could be applied. If I had the time to go through the provisions of that legislation I would be able to show, as the Opposition showed during the debate on the Bill, that its contents are completely inadequate. If the provisions were applied it would bring about a complete shut down of, say, the power industry.

Mr Frawley: The Government could not run the powerhouses if it did invoke them.

Mr VAUGHAN: Of course not. That is the fallacy of the Act.

When the Treasurer and others return from Japan they make statements in the Press that the Japanese are concerned about the incidence of industrial disputation in this State, particularly in the coal industry. On 30 September this year the following statement of the Deputy Premier appeared in the Press—

"Industrial disputes posed the greatest threat to Queensland's future coal exports . . ."

The secretary of the Queensland Colliery Employees Union summed it up in a nutshell when he said that the Japanese are very astute negotiators and will use industrial disputation as a bargaining tool. I am sure they take our representatives in.

In the year 1980-81 we had a record production of coal—32.8 million tonnes, which was 19.4 per cent more than the previous year. In spite of the 10-week dispute over the housing issue, coal production reached an all-time record. For example, in 1979-80 production was 27.5 million tonnes. It could be said that new mines came into production. However, in spite of the 10-week stoppage, we not merely matched the previous year's production but exceeded it by 19.4 per cent.

I said at the time that we need not get too upset about disputes in the coal-mining industry because the coal miners—the owners in the industry—are very astute businessmen. When I was tied up with that industry I used to say that the industrial relations policy of Utah could be gauged by the height of the stockpile at Hay Point—and how true that was. The Treasurer says that the disputes worry the Japanese. Certainly they do. They are of concern to us all. We would all like there to be no disputes, but let us be realists. We cannot achieve such Utopia.

The Minister said that it was interesting to note that a considerable number of employees are not members of unions.

(Time expired.)

Mr HARTWIG (Callide) (4.1 p.m.): At the outset, I state that in my opinion this is one of the more important ministerial portfolios because essentially it relates to the control of the work-force and associated matters.

I do not know how the hell anybody can live on, let alone support a family on, what is commonly referred to as the basic wage. Never before have there been so many professors and academics; never before had there been so much technical know-how. In spite of that, employment is in its most disastrous state for hundreds of years. With all the brains at the Government's command, with all the opportunities to outlaw manual labour, one finds that people are starving. There are goods in the shop windows that people cannot acquire.

Mr McKechnie: Too many brains and not enough common sense.

Mr HARTWIG: Yes. Too many chiefs and not enough Indians—one could put it that way, too. The point is reached at which an article is produced and people do not have sufficient funds to acquire it.

I will begin at the top. Each year the Government in Canberra, in an effort to control inflation, advances the argument that it is necessary to reduce expenditure. Immediately that happens, Joe Blow loses his job, and his family then does not have sufficient funds to procure goods and the necessities of life. That is the mad way in which the Federal Treasurer—and all Treasurers think alike—controls the economy. Human beings are more important than the economy.

Until we have the necessary know-how and legislate accordingly, Australia as a great nation should mortgage its assets to allow Australians to buy land. One hears a great deal about the registration of land purchases by overseas investors. We do not have the money for Australians to buy back the farm. At present the Treasurer is overseas. He makes many trips overseas to borrow millions of dollars from countries such as Japan. Those millions of dollars do not come to this country by way of gold or silver; they come here as an entry in a book. Credit is created. If we can go to Japan and create credit, what is wrong with a country like Australia creating its own credit with its own resources and giving people an opportunity to work for a living so that they can live a life of dignity?

Mr Davis: Where did you get that tie from?

Mr HARTWIG: I will tie it around the honourable member's neck if he is not careful. If he listens to me, he will learn something.

I have the greatest admiration for the worker. No genuine person wants to be out of work. There is nothing more frustrating than being unemployed. When I was a boy, I travelled to Sydney with 10s. in my pocket. For a fortnight I was a guest of the Royal Agricultural Society. Needless to say, after two days I was broke—broke in the Sydney Showgrounds. That left an indelible mark on my memory. I had no money in a strange place. Today one sees many young academics walking the streets of the capital cities of this nation. They cannot obtain employment. There is something sick about the economy and the administrators of this country. We should be able to create the money necessary so that they can at least buy food and clothing.

Mrs Kyburz: You don't believe in printing money?

Mr HARTWIG: I do not care how it is done, as long as we have the assets. We sell our coal to other countries, such as Japan, for a pittance. What does the Treasurer do? He goes to Japan to borrow money on the profits that that country made from selling our coal. That is the story in a nutshell.

An Opposition Member: Tell us something new.

Mr HARTWIG: A lot of people have not woken up to what is going on.

We sell our resources for a pittance and then we go to those importing countries to borrow back the money to finance projects in our own country. We call ourselves intelligent. If members of this Parliament class that as intelligent, I will walk to Bourke. Australia is

looked upon as one of the wealthiest nations in the world. It has been stated by people throughout the world, not only by Queenslanders, that Queensland is one of the wealthiest States in the world. It is a disgrace to see people lined up at the soup kitchen every morning and evening. It is a disgrace to the administration of Treasurers and Governments who say, "We must control the economy. We must tighten up on finance." If inflation and finance are placed above the welfare of the people, we are heading for trouble.

One of the worst demonstrations I have seen in my life concerned the housing shortage in Amsterdam. Young people could not obtain housing. Can the young people of Queensland obtain it? We have local authorities exercising controls over new developments. They impose conditions on subdividers who are prepared to spend money subdividing land. What does a local authority do? Condoned by this Government, it says, "You must contribute \$80,000 for a bridge and \$100,000 for roads." What are we doing? We are pricing that piece of land out of the reach of young people who wish to buy their own land, let alone build a house. We condone it. We say, "We must make sure that we keep the roads maintained." Recently, when a subdivision was proposed, I heard a shire chairman say, "But we will have to grade the roads when they subdivide that area."

As everybody knows, a week is made up of 168 hours. Of those 168 hours, most employees work for 35 or 37½ hours. That means that each week they have approximately 120 hours of leisure-time. Do honourable members remember the days when men went out on week-ends to do a bit of casual work? They used to do odd jobs at the week-ends, until the Federal Treasurer woke up and said, "I will tax you at the rate of 50c in the dollar for every dollar that you earn at the week-end." What does the man who used to do week-end work do now? He either goes to the pub or stays home and mows his lawn. He says, "To hell with week-end work. It does not give me any profit."

The Federal Treasurer has killed incentive. When that happens in the work-force, the dignity of the worker is destroyed. The Government should not forget that the worker is the great spender in the nation. It is the worker, not the rich man or the multinational, who pays cash for goods and services. Whereas graziers ask for three months' credit, the workers pay cash. I have been in business and I know the ways of the worker. I will certainly defend him. As a result of the killing of incentive, goods are on sale in the window but the people have not enough money to purchase them.

While I was in Japan I visited the Noritake factory in Kyoto. On Saturday afternoon the factory was engaged in full production. I asked, "What is the score? How much a week do the workers get?" At that time, about six or seven years ago, they earned \$80 a week. One of the girls working in the factory said to me, "It is 2 o'clock now. I have done my quota for the day. For anything that I can do between now and 4 o'clock, I get paid extra." An incentive such as that gains productivity for the employer and extra pay for the employee. I see nothing wrong with it. It might be claimed that that is socialism, but many schemes are more socialistic. That brings me to the point of repeating that it is time Queensland considered the establishment of a State bank to provide funds to the people of Queensland.

I turn now to unemployment.

Mr Frawley: Before you do that, I want to say that I was impressed by your foreword on the establishment of a State bank.

Mr HARTWIG: I am pleased to hear that.

As everyone knows, the Commonwealth Games are to be held in Brisbane. Anyone who drives around the city with his eyes open will notice that it is as dirty now as it ever has been. The member for Balonne and I drove from Hong Kong to the Red China border. We drove over 27 miles of freeway that is swept every day. What is wrong with having similar work done here in Brisbane? What is wrong with giving unemployed people yard brooms and bins and paying them for sweeping the gutters and getting rid of the mess that blocks the drains? It can be seen everywhere. People who are prepared to work would be glad to do that to earn some money.

I do not know what visitors to Brisbane for the Commonwealth Games will think. Anyone who drives from Brisbane Airport will see the gutters chock-a-block with leaves, papers, soft-drink cans and other rubbish. Why couldn't three or four persons be allocated to a block and told to keep it clean? If that were done the city would be cleaned up in no time and made to look respectable. Dirty streets create a very bad impression.

The cost of food in this country is as low as anywhere else in the world. That can only mean that our producers are not being reimbursed for their labour and other costs. In the Lockyer Valley, I could probably buy three head of cabbage for a dollar. No-one can economically produce three head of cabbage for a dollar.

Accommodation in Australia is cheap. In America I paid \$100 a night for a single bed. I was charged \$40 for lunch and paid 8 per cent or \$3 tax and a \$15 tip that the waiter demanded. On world standards, we have cheap food, accommodation and labour. No-one in Australia would ask for a \$15 tip.

Mr Frawley: They would not be game to ask you for \$15 for a meal.

Mr HARTWIG: They certainly would not.

Because of the many hours of relaxation that the work-force enjoys each week it is suffering from boredom. The many coal miners in Central Queensland are doing a very important job, but what can they do for recreation? When the Government, headed by the Cabinet brains trust, decided that Queensland should have casinos, it said, "We will have two of them, one on the Gold Coast and one at Cairns." It conveniently forgot the 8 000 men employed in the mining industry in Central Queensland who have nothing to do. It is too far for them to travel to the Gold Coast or to Cairns. Why wasn't a casino sited in Central Queensland?

Mr Moore: Just fight for it, and you will get one.

Mr HARTWIG: Yes, in the year 1999.

Prisoners at Etna Creek live in better conditions than the railway workers of Queensland. In one house at Biloela it is so dark that a match has to be struck to see whether a room is a bedroom or a toilet. These railway workers have to install their own hot-water systems.

The Biloela Railway Station is on one of the few lines that pay. It is a disgrace that the station-master and his officers have to work in shameful conditions, completely out of keeping with conditions elsewhere in that part of Queensland. It is time that the Government looked at these matters.

I am concerned about the flea markets that seem to be increasing in number. If a person runs a fruit stall in town he has to comply with the Factories and Shops Act, and the health inspectors ensure that his goods are suitably displayed above ground level, yet vendors in flea markets are allowed to display their goods on the ground, with hundreds of people walking by, virtually spitting all over them. It seems that the inspectors shut their eyes to what happens in flea markets, while insisting that their city cousins pay electricity and rates, and abide by the Factories and Shops Act.

On the other hand it is convenient to say, "Oh, we've got a flea market, let it be sold there." The little wheelbarrows that one sees along the roadside pay no rent, nor do they abide by the health standards required under the Factories and Shops Act. They pay no fire insurance, nor do they provide fire extinguishers. How does a businessman in town compete with them? Yet this Government allows that sort of situation to continue. It said, "Let's form a Small Business Corporation. We back small business." This Government is sending the small businessman to the wall—no more and no less. The conditions under which goods are sold at the flea markets is appalling; they should be condemned.

I now turn to the subject of retail petrol outlets. It is impossible to buy a gallon of petrol in Brisbane on a Saturday night. We are supposed to entertain thousands of visitors to the Commonwealth Games, yet they will not be able to buy petrol on a Saturday night. Last Saturday night I wanted petrol but I could not find an open petrol station anywhere. The proprietor of one station said to me, "Look, if I sold you a gallon of petrol I could be fined \$2,000." And that is by this free enterprise Government! That is the sort of situation this Government's actions have brought about.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr HARTWIG: It is true. Members should try to buy a gallon of petrol in Brisbane on a Saturday night. If a bloke sells it, he is committing a criminal act.

(Time expired.)

Mr FRAWLEY (Caboolture) (4.22 p.m.): Before I discuss the Minister's Estimates, I congratulate the honourable member for Callide on the speech he just made. It was a black day for the National Party when the honourable member was expelled, and I think the party will regret it. If that dill Carige thinks he can beat the honourable member at the next election, he has another think coming. Before this episode is finished, I will spill a bucket on him that he will never forget.

I must congratulate the Minister and his department, not for the work they have done during the year, but for what they did for one of my constituents a week ago yesterday. On Monday, 9 November I received a telephone call from one of my constituents in Deception Bay. He said, "I am on workers' compensation, and I haven't been paid since 15 October." So I rang the Minister's office. The upshot of my conversation was that last Monday afternoon a car went down to Deception Bay with that man's cheque.

Mr Vaughan: That's preferential treatment.

Mr FRAWLEY: He was a Labor supporter, but he has now switched to the National Party. He told me that he had been getting the run around from someone in the office of the Workers Compensation Board. That person lost his file twice and did all sorts of things to delay his cheque.

In his speech the Minister said that the board has continued to give excellent service to the public. That is a lot of rot! It gives a rotten service! I have had a large number of complaints about board officers' pin-pricking attitude. I know that there are plenty of people who try to defraud the board but there are many genuine people who are pushed from pillar to post, and that is not right. Board officers have to recognise that not everybody who goes to them is a malingerer, that some people are genuine. The attitude adopted by some officers is disgraceful. I have another case pending and I hope that something will be done about it.

On the subject of employment, there are plenty of people who are genuine in their attempts to obtain work, but there are a lot who do not want to work. I received a telephone call today from the proprietor of an engineering workshop in my electorate who cannot get workers. Every time he rings the CES and people are sent to him so that he can check them out, they all want overaward payments; they will not work for award wages. When I had a garage in Redcliffe I worked a 13-day fortnight to build up my business. I had been a unionist for years. I was a member of the Electrical Trades Union for about 19 years. I always paid my dues, and the member for Nudgee can verify that.

Today, we hear talk of a 25-hour working week: Good heavens, it is not hard to work a 40-hour week! The tourist industry is being penalised by having to pay penalty rates. Some unions are pricing their members out of work. Many owners of motels and boarding houses in the Bribie Island and Caloundra areas in my electorate are saying that they will get their guests to make up their own rooms. They cannot be blamed for that, because the penalty rates for week-end work are absolutely extortionate. The sooner the unions wake up to themselves and allow their members to work 40 hours, five days a week, the better.

Mr Yewdale: Will all the motels then drop their prices?

Mr FRAWLEY: I shall come to that later.

For example, fire brigade employees work 10 days straight and then have four days off. When fire brigade employees were members of the Australian Workers Union, that union tried to get the Brisbane Fire Board to stop employees from working 10 days straight and then having four days off. It tried to force them to work five days and then have two days off. But the employees themselves did not want to do that. That was one of the reasons why they formed the United Firefighters Union. Honourable members will remember that the only two members who rose in this Chamber and supported the United Firefighters Union were the member for Rockhampton North and myself. Some members backed the AWU, and others were not game to do anything. In fact, it was disgraceful that members of the Labor Party were prepared to let the United Firefighters Union go to the wall. As I say, the only Labor member who defended that union was the member for Rockhampton North. Other Labor members backed the AWU and tried to beat the United Firefighters Union. The United Firefighters Union was finally registered, and I am proud to think that I played a small role in its registration.

Mr McKechnie: You played a big role.

Mr FRAWLEY: I thought I did, too. I spoke under pressure in this Chamber. I shall not mention names, but I was told to lay off and not try to help the United Firefighters Union. I helped that union, and I am pleased that I did because I am an old unionist from way back. I believe in trade unions. I was a member of the Electrical Trades Union when there were reasonable people in it. The secretary at that time was Archie Dawson, who is a constituent of mine. He lives in the War Veterans Home in Caboolture. He probably does not vote for me, and I respect him for that.

Mr Vaughan: He wouldn't vote for you while he had a breath in his body.

Mr FRAWLEY: He is a nice bloke. I often visit him in the War Veterans Home in Caboolture. He was one of the old trade union secretaries who could be trusted, unlike the present secretary who is not worth a trey-bit. He wrecked the union car and made the members pay for it. I could tell stories about him that would make honourable members' hair stand on end, but I shall not do so. I have only 14 minutes left and I have other important matters to raise.

I wish to refer to the licensing of petrol outlets, which comes under the Minister's department. Recently, people in my electorate have complained to me that tankers are coming from other areas and delivering petrol to their area. For example, a tanker comes from Beenleigh and delivers petrol to Deception Bay. That petrol is then sold at a cut price, and that suits most people. But the tanker drivers are being subsidised to take that petrol from Beenleigh to Deception Bay. A wholesaler from Nambour receives a subsidy so that he can come to Brisbane and take a load of petrol to Nambour. He also sells petrol to outlets in Deception Bay and on the outskirts of Redcliffe. That is not right. It should be stopped.

Before the last election, I wrote to the Minister who previously held this portfolio and complained on behalf of a wholesaler from Caboolture who had a depot. Somebody from Esk was selling petrol to outlets in Caboolture. He was receiving a subsidy for taking petrol from Esk to Caboolture. Nothing was done about it.

Mr McKechnie: They get a subsidy to take it right out West.

Mr FRAWLEY: I would not doubt that.

Inspectors from the Main Roads Department check to see whether trucks have permits, so why cannot they follow unmarked petrol tankers? I saw the one that I am speaking about very recently at Rothwell, outside of Redcliffe. It is a grey, unmarked tanker.

Mr McKechnie: One of them in my electorate had false number-plates.

Mr FRAWLEY: I would not doubt that. It would be no trouble to check and put a stop to the practice. The Government is paying a subsidy and the money is being wasted.

The Consumer Affairs Bureau is a very efficient department. In the last 12 months it processed 3 439 written complaints. That is an indictment of manufacturers. I know somebody who recently bought a bedroom suite for approximately \$1,500. One of the doors of the wardrobe did not fit correctly, so the person had to adjust the hinges. Then he found that one of the rods on which clothes are hung was missing. Screws were also found to be missing. The inside of the wardrobe was covered with overspray because the door had been left open when the wardrobe was painted. Today many products are not finished off properly. No wonder the Consumer Affairs Bureau is inundated with complaints.

Mr Davis: That is just like when you were in the tow-truck business in Redcliffe. Boy, didn't we have some trouble!

Mr FRAWLEY: I did not want to speak about that, but I suppose I will have to, now.

When I had a service station at Redcliffe, I also had a tow-truck. One of the reasons why I left that industry was that I towed many members of the Labor Party. In fact, the member for Brisbane Central showed me his gold pass and told me he was entitled to a free tow. I do not know how he thought that worked. He also used his gold pass on the Hornibrook Highway. The toll was only 10c but he used to flash his gold pass. That was shameful.

Since tow-truck operators have been licensed, the industry has been cleaned up. One night I received a telephone call from a friend of mine who was involved in an accident near the Boondall Drive-in Theatre at the intersection of Sandgate Road and Beams Road. My friend drove a Hillman Imp, and by a strange coincidence the other car involved in the accident was also a Hillman Imp. They are rotten little things, anyway. I advise anyone who has one to get rid of it.

Because that young fellow was a friend of mine, I decided to do the job for him. When I arrived at the scene of the accident at 11.30 p.m., it was ablaze with light. I thought it must have been a fantastic accident. A mob of tow-truck drivers were sitting up like vultures waiting to get the job. My friend was still sitting in the front seat of his vehicle with blood running out of his forehead. The tow-truck drivers were shoving forms under his nose. His wife said to me, "For God's sake, tow us out of here. Every couple of minutes they are shoving forms under his face. They want us to sign this authority so that they can tow the car away." Those tow-truck operators wanted to tow his car back to Brisbane, not down to Redcliffe. If that had occurred, he would have had to pay even more money to have his car towed back to Redcliffe. I told the policeman that he was a friend of mine and that I had to do the job.

Mr Davis: Did you have the radio well in tune to the police?

Mr FRAWLEY: I never had a two-way radio on my tow-truck.

Mr Davis: Yes, you did.

Mr FRAWLEY: No. I did not need one.

I was abused by the other tow-truck drivers but finally I towed the young fellow to Redcliffe.

The honourable member for Brisbane Central mentioned radios in tow-trucks. I never had a two-way radio in my tow-truck. At that time, only three tow-trucks operated in the Redcliffe area. The RACQ operated one, a wrecking yard had one and I had one. The police worked a reasonable system and gave each operator a turn. If anybody belonged to the RACQ and wanted their tow-truck, fair enough, he was given the job. If the owner expressed no preference, the police allocated the jobs in rotation. In Redcliffe at least, there was no tow-truck racket.

I sold my tow-truck when I became a member of Parliament. My boys did not want to get out of bed to drive the truck at night-time.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention, Mr Miller, to the fact that the honourable member is not speaking to the Minister's Estimates. Tow-trucks come under the Department of Transport.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr FRAWLEY: I stand corrected. The member for Brisbane Central took me off the track again. He provoked me. However, I am tempted to tell about the time—and this definitely comes within the Minister's portfolio—that super petrol was mixed with standard petrol and sold at the price of super petrol. When the member for Brisbane Central was out of this Parliament and had a garage, he did that. He sold 50/50 petrol at super price.

The Minister has been in Cabinet for some years, although this is his first term in this ministry. He has not done a bad job. If his department keeps up the good work that it did for me a week ago yesterday in looking after one of my constituents with workers' compensation, I will be happy. Incidentally, he should have had the cheque well and truly before he got it. I hate to harp on it, but the Workers Compensation Board is one of the worst bureaucracies in the State of Queensland, and I finish on that note.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (4.36 p.m.): The portfolio we are debating is very important from a number of points of view, particularly the welfare of workers and the State itself. I draw attention to the speech of the member for Callide. Anyone listening to him could be forgiven for believing that he was a dead-set socialist and not a National Party member, as he was for a number of years. He mentioned a pertinent point which is well worth highlighting because it rebuts the red herring of penalty rates in the accommodation industry, which was raised by the member for Caboolture. As the member for Callide said—and as many members of Parliament who have travelled overseas would

know—first-class accommodation in Asiatic countries is very expensive, yet wages there are half the wages here and in some cases less. In spite of the high cost of staying at those hotels in comparison with Australian first-class hotels, people have not been discouraged from using them. This point which has been raised time and time again should be put to rest once and for all.

The member for Callide mentioned rostered petrol stations. If I let his point go, the many thousands of people who read "Hansard" will probably be confused about his statement that a person cannot get petrol on a Saturday afternoon in Brisbane. That is quite wrong. Petrol is available at rostered stations. Anyone who has been involved in the service station industry will agree that it is the best system that the Government has come up with. Anybody can get petrol on a Saturday afternoon from either a rostered station or one of the number of service stations with pumps that can be operated by \$2 notes.

Over the years Government regulation of trading hours has led to what I would term a contempt for authority. Before late-night trading was introduced, firms such as Kennedys thumbed their noses at the law, saying, "Prosecute us; we believe that there should be late-night trading."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Trading hours are before the Industrial Commission at the present time. I would like the honourable member to be very careful about what he says. If he talks in general terms it will be all right.

Mr DAVIS: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Miller. I certainly will not be touching on the court case. Most of what I will be saying is past history.

From my own experience as a union official, it is a point I would like to bring forward in order to put the benefits of my experience into "Hansard" for posterity.

Mr Frawley: It will give them a laugh, anyway.

Mr DAVIS: It won't be a laugh. I might even mention the member for Caboolture later if he listens carefully.

Kennedys decided that they did not like the law and said, "We will break it."

Mr Moore: Whitlam said, "If you don't like a law, break it."

Mr DAVIS: I am not worried about Gough Whitlam, I am worried about Kennedys and the Government. I am not worried about the past, I am worried about the future and the present. They are our two main concerns at present.

I do not know how many prosecutions were lodged against those law breakers. Other companies were also breaking the law. Was the penalty wiped so that they could break the law with immunity? When the law was changed were the past bookings ignored? I will cite an example of persons breaking the law. I have never heard why one firm, such as Barnes Auto, is allowed to continue trading. Barnes Auto operates a service station in Adelaide Street. It has thumbed its nose at the law for the last 20 years. It is the only service station that is allowed by this Government to operate with immunity. Initially, inspectors continually policed its operations. However, it has reached the stage where they have probably decided that they cannot stop the firm's operations because it has already been booked and it has ignored that.

Mr Fitzgerald: They never sleep, do they?

Mr DAVIS: For the benefit of the member for Lockyer, in case he thinks I am referring to the towing section, Barnes Auto runs an open garage. It is not like a taxi-owned station where the Black and White, Yellow or Blue and White taxi companies sell only to their members. It is a well-known fact that anyone is served at Barnes Auto.

I have always been in favour of reduced working hours. There should be less overtime and more leisure-time. A person's quality of life should be the community's main objective. To be consistent, I would be in favour of regulated hours. The latest episode of the relaxation of trading hours without any inquiry, in addition to the antique and second-hand dealers being allowed to trade at any time that they wish, indicates that we should start ripping up the Act and letting the market indicate what businesses are going to survive and what businesses will go to the wall. So much for the Government's alleged concern for small businesses! The history of regulated trading hours has been

to allow small business people a chance to enjoy some leisure-time with their family, the same as other persons in the community. That is why I took umbrage at the member for Callide in his reference to service stations. Anybody who has been involved in business, such as I have, as the member for Caboolture so ably and capably told this Committee this afternoon, does not want to be working for seven days a week. Nobody wants to work seven days a week, 14 hours a day. Everyone wants to spend some time with his family. Small businessmen are entitled to that.

Before I was elected to this Assembly I was a union official connected with the transport industry. For many years the problems of breaking awards and agreements in the transport industry were fundamentally ones in which I was involved with a view to arresting them.

Turning now to bakeries—I am sure that you, Mr Miller, remember the discussions that we had on this matter. We see the same old guise and act today. In the old days bakeries would trade illegally. The hue and cry was raised, as it was in the case of the hardware stores. Bakers were remaining open and saying, "We are providing a service to the community; we are providing fresh hot bread." They were not concerned at all for those bakers who were abiding by the law and keeping their doors closed after the legal trading hours. Naturally the baker who was breaking the law was gaining more business; he was the only one who opened his doors to customers.

As happened in the case of the hardware stores, the television crews came round and filmed the bakers' trading activities. A great hue and cry was raised. The floodgates were opened. The little person cried, "I will go broke if I have to abide by the law." Trading was allowed seven days a week. But what has that achieved? All we have seen is a huge hike in bread prices. I suppose the number of bakers who deliver to houses could be counted on one hand. That means that as many as 500 or 600 bread carters have been put out of work. All this has happened because a few people who broke the law were able to exert pressure on the Government to allow an open go.

That might be all right for the managers and the owners of big businesses. No doubt they are enjoying their peace and contentment down at their second homes on the Gold Coast. The employees, on the other hand, are working seven days a week. Many people ask, "Why not have an open go and allow trading seven days a week so that people can shop at week-ends?" If one were to take that argument to the extreme, one could ask, "Why not force post offices, banks and Government offices to open at week-ends?" Why should not a shop assistant, for example, be allowed to conduct his business at the SGIO on a Sunday?

I go along with the regulation of shopping hours and I support the holding of an inquiry by the Industrial Commission. I do not support those people who deliberately break the law and who through the media try to have the law changed to suit them.

How many small operators remain in business after they have built up their trade by breaking the law? By engaging in illegal trading, they are able to show that they have a healthy trading profit. They say to a prospective purchaser, "There you are; we have built up a good business. We now want sell out." By that time, everybody in that type of business is allowed to remain open and nobody makes a profit. So, as I have said, I agree completely with regulated hours. At least they will ensure more leisure-time for the workers.

While I am on the subject of prices, I will deal with petrol prices. Recently they have received wide publicity both federally and in this State. Before the member for Caboolture interjects and tells me that the oil company with which I was associated introduced discounting in a fairly big way, I point out that it did not sell at a price below the recognised wholesale price. What it did was give high rebates to its retailers.

Jobbers and carters can sell to service station proprietors at a rate cheaper than that at which the companies sell wholesale. Judged by private enterprise standards, what I intend to outline is horrific. In 1933, legislation titled the Motor-Spirits (Regulation of Prices) Bill was introduced in New Zealand. The Government has since fixed maximum and minimum retail and wholesale prices. That has not caused any harm.

Mr Fitzgerald: What is fuel worth over there now?

Mr DAVIS: I am not interested in that. The honourable member may as well ask me what the price of fuel is in Saudi Arabia.

Mr Fitzgerald: It is a lot dearer than it is here.

Mr DAVIS: Why should it not be a little dearer? For the benefit of the honourable member for Lockyer, I point out that New Zealand has not many oilfields. What a ridiculous statement! Whether New Zealand has oilfields or not, the simple fact is that it has regulated minimum and maximum prices.

Mr Fitzgerald: Is it working?

Mr DAVIS: It has been working since 1933.

Mr Fitzgerald: How do you know?

Mr DAVIS: I have a pamphlet here.

Government Members interjected.

Mr DAVIS: In reply to the hilarious laughter from Government members, I should say that I made a slip of the tongue. I have here the New Zealand "Hansard" for 1933, and the regulations that have been made since then. That legislation was passed in 1933 and it has operated successfully since then.

The reason for the introduction of the legislation may be of interest to National Party members. This is what appears in "Hansard"—

"... the recent progressive fall in prices was due mainly to combination on the part of the major oil companies with the object of crushing the Associated Motorists Petrol Company, Limited; (2) that present selling-prices are uneconomic and are likely to result in destroying competition among sellers, thus bringing about monopoly; (3) that such monopoly will probably result in substantially increasing prices to consumers; (4) that in the public interest the petitions should be referred to the Government for immediate and most favourable consideration; . . ."

Mr FRAWLEY: I move—

"That the honourable member for Brisbane Central be asked to table the document."

Mr DAVIS: I would love to table it for the benefit of the honourable member for Caboolture. No doubt Government members would say that that was socialist legislation. Do Government members agree with me? They are mute. It was not socialist legislation. It was introduced by the Right Honourable Mr Forbes, the Prime Minister. He was a member of the National Party, which is a very conservative party, and he was a conservative person. He is on record as saying that the dole was Satan's gold. If any person took the dole instead of working for money, he believed that that person was influenced by Satan.

The New Zealand legislation was introduced because unfair pricing was destroying competition and because the farmers were being taken down by the oil companies. That is exactly what is happening in Queensland at present. Time after time, National Party members have complained bitterly in this Chamber about the prices charged by the oil companies. Of course, those National Party members forget to tell us that this policy was introduced by their beloved leader, "Darling Doug" Anthony. The people of Australia have had to carry the cross because of "Darling Doug's" fuel policy.

Another aspect of the Minister's portfolio is the work done by the industrial inspectors. I have raised this matter before and I would like the Minister to comment on it. It has been my experience over the years that a number of workers employed under Federal or State awards are working virtually award free. Perhaps they are employed in a calling where they are covered by a Federal award but, because they have not been "roped in" under that award, they have been able to get away scot-free. It is a salient point that at present many employers are getting away with paying less than award wages because there is insufficient policing of time-books by departmental inspectors. I have not heard of too many prosecutions for time-book offences initiated by the department.

(Time expired.)

Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (4.56 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to support the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations in the presentation of his Estimates. The department

has a bigger and bigger job to do because not only are there greater numbers employed in Australia today than ever before—the number of people coming into the work-force exceeds the natural growth rate—but Queensland is doing better than any other part of Australia in terms of migration and job opportunities. This growth has been brought about by the positive attitude adopted by this Government towards the encouragement of industry and development. The Government takes care of the growing percentage of the population which is employed.

Of course, we still have unemployment. Various types of people make up the unemployment statistics. They include those applying for jobs who already have a job; those endeavouring to obtain higher positions or positions in a work-place nearer to their homes; those who have no desire to work at all because the difference between unemployment benefits and the wages they would be paid is insufficient incentive for them to obtain a job, and those who have tried very hard to obtain a job, but without success. Many young people have tried to obtain jobs but have been knocked back because they have no work experience. That is a continuing problem, although it is not new. Unfortunately, at this time of the year concentration tends to be focused on such problems by the media and at various school speech-nights. Many young people about to leave school are told that the silicon chip will do them out of a job, that there is no room for them in the work-force and that they will join the ever-increasing number of unemployed. But this does not have to be the case. It was never the case during the days of the Industrial Revolution, although exactly the same things were said—that the advent of the steam engine and mechanisation would put both the lay person and the craftsman out of work.

Mr Moore: It put the cottage industries out.

Mr SIMPSON: That is right, and it is interesting to note that, because people are looking for handcrafted articles, cottage industries in certain forms are making a resurgence. A number of speakers in the debate referred to poor workmanship caused by the pressure to turn out more goods. Mass production does not always result in a desirable article. I think that that is partly due to the poor inspection of the article and to the way in which it is marketed.

Mr Davis: How is that boat going up there?

Mr SIMPSON: He is still trying to raise funds for the sails. The name of the vessel is "Catdingo". It is still sitting in a little harbour at Noosa Heads waiting for a sponsor to provide funds for the sails. I do not know whether the design of the vessel will enable him to break the world record. Of course, he also plans to sail to the Great Barrier Reef and back under charter. The vessel is supposed to have accommodation in the twin hulls for 40 persons.

Mr Prest: The Great Barrier Reef is Fraser's territory; it is under his control.

Mr SIMPSON: The honourable member wants to keep up with the saga. The Premier, according to latest reports, has got his way. This State for many years has managed and looked after the reef, and has made it the precious jewel that people cherish.

Mr Davis: Come off it!

Mr SIMPSON: The honourable member cannot look at it any other way. He cannot say that the State has so abused the Barrier Reef that it is not sought after by people. I have said for a number of years—others in higher places are now saying it—that the Great Barrier Reef is an immense area and that very few people will ever see its beauty and all the species of fish that are portrayed by cameramen who are able to photograph under water.

Mr Miller, Opposition members are leading me away from the Estimates, except that the matters they raise by way of interjection concern employment in the tourist industry and the fact that penalty rates in this country are not based on a seven-day week. The Opposition wants people to work from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., five days a week. That is stupid and absurd in the tourist industry and has no relationship to the work requirements of the industry or to the competition that it faces from other countries that do not have this added cost, which results in a reduction in services at certain times at week-ends.

Penalty rates in the tourist industry will result in many people losing their jobs. Greater mechanisation, such as vending machines, will be introduced. That is sad, and I would like to see the unions adopt a more responsible attitude and meet the challenge facing the industry. A ready smile and a desire to give satisfaction are the passport to people providing a rewarding service.

Mr Jennings: That is 100 per cent right.

Mr SIMPSON: I thank the honourable member. Young people can provide this service without a great deal of training. I would like to see the Federal Government place greater emphasis on training schemes in the tourist industry. I know that the Queensland Agricultural College at Gatton provides hospitality courses.

Mr Fitzgerald: Excellent courses.

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, but the courses should be conducted in the tourist areas, such as the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. After undertaking those courses, young people would provide greater enjoyment to holidaymakers and attract tourists from countries on our doorstep.

The sale of petrol in Nambour has been mentioned in this debate.

Mr Davis: As an example, you are getting cheaper petrol up there than I am getting in Brisbane.

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, I believe that at some outlets that is the case. A person could shop around in Brisbane and buy petrol at the same price as it can be bought in Nambour.

The gentleman who started the petrol price war in Nambour was a cane farmer. Many people think cane farmers are doing reasonably well at the moment. That gentleman brought a freehold service station and said to me, "Look, I can't understand the mark-up with the turnover that is achieved on a good site." He reduced his price and, of course, people flocked to his garage and his turnover increased dramatically. He continued with that practice and the other service station proprietors approached him and said, "This is not fair. At these prices we cannot all make a living". Perhaps there is a message in that; perhaps there are far too many petrol outlets so that the turnover of each garage is not sufficient for them all to operate at a profit.

Mr Prest: Free enterprise.

Mr SIMPSON: Yes, free enterprise.

Mr Prest: You want some of them closed?

Mr SIMPSON: No. I said, "Free enterprise".

The man who commenced the selling of cut-price petrol said that he would go along with the other proprietors and increase his price by 2c a litre. However, within a week one of the other operators undercut his price. He reverted to his cheaper price and told the other proprietors he would not play ball any more. That man operated for a long time and I wondered how much longer he could continue to sell petrol cheaper than the other outlets. I asked him about that and he said that he was going very well and that he had just bought a second service station because he was doing so well with the first. Some people say that he is supplied with fuel at a cheaper price than the other proprietors, but he tells me that is not the case, that anybody else in the same circumstances can buy the fuel at the same price.

Mr Davis: That is wrong.

Mr SIMPSON: That is free enterprise.

The controls already exist, but the Government must ensure that it fosters some degree of enterprise. If petrol outlets cannot survive on their current turnover, then perhaps a reduction in their number could be in the interests of the public.

The solving of problems by the Consumer Affairs Bureau is a rewarding job that helps people who have been unfairly dealt with. The staff of that bureau use their experience to bring some manufacturers into line and ensure that they give fair service on the goods that they sell to the public. I commend them for that work as it is a great help to those who are in the greatest need.

I continue to be bugged by problems concerning warranties on new cars. When something goes wrong dealers always say something like, "That is a tyre problem, go to the tyre company". Recently a person in my electorate bought a four-wheel-drive Fiat tractor which was fitted with Pirelli tyres. The lugs just fell off those tyres in a matter of months. That person has a whole bag of them. He tried to get some compensation but it has been a long process in which everybody concerned has tried to duck the issue. I hope that in time he gains some satisfaction.

In a car, it might be the generator, battery, tyres, starter motor or alternator. The company is always quick to say, "Look, everything else is covered by the warranty, but not that." I have had a few bugs in my Commodore that annoyed me. I had to replace a worn-out cam at 40 000 km and they said, "Extraordinary! That has never happened." Then I found that many others have had the same problem. That was outside the warranty period and I had to put up with it. Of course, one may choose not to buy the article again. Again, all makes of vehicle probably have problems, and one learns by experience.

My car has also had several faulty starter motors, which caused me problems. The attendants in this building have often had to help me with jumper leads, or I have had to leave it on a slope. On the other hand, the car has many good points and I am in a quandary about what to buy next. However, they are pin-pricking faults of the type experienced by the people whom I represent.

I comment now on apprentices and the positive way in which the Minister has gone about furthering the efforts in this State to cover the future need for tradesmen. His efforts are commendable, and they should be pursued even more vigorously because of what he has achieved already. However, in some instances the requirements imposed on people desirous of employing apprentices are too inflexible. In the case of an apprentice boilermaker, there is a requirement that there be a certain range of equipment to allow for a designated range of work. However, an industry without all that equipment may operate for another 50 years, well beyond the length of time a person apprenticed would be there. I cannot see why there cannot be more flexibility. Although a lad apprenticed to that factory may not have the full work experience of a boilermaker, surely during his block-release training he will gain some experience of the other work. In our endeavours to place greater numbers of apprentices, we should consider greater flexibility in approvals for apprenticeship.

Public holidays come within the Minister's responsibility. There are people in this and other States who consider that Anzac Day would be conveniently placed before or after a week-end to make a long week-end. In my opinion, 25 April should be observed as Anzac Day, irrespective of day of the week on which it falls. I know that the Minister also holds that opinion. Certainly members of the RSL do. I should like to see that attitude strengthened in Queensland. Often calendars available in this State show Anzac Day as not being on the 25th; for example, some calendars for next year show it as the 26th. That is a problem that should be rectified well before next year.

Queensland has a very fine record in dealing with people subject to workers' compensation claims. Of course, there are always those who feel they have been wrongly dealt with. The system requires assessment by medicos and the Medical Board. However, there will always be a grey area, especially with back injuries, when people suffer a continuing deterioration of a condition resulting from an injury.

I often think that people are somewhat disadvantaged in the field of workers' compensation. There needs to be co-operation between the States to achieve a uniform system so that there may be some portability of workers' compensation benefits. Workers should be covered for workers' compensation in all States. That poses a problem, but it should be pursued so that greater safeguards are given to workers.

I commend the Minister for his endeavours to have a modern motor vehicle inspection centre established on the Yandina Crown Industrial Estate, which is in my electorate. It will be located only half a mile from my home. I look forward to the construction of that centre and its future operation. Vehicle inspection involves an ingredient of safety. It will assist in reducing the road toll by a small percentage. The establishment of the inspection centre will create an atmosphere of safety awareness. That is something that is necessary Australia-wide, particularly in Queensland.

I support the Estimates of the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations. I hope that his work continues for the benefit of the people of this State.

Mr JENNINGS (Southport) (5.16 p.m.): I compliment the Minister on the work that he has done in his portfolio.

The member for Cooroora made a significant contribution to the debate. He referred to tourism. A hospitality course is conducted at the TAFE college at Southport. It is proving to be very popular. The organisers are doing a magnificent job. Most of the students completing that course are finding jobs. That is a great credit to the persons involved with the course.

I must come to the defence of the Commodore. I have had very good results from my vehicle.

Every aspect of the Minister's portfolio is wide ranging and important. Every aspect affects the man in the street—consumer affairs, prices, bread, employment, awards, Acts, labour relations, workers' accommodation, workers' compensation, the Industrial Court, the Industrial Commission, apprenticeships, and so on. Safety inspection of building construction is a matter which has arisen recently because of the great increase in the volume of building work. Of course, awards are of vital importance to employers and employees. Job creation is another concern of the Minister.

Nobody would disagree that striking by workers is the one overriding problem that primarily affects the man in the street. Queensland has had a bad record over the last 12 months. In 1980-81 there were 330 disputes involving 620 000 working days lost, and an estimated loss of \$34m in wages. That is crazy when one considers that in the previous year there were 199 431 working days lost and \$18.6m in lost wages. Those figures are worked out on the basis of a population of two and a quarter million. That is crazy in a country such as Australia. I will refer to that in greater length at a later stage.

The member for Rockhampton North stated that the Government was using this portfolio as a whipping-post to denigrate the trade union movement. That is a complete misrepresentation of the behaviour of this Government and this portfolio. That should be refuted as strongly as possible. He also stated that there was a lack of labour relations on the part of this Government. That is completely incorrect. He condemned the Government for its lack of planning. In 10 years a quarter of the additional jobs that have been created in Australia have been provided in Queensland. Would he have foreseen 10 years ago the growth that is taking place in Queensland today? The point about it is that more jobs have been created, and will continue to be created, in Queensland, which has an area five times that of France. What he said was a complete misrepresentation of the efforts of this Government, this portfolio and this Minister. His allegations should be refuted as strongly as possible.

A great many opportunities are available in Queensland. That is why people are coming to this State. They come here because they know Queensland enjoys political stability. They know what will happen in the future because they have seen what has occurred in the past.

Certainly Queensland suffers from a shortage of skilled labour. However, there is a shortage of skilled labour throughout Australia. Western Australia and South Australia suffer from such a shortage. The Queensland Government cannot be condemned for the shortage of skilled labour in this State. It has done everything it could. It has promoted apprenticeship.

Workers have flowed into Queensland from New Zealand. Skilled tradesmen have had to be brought from the United Kingdom and Europe as well. Their importation has been forced on industry. John Lysaght and other big companies did everything they could to seek Queenslanders to fill their job vacancies. They could not obtain Queenslanders, so they had to go overseas to get workers. That is crazy. Queenslanders enjoy a wonderful life-style. Where else in Australia can young people live in a nice temperate environment, have a reasonable income and enjoy the sun and the surf? I am not criticising young people for doing that, but that is a fact of life. The Government cannot be criticised, as the member for Rockhampton North attempted to do, because employers have been forced to look overseas for tradesmen.

Recently, the Leader of the Opposition claimed that there is no spin-off from the resources boom in Queensland. Obviously he has not read the newspapers. Obviously he hasn't gone outside Mackay. He is misrepresenting the facts. He has claimed that the families are missing-out. The families on the Gold Coast are not missing out. The husbands

who work in the construction industry do not want to strike. They are working 44 or 48 hours a week and are earning good money. Their families certainly are not missing out. They will miss out, however, if the union leaders up here in Brisbane are allowed to exploit them, as happened in the South.

The Leader of the Opposition told us that his answer to the problem created by industrial strife is to hold a meeting with labour leaders to formulate a policy. He criticised the Government, as the member for Rockhampton North did.

Mr Yewdale: That is what the Minister said he would do.

Mr JENNINGS: The Leader of the Opposition said he would call a meeting.

Mr Prest: Is that the meeting you were thrown out of?

Mr JENNINGS: I was not thrown out. I have never been thrown out of a meeting. No-one will physically throw me out of any meeting. I left that meeting because the union leaders from the South asked me to leave. The union leaders on the Gold Coast agreed to let me attend. It is our job as members of the Government to represent unionists, their wives and their kids. That is what I was doing. Those fellows wanted me to be at the meeting. They wanted someone to combat the union leaders from the South, who told a pack of lies about what is going on in the construction industry in the South. The workers on the Gold Coast and the union leaders on the Gold Coast do not want strikes. They know what is happening on the Gold Coast and they know what is happening throughout Queensland. The southern union leaders are the ones who are causing the trouble.

I compliment the Minister on his formula for a future wages policy. It is interesting to note that a number of workers in Queensland are not members of unions. The Minister has taken in hand many aspects in regard to industrial safety. I notice that he is appointing to the Industry and Commerce Training Commission representatives from various groups, including the unions. That is good. I am the first to acknowledge a good union leader; he has a major role to play in our economy.

No-one could have done more than the Minister in the promotion of apprenticeships. He has produced booklets and done many other things to promote apprenticeships. Great credit is due to him. Anyone who wants one of the booklets can contact his member of Parliament and ask for a copy. The booklets are "Scaffolding" and "Formwork and Falsework".

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Mr JENNINGS: It is a matter of whether one believes that the Minister has done an excellent job in relation to apprenticeships. I believe he has.

Mr Mackenroth: You said nobody could do better.

Mr JENNINGS: I will not engage in an argument on that. Perhaps the honourable member knows somebody who he thinks could do better.

It is fascinating that of the 29 000 inquiries made of the Consumer Affairs Bureau, only 3 400 were in writing. The Consumer Affairs Bureau is a great organisation. It gives little old ladies an opportunity to ring up and get information. The bureau is a comfort to them because it provides them with knowledge.

The pre-selling of home units on the Gold Coast is an unusual phenomenon. It has been going on for some years. People buy off the plan at minimum risk. Hundreds of units are built on the Gold Coast, but less than 20 per cent of them are sold before completion. After buying off the plan many people have benefited financially through increases in value.

Every property sale on the Gold Coast means a lot of revenue for the Government by way of stamp duty.

Gold Coast developers selling off the plan guard their reputation jealously. They have performed; they have delivered the goods, and they are still doing so. They are doing a very good job.

As we all know, workers' compensation is a great advantage for people when something unfortunate happens. The Government is offering incentives in the form of

merit bonuses up to 60 per cent of the premium when individual claims and premium ratios have been satisfactory. Employers who provide an acceptable ambulance service on their premises are allowed a 5 per cent reduction in premiums.

I am pleased to note the grant that is being made to the Flying Doctor Service. Every one of us who has lived in the North knows what a great comfort the Flying Doctor Service is in difficult circumstances.

It is of great importance that, as from January 1978, workers' compensation premium rates were reduced overall by 10 per cent. Since then, the fund has operated without any increase in the basic rates. I am sure all members will agree that that is a great credit to the way in which the workers' compensation system operates.

The Minister told us that the prevention of industrial disputation has undoubtedly become a major concern of all industrial organisations, both employer and employee. We all know what the Builders Labourers Federation has done in the southern States. I remember when the Builders Labourers Federation imposed a ban on the Newport Power House. It was suddenly lifted, but two days later the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union imposed a ban. A few months later there was discussion about a \$40,000 cheque that was supposedly to be paid to the widow of an employee who was killed on the Westgate Bridge. Later, a ban was imposed on the Omega station. Later again, the Builders Labourers Federation was fighting other unions, and members of the union were walking off the job while big concrete floors were being poured. That is typical of the guerrilla tactics the union was engaging in. We do not want to see any of them in Queensland. I hope that the Commonwealth Government goes ahead with its plans to deregister the Builders Labourers Federation. Sufficient evidence is available to show what sort of organisation it is and how it has destroyed the basis of the building industry in the South.

It is essential that agreements between labour and management be contractual so that civil law can apply to them. When an agreement is made it should be binding on both parties. That is the only way to get reasonableness between the parties. In the 1960s, during the Mt Isa strike, many of the Mt Isa workers were not really on strike. They simply allowed Mt Isa to be destroyed economically while they got a job elsewhere. When workers go on strike it is imperative that they remain on strike and that the union leaders do not draw any money. I am not complaining about the workers' right to strike, but if the workers are to be protected by awards and agreements they must be prepared to accept responsibilities.

Once workers go on strike, it is important that they remain on strike. It should be illegal to employ a striker. That is the only way we will get common sense and responsibility back into the system. The same thing occurred during the Qantas strike. Strikes in Telecom, Australia Post and other essential services caused problems. If essential services are involved, it is important that consultation take place. The honourable member for Port Curtis said that I was kicked out of a union meeting. I went along to listen. I have been to union meetings before. I learn a lot, and I hope there is fair exchange. Why can't members of Parliament go along to union meetings? What is wrong with that? What have the unionists got to hide? I think it is our responsibility to get out into the market-place and the street and talk to people about what is happening in this country.

Why is the employment situation so good in Queensland? Why is Queensland so prosperous? It is prosperous because the man in the street understands what it is all about. But once we have union leaders coming up from the South and telling people a pack of untruths about what is happening in the South, we will get into strife.

This Government has been in power for over 25 years, and it has to get the job message over to the people it represents. We represent the people who vote for us and, once we are elected, we represent the unionists, their wives—and that is important—and their kids.

I have talked to union leaders from the Gold Coast. I will not name them because I had confidential discussions with them, but I am trying to help them retain the prosperity that we have there. They do not want to do what these southern fellows are advocating. Why shouldn't we help them? That is our job.

Mr Hansen: Who was it asked you to leave the meeting?

Mr JENNINGS: A couple of the characters from the South. It was not the local guys, don't worry about that.

Mr Hansen: Not from Brisbane?

Mr JENNINGS: I do not know whether they came from Brisbane, but it was not the locals.

In the last financial year construction work valued at \$398m was carried out in Brisbane, whilst on the Gold Coast and in the Albert Shire it was valued at \$460m. Forget about all the other places; the Gold Coast is the major construction area in the Commonwealth. The fellows working in the construction industry on the Gold Coast want to be individuals; they do not want to be ruled from outside. In the past three months 1 515 units were approved in Brisbane, whereas 2 450 units were approved on the Gold Coast. That is why the workers on the Coast are individuals; they can see the prosperity there. They are not working a 35-hour week.

The honourable member for Rockhampton North mentioned the introduction of new technology. Most people in this country do not want to see the introduction of a 35-hour week. Does the honourable member want to see it?

Mr Yewdale: You would be hard up making a speech if you had to agree with me.

Mr JENNINGS: Does the honourable member for Rockhampton North want a 35-hour week?

Mr Yewdale: Yes. I think this country can handle it.

Mr JENNINGS: I do not think it can; in fact, I know it cannot. Most people do not want it. It will cause increased costs and require more overtime to be worked. The honourable member has lost touch with his members if he thinks that they want it, because they do not. It will encourage the introduction of more technology, the very thing the honourable member was talking about.

Mr Yewdale: Put them on the dole queues.

Mr JENNINGS: What an attitude! We want to put them into jobs so that they can take a big cheque home to their wives each week. The introduction of a 35-hour week will cause a huge increase in costs. In Western Australia 100 Alcoa workers rebelled against the union. They said they did not want a 35-hour week and shunted their union leaders off. That is exactly what has happened on the Gold Coast. The building workers on the Gold Coast did not give their leadership a blank cheque to say when they would go on strike. Those fellows like working. One has only to go down there and watch them to see that. Who is the main advocate of the 35-hour week campaign? None other than Mr Laurie Carmichael! He is organising this "spontaneous rank-and-file action on the factory floor" by the Amalgamated Metalworkers and Shipwrights Union. What is his philosophy? He is a Communist!

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Why does he get a majority vote from the membership of his union?

Mr JENNINGS: It is funny that the most recent election in that union is now being queried, but that has nothing to do with the point I am making. He has now given away the 35-hour week campaign; he wants the working week reduced to 20 hours. Why? Because the basic Communist philosophy is simple—destroy the economy. The Communists know that the diminution of the value of our money will undermine our whole social system. That is how Hitler came to power. That is what Laurie Carmichael wants. He does not want a 35-hour week; he wants a 20-hour week. Once the working week is reduced, the value of our money will be destroyed, and that is what the Communists want. They want to destroy the value of our dollar, and they are doing it progressively by reducing the working week.

I wish to thank the Minister for his co-operation in the matter of building industry safety. He intends to appoint more inspectors on the Gold Coast. So much can be inspected or supervised, but it gets back to the man himself—whether he wears thongs, or behaves properly on the job.

Much building is occurring on the Gold Coast. Many factories are starting up. Wally Crossie's clothing factory employs 200 happy girl workers. They are happy because they are working. The construction workers are happy.

We are the most democratic country in the world. The little fellow can get bigger if he wishes. The more big companies there are, the more opportunities there are for the little efficient blokes who do not have the overheads. This is the greatest country in the world, and Queensland is the greatest State in it. Provided there is reasonable harmony between employers and employees, and provided we give incentives to industry, we will have a future that will not be matched anywhere else in the world.

Mr WILSON (Townsville South) (5.36 p.m.): I speak today about portable long service leave for building workers based on service to the industry rather than to the employer. Because of the nature of the building industry, it is virtually impossible for any building worker to work for one employer for the qualifying period of 15 years, which entitles him to 13 weeks' long service leave, or for 10 years to enable him to receive pro rata long service leave.

Because of this, the unions within the building industry, in order to get justice for their members by ensuring that that they were able to enjoy long service leave like employees in other industries, decided that if ever building workers were to receive long service leave it would have to be based on service to the building industry and not to one employer. The unions, in their wisdom, devised a system that is fair and equitable. It is a system of portable long service leave for building workers based on service to the building industry. Under it building workers will be able to carry a credit card, which will be handed to the employer at the time of engagement, handed back to the employee at the time of disengagement—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member may not have been in the Chamber when the Temporary Chairman informed honourable members that matters requiring legislation could not be discussed during the debate on the Estimates. The matter to which the honourable member is referring requires legislation, and I must ask him not to persist with that line.

Mr WILSON: I do not know how the matter will be raised in this Chamber. No legislation will be brought down to provide long service leave for workers in the building industry. On four occasions, the legislation—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot allow the honourable member to pursue that line. He asks when he will have an opportunity to bring this matter before the Chamber. He had the opportunity during the Budget debate and the Address-in-Reply debate. He also has an opportunity to raise it during the Matters of Public Interest debate. He certainly cannot raise it during the Estimates debate. So I ask him to return to the Estimates and discuss them.

Mr WILSON: I have nothing more to say. It is quite obvious that the question of building workers' receiving long service leave will never be dealt with in this Chamber. They are being subjected to the gag at this time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will withdraw that remark against the Chair.

Mr WILSON: I withdraw it. It was not intended to be a slight upon the Chair. I was only making the statement that the Government had no intention of bringing down legislation.

Mr PRENTICE (Toowong) (5.40 p.m.): It is with some pleasure that I rise to speak in this debate. I wish to look first at the question of industrial relations, in particular the relations between business and employee and where each stands respectively in the bargaining situation.

If one reads the newspapers from time to time and watches the progress of major disputes—they are the ones to which I refer—one tends to find that there appears to be one law for the employer and an entirely different one for the employee. That concerns me. More and more often one finds that, when a decision is handed down by the industrial commission, employers will accept that decision and act on it, as indeed they should. But when it comes to the union's involvement in the dispute, more often than not one finds an entirely different approach. It appears that the unions would be very upset if an employer were to say in the face of a decision from the industrial commission that he does not like the decision, that he does not want to

pay that amount or give that much leave and therefore say, "I won't do it." However, the unions are prepared to say, "We think that is not fair; we won't abide by the decision."

That is a perfect example of double standards. If industrial relations are to be effective in this State, what is needed is an opportunity for fairness on both sides so that the industrial commission will ensure that those people who are part of the bargaining process, once having been before it, will accept its decision. If they are not prepared to do so, they should be penalised accordingly, whether employee or employer, union or industry body. Surely that is fair. There should be an even-handed approach, regardless of who is before the industrial commission.

People in the community become very upset about strikes. Undoubtedly, on many occasions people go on strike with what they believe to be just cause. They are therefore prepared to withhold their labour because they are not getting what they believe to be a fair deal. On occasions they may not be.

It annoys me when a union suddenly decides that its members will not undertake certain tasks—that they will go to work, that they will do 90 or 95 per cent of their job but that they will not do the remaining portion. The union then expects its members to be paid, regardless of the fact that they are not doing all the work that they are paid to do.

In my view, if a person does not do the job he is paid to do, he simply should not be paid. If he wants to go on strike, fine; but he must go all the way. The idea that a person can withhold certain labour, destroy or interrupt the operations of a certain aspect of a company's business and still expect to receive his full pay is patently absurd, patently unfair to business, and, indeed, I would think, improper in the mind of any reasonable person.

Mr Vaughan: Who decides all this?

Mr PRENTICE: From what I read in the newspapers, the decision is taken by the unions concerned. They tell their members what they will or will not do. The employees then withhold their labour in certain areas.

Quite frankly, that is not fair. If industrial relations are ever to be on a proper footing so that things on each side of the fence are on a fair and even basis, a bit more trust is needed. Certainly those on the other side of the Chamber may suggest that business itself is at fault. I would not suggest that business is 100 per cent right. There is fault on both sides, but trust is needed.

We need to have people sit down and discuss these things rationally. It may be that we will have to turn to collective bargaining. My one concern about that is: who will represent the public interest when a number of employees decide they require a certain wage, which they believe to be a fair wage, and the company says, "We can still produce the product. We can up our price. We can afford to pay the wage."? Who looks after the public interest in a system of bargaining, which may even go to contract and civil liability, as the member for Southport suggested? That is my concern.

It is time that the whole matter was looked at. I do not claim to have all the answers. There are problems. It is my view, however, that, until the matter is discussed rationally by Government, employer, union and employees, we will continue with a state of affairs that is often absurd. I pay a tribute to the work the Minister has done in this area of his responsibility.

I turn now to trading hours. I am aware that this matter is before the courts at the moment. It is not my intention to talk about what those trading hours should be. What I do say is that when trading hours are set they should be enforced. When they are laid down by law, people should be prepared to expect that they will be enforced. I know that there are great difficulties in finding the manpower to ensure that the law is enforced on every occasion. However, it is not fair to expect those who are honest and prepared to follow the rules of the land to obey the law while others flout the law day after day. They are prepared to pay the fines. They see them as a normal business expense. Some are prepared to gamble on the chance of the inspector not getting to their premises quickly enough or often enough. If we have a law that restricts trading hours—and that is an argument that will take place in other places—people should be prepared to abide by it. The law should be enforced strictly and fairly across the board.

I have one shop in my electorate that operates without regard for trading hours. It is not exempted in any way. It has been operating that way for many months, despite complaints and, I understand, despite proceedings.

Mr Vaughan: We all have them.

Mr PRENTICE: That may be so, and I can understand the problem of not having sufficient staff to enforce the trading hours, but it is unfair to the honest people who abide by the law. It is something that I hope the Minister will look at.

I congratulate the Minister on his efforts in the apprenticeship area. He referred to the door-knock that has been carried on within business. What I am pleased about is that it may act as a balance against the great concentration in society today upon university degrees. There seems to be almost a social need for people to get university degrees, as if a degree were the ticket to everything a person would ever want. In the past in some areas there has been a playing down of the trades. I suspect that people are now coming to realise how important trades are and how important it is that we have people trained in those areas. I suspect that a number of people who have graduated from the Queensland University now wish they were qualified plumbers. They might have been a lot more successful financially and they may have been able to make a worthwhile contribution in that field.

Concentration on universities, the TEAS allowance, the lack of fees, and so on, is all very well. I do not dispute the need for people to obtain tertiary qualifications or that they should be given that opportunity. That one person has a degree and another person has a trade should never be taken as some sort of class or social distinction. In this nation we should encourage people to do what they can do best, and no social stigma should attach to it.

A great deal of work has been done in apprenticeship training and the trades. The Minister has started in the right direction, but we should not sit back and say, "We are doing a lot now, and that is enough." I am sure that the Minister would not do that. While we concentrate on tertiary institutions at Federal and State levels, we are heading in the wrong direction.

I congratulate the Minister on his speech and his conduct of the department. There is little that can be criticised. He has done an excellent job.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (5.51 p.m.): In rising to take part in the debate on the Estimates of the Department of Employment and Labour Relations, I congratulate the Minister on familiarising himself with what is happening in country districts. He has recently travelled round the State and been able to view the problems at first hand. The Minister has always done that regardless of the portfolio that he has held. I was particularly interested in his visit on this occasion. It is important for any Minister to become familiar with what is happening. The Minister has certainly done that.

The fact that such a senior Minister holds this portfolio gives the lie to the claim that the Government is somewhat lax in the industrial arena, particularly in the sphere of dispute. It is because the Government realises the real problems in the Labour Relations portfolio, that a senior Minister has been entrusted with it. I was pleased to hear him say that it is better to get together in an effort to settle disputes than to let problems accumulate until a major one develops.

The abandonment of indexation has left a vacuum. Unless a definite policy on wage structures can be formulated, people will be hurt.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr BOOTH: Collective bargaining has been mentioned as the main way to overcome the problem. People who are not protected by a large union will strike a great number of problems with collective bargaining. Unless we are very careful, a situation could develop where some wages would escalate and others would not. This problem must be overcome. We must decide what we should do and what changes to make. I do not believe in continual changes. Perhaps that is bad in a field such as this one. However, if we must make a change, we should face up to it.

I would be surprised if collective bargaining played the part that some people believe it can. Collective bargaining could bring about a confrontation that could create continual difficulties. I would be somewhat worried by its introduction. Under a system of collective bargaining the workers without industrial muscle are the losers. Clear guide-lines should be laid down for the settlement of industrial disputation and for the automatic adjustment of wages and salaries. Perhaps the guide-lines should be wider than the original parameters of indexation, which might have been the cause of its downfall. All possibilities should be explored.

I turn now to apprenticeship. I do not want to be critical, but I pose a number of questions concerning pre-vocational training and pre-apprenticeship courses. The former is a matter for the Education Department and the latter comes under the control of this Minister.

I have been told that when a young person successfully completes a pre-apprenticeship course and seeks employment an employer who takes him on has to accept the conditions that go with that pre-apprenticeship course. Apparently some employers are not prepared to accept those conditions. It is fairly difficult to ascertain the facts. Certainly I am not aware of the true position. In fact, even certain officers in the Minister's department appear to be hazy about pre-apprenticeship courses.

If an employer is not prepared to accept the conditions attaching to pre-apprenticeship and says that because of those conditions he is not interested in employing a particular young person, that young person's pre-apprenticeship training places him at a disadvantage rather than an advantage. The employer regards him as being a debit in the initial year rather than a credit. This is so particularly when the indenture period is shortened. The employer ignores the fact that the young person has successfully completed his course.

The whole matter of pre-apprenticeship courses should be clarified so that employers and young persons who complete the courses know exactly where they stand. It is undesirable that the completion of a pre-apprenticeship course should prove to be a disadvantage. After all, it should be a great advantage. That idea should be sold to employers. I am sure that the Minister will do all he can to sell it to them. Pre-vocational training does not pose the same problem.

Earlier speakers referred to the lack of courtesy displayed by officers of the Workers Compensation Board and to delays that occur in the processing of claims. I cannot say that I have experienced any lack of courtesy or received complaints regarding delays. At times the board's officers are harassed and delays do occur. I have had a fair bit to do with insurance in one way or another and realise that delays can occur in the processing of claims. I am sure that the Workers Compensation Board is endeavouring to overcome any problems that do arise. I can speak, of course, only for the branch in my electorate, but I have spoken with people who have dealings with other branches. As a result of my discussions I am not prepared to claim that lack of courtesy is a significant issue.

In my area and perhaps in other parts of the State complaints are made concerning premiums applicable in the various divisions. It might be that there are too many divisions. Recently some people in hardware businesses thought they had cause for complaint. A differential is struck between premiums paid by light-hardware businesses and those paid by heavy-hardware businesses. I suppose that such a differential is acceptable, provided it is not too great.

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

Mr BOOTH: Before the dinner recess I referred to the difficulties that occur when the differential between certain categories appears to be too high. I am prepared to believe a great deal of research is engaged in before the premium rates are set; but even better research should be carried out to try to avoid some of the problems that now arise. Although some rates appear to be very high others appear to be too low.

Some people think that a person who claims that he has a back injury is a compo bludger. Only those who have suffered back injuries know how much pain may be involved. It may be quite impossible for them to work. There was substantial evidence of that last week when Martin Kent was unable to take the field for Australia in the test in Perth. His cricketing future is somewhat clouded, but it is hoped that, with treatment, he will be able to make a comeback. I certainly hope he does so.

A Government Member: He is not even a bowler.

Mr BOOTH: No, but he is a great cricketer.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: What about the poor old worker with a crook back who is knocked back time after time by the Government?

Mr Booth: I have not said that they are knocked back.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Of course they are knocked back.

Mr BOOTH: That may be so. I hope that medical evidence is followed in the appeal system. I was just pointing out what had happened to Martin Kent.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You are worried about a good old Tory like Martin Kent, but you are not worried about the poor old working man.

Mr BOOTH: The honourable member is adopting an unreasonable attitude. I am sure that it will do the working man a lot of harm. I will go further and say that if the honourable member for Wolston is ever entrusted with responsibility in his party, he will do both his party and the people whom he represents a deal of harm.

A Government Member: We need him.

Mr BOOTH: We need him; we would love to see him leading the party. He is not capable of doing that; he would make a complete mess of it. He would put Labor just where Whitlam put it when he was the leader in the Federal sphere. The honourable member's intolerance and the way he behaves does the ALP a good deal of harm.

Everyone knows that Martin Kent would be out on the field if he could be, but his back prevents him from playing cricket. One must be tolerant with anyone who has a back injury that is not easy to pin-point.

I agree with the honourable member who referred to impulse buying as a problem. When dealing with impulse buying, the Minister said earlier today—

"This is seen as a reflection of the bureau's consumer education program. Further evidence of this is an increasing number of consumers approaching the bureau for pre-purchase information. To complement the willingness of consumers to seek this information, later this year the bureau is to embark on a newspaper advertising campaign which will provide positive guide-lines for consumers' purchases."

That may be acceptable, but I urge caution. The best protection for the impulse buyer is education in the age-old first commandment of business, that is, let the buyer beware. I have made purchases with which I have not been happy.

Mr Yewdale: It is rubbish to say, "Let the buyer beware." What about the organised crooks?

Mr BOOTH: If a person is not prepared to assess the merits of a commodity, he is very foolish to purchase it. It is no use making suggestions to the honourable member; he is unable to absorb them. I am doing my best to educate him.

I suggest that the best way to tackle the problem is to make the buyer more aware. For instance, a person buying a motor car should have a look at its horsepower and think about the job he wants it to do, whether it is to carry four people or only one. A person will normally opt for a smaller car if only one person is to be carried. The same principle applies to the purchase of any appliance. When I bought equipment for my farm, I always purchased a tractor or other farm implement that would do the job I wanted it to do. I was not always successful, perhaps because I had not heard the dictum, "Let the buyer beware". It was not long after I had purchased a certain implement that I became aware of what it meant. If an advertising campaign is to be carried out, I suggest that the Government should ensure that that aspect is covered.

The administration of the Weights and Measures Branch is one of the Minister's very important responsibilities. An Opposition front-bencher, the honourable member for Rockhampton North—he should not be a front-bencher—spoke about crooks in industry. All honourable members are aware that there are some crooks in the community, but one way of preventing minor crime is by ensuring that the weights and measures regulations are enforced.

The checking of weighbridges, particularly those used for weighing grain and weighing cattle at saleyards, is carried out by the Weights and Measures Branch. Testing weighbridges is an expensive task and it is not performed as often as the farming community would like. Action should be taken to speed up the process. If the job could be done in half an hour instead of three or four hours there would be a big saving in cost, thus enabling the weighbridges to be tested more often. That would benefit the farming community.

The checking of bulk milk vats is a difficult task. One would not think that the measurement of such vats would alter; but tests carried out by the Weights and Measures Branch indicate that it does. The testing of vats used to be an expensive procedure. I do not know what the cost is now, but if it has increased to the extent that I think it has, it must be very expensive.

Weighbridges must be accurate if disputes are to be avoided. If the weighbridge at a cattle saleyard shows any sign of inaccuracy the buyers become suspicious, and that is reflected in their bids. Too much soil can affect the accuracy of a weighbridge, although most saleyard managers have their own methods of cleaning them.

For as long as I have been associated with farming there have been disputes about grain weighbridges. These usually occur not because there is anything much wrong with the weighbridge itself but because the operator makes an error, whether deliberate or otherwise, or because the conveyance being used to carry the grain, be it a truck or a rail car, is carrying surplus weight, usually in the form of soil or something similar. That regularly causes problems.

Over the years, the Weights and Measures Branch has gained an excellent reputation in my area. The only complaint is that it is not able to test weighbridges as often as my constituents would like.

By far the most important responsibility of the Minister is that relating to the settlement of industrial disputes. He has to try to make the industrial section of our society work better. The history of industrial disputation goes back many years, and some people are regarded as industrial heroes. However, if action had been taken at the appropriate time to settle a dispute and bring the people concerned back into line, the names of those people probably would not have appeared in the history books.

At the present time we have very little historical guidance in industrial matters. Indexation was not with us for long. We are presently passing through a critical industrial period. I hope that everybody will do his best to try to iron out some of the problems that confront us. I am sure that the Minister, with the experience that he has gained over the years in the many posts with which he has been entrusted, will do everything he can to overcome these problems.

Before I conclude, I wish him well in his portfolio.

Mr Jones: While you are making your speech, why don't you wish him a Merry Christmas?

Mr BOOTH: What is the implication behind that? Is there something wrong with a Merry Christmas? I have always enjoyed taking part in the feast at Christmas, as I am sure the honourable member does. I am surprised that he should return from a lengthy overseas trip and make a derogatory remark about Christmas. I can only hope that he will improve substantially before the night is out.

Mr MILLINER (Everton) (7.26 p.m.): In rising to speak to the Estimates I know that it is usual to congratulate the Minister. That practice is beaten into Government members at the joint parties meeting.

The department that the Minister administers is important to the community. It looks after labour relations. Many things are happening in the industrial field at the present time. I read an article in last Sunday's "Sunday Sun" headed "20 hr week next says union boss". It reads—

"Laurie Carmichael, boss of Australia's biggest union, sees the country's future as one of even shorter working weeks, extra cash, and organised leisure.

To the joint national secretary of the powerful Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union, the 35-hour week is a foregone conclusion.

Now he is talking about the 20-hour week.

'That new techniques with robots and clones are possible in the foreseeable future as distinct from the distant future means a 20-hour week becomes a real possibility to meet the material needs of society,' he said.

#### Robots

'I think that by the turn of the century the volume of robots in industry will have been through an explosion.

Without doubt, it will be the fourth industrial explosion.

It is not going to happen until the late 80s but then the decade beginning 1990 will be quite a decade.'

I agree with what Mr Carmichael said.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Would you say that there are clones and clowns on the other side?

Mr MILLINER: That has been suggested.

I think that Mr Carmichael is a very forward-thinking person and I agree with what he has predicted. Some time ago I predicted that we would see the 30-hour week within the next decade. I tend to agree with Mr Carmichael's statement that within the next decade we will probably be working less than 30 hours a week. It is conceivable that we will be working 20 hours a week.

Let us have a look at the history of the shorter working week. Of course, we can go right back to the dark ages when children worked in mines 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Of course, things have changed dramatically since then. There is a history of continuing campaigns for a shorter working week. Initially, there was a 48-hour week. Subsequently, that was reduced to 44 hours, and then to 40 hours.

In addition, employees have benefited from increased long service leave entitlements. Just before I started work a fortnight's annual leave was the entitlement. Just after I started work, the period was increased to three weeks. Now it is four weeks, plus a loading of 17½ per cent.

Long service leave provisions have also been improved. Initially, the qualifying period for long service leave was 20 years. The period was reduced to 15 years and then to 13 years. Under some awards, the qualifying period is now 10 years. I believe that these increased benefits have been provided because of an increase in productivity.

I will be interested to see industry's attitude towards the introduction of the 35-hour week. Various campaigns have been mounted on the issue, but not all employees work a 40-hour week. For instance, since 1902 Federal public servants have worked a 36¾-hour week. Obviously working less than a 40-hour week is not a new concept. Fortunately, in many industries, such as Telecom, oil companies and the stevedoring industry, a less than 40-hour week has been implemented. No longer do we hear the great hue and cry from industry that a shorter working week creates higher prices. Personally, I believe that is not the case.

Technological change is another reason for the introduction of a shorter working week. Some years ago I was employed in the printing industry and I have had first-hand experience of technological change. Through computerisation that industry has undergone tremendous change. Printing businesses are using more and more sophisticated technology, which is causing a reduction in employment. I am reliably informed that Mirror Newspapers Ltd, the publishers of the "Sunday Sun", has introduced a computerised composing-room, which will mean that it will dismiss most of its compositors. That will have a devastating effect because in the newspaper industry the composing-room is a fairly important side of the production and it employs a large staff.

Yesterday I had the privilege of inspecting the premises of Wilke Printers (Qld) Pty Ltd at Zillmere. That firm has kept pace with the times and uses a great deal of technology in its plant. When I was there the telephone rang and the fellow who answered the phone said that the race fields for Melbourne were coming up on the line. They were being typeset in Melbourne, put into a computer and reproduced in Brisbane in what is called a bromide which is suitable for photographing for a negative. By that means a plate was made for the printing of the race fields. The whole operation took place with virtually one man overseeing one machine.

Chemist shops are an example of the introduction of computerisation in the suburbs. The items on the shelves of chemist shops are priced with the use of computer codes. The pharmacy assistants key the stock code numbers into something that look like a calculator. They also feed in the amount of the stock required and at the end of the day they simply attach that to a machine and dial a phone number. That feeds the information to the drug company, which produces an invoice so that the storeman can collect the goods for dispatch to the pharmacy. At the end of the month the computer produces a statement. All that is done with very little work.

Mr Fitzgerald: Are you opposed to all this?

Mr MILLINER: No, I am not opposed to it. I simply say that that is change and that we have to accept it. I am simply saying that it has a devastating effect on the workforce and that there should be reduced working hours.

The old system was that a chemist would ring the drug company where a highly trained girl would make a list of the drugs required. That would go to a clerk-typist who would type up the invoice. Then it would go to the accounts section for the preparation of the statement. Now all that is done with the aid of computers, which are so advanced that at the end of the year they can produce an inventory of what the chemist has purchased for the whole year. That means that it is easy for the chemist after a stocktake to work out exactly what his takings should have been. It is a highly sophisticated operation that employs very few people.

Another area that will be severely affected by computerisation and other technological change is the white-collar industry. I am talking about the banking industry and the insurance industry. The banking industry will be devastated by automatic bank tellers. I note with interest that the Bank of New South Wales has now installed an automatic teller in its Queen Street branch. It is conceivable, with the new satellite being put into orbit, that it will be possible for money deposited through an automatic bank teller in Mt Isa to be immediately credited to an account held in a computer in Sydney. It would be possible for the money to be withdrawn five minutes later and the account to be debited. There would be no need for any bank staff to be involved in Mt Isa or Sydney. I am reliably informed that banks of America give their tellers bonuses if they encourage people to use automatic bank tellers. This is an area in which tremendous interest will be shown in the not-too-distant future.

I move from automation and technological change to the field of industrial relations, which is a very delicate area. We sat through one night with the Opposition calling for a number of divisions on legislation introduced by the Government. I am speaking, of course, about the Essential Services Act. It has never been used and I confidently predict it never will be. Clearly it is unworkable legislation.

On our recent overseas trip, I was very impressed by the industrial relations at the Toyota car factory. We were informed by the company that there were suggestion boxes and that it is the responsibility of middle management to try to implement suggestions put forward by the workers. If suggestions cannot be implemented, the executives have to explain to the board why they cannot be. The company provides universities, hospitals and so on. The workers at the Toyota car plant were receiving something like the equivalent of \$12,000 per year plus bonuses. In the preceding year the bonuses amounted to something like \$6,000, so altogether their wages were approximately \$18,000.

We asked the management about industrial relations. It was very keen to promote good relations. We were told that twice-yearly negotiations were held with the workers on wages and bonuses. What normally happened was that, if inflation was running at 10 per cent, the workers would argue for 10.25 per cent and the company would argue for 9.75 per cent and, after a day's negotiations, they would agree to 10 per cent. It was encouraging to see industrial relations at work in Japan.

At the plant we heard about quality control. A worker had been trained to be a car assembler, having been taken right through the whole business of manufacturing a car. He was put into the stamping shop for a period and then trained in the motor-trimming shop. We asked about manufacturing in Australia. It was made quite clear that there was nothing wrong with Australian workers, that the problem in Australia was the lack of quality control; that it was in fact virtually non-existent.

Mr Mackenroth: Those companies look after their workers, too, don't they?

Mr MILLINER: They do. They look after their workers extremely well.

It is something that the Australian Government and Australian employers should look at seriously. Instead of blaming Australian workers they should be looking at their own areas of responsibility, particularly quality control.

It was with great concern that I read, in the Auditor-General's report tabled in the Parliament earlier this year, about the occupational safety branch inspections, which come under the Department of Employment and Labour Relations—

“A significant number of inspections required to be made under the provisions of the Construction Safety Act 1971-1975, the Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1979 and Motor Vehicles Safety Act 1980 are currently not being performed. In the construction safety inspection area 13,135 notifications of intention to commence a construction were received together with relevant fees due. Statistical records available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicate that 24,181 constructions were commenced in the State during the nine month period ended 31st March, 1981 . . . ”

The discrepancy in the figures should be of grave concern to all members of the community. The report continues—

“Of the construction notifications received, approximately 10 per cent of inspections were unable to be performed owing to the unavailability of staff. Refunds of fees paid were made in these cases.”

That is clearly disturbing when the number of accidents recently reported on industrial sites is considered. I refer particularly to the Gold Coast area where over the last few months a number of very serious accidents have occurred. I am very concerned about the statement in the Auditor-General's report that these inspections are not being carried out. I would ask the Minister in his reply to indicate what steps have been taken to remedy the matters raised by the Auditor-General.

The Auditor-General also states—

“The staff ceiling imposed by needs for economic restraint in Government is the major contributing factor to construction work not being inspected. There is also a shortage of suitably qualified staff in the machinery inspection section. During the year, 98,568 inspections (104,342, 1979-80) were made in this section. It was estimated that at least a third of the inspections required were not performed.”

That is fairly alarming. The report continues—

“In the motor vehicle section, approximately 190,000 notices were issued requiring inspections be made in 1980-81, whereas only approximately 112,000 of these inspections were carried out. Motor vehicle inspections have been the subject of a report furnished by the Internal Operational Audit Service.”

It can be seen from the report that approximately 78 000 inspections were not carried out. Recently we have experienced increased carnage on our roads. Last week two semi-trailers rolled over on the Gaven Way. I am not suggesting that the vehicles involved were in any way defective; I do not know the circumstances surrounding the accident. A lot of emphasis is being placed on road safety. However, the Government is not playing its role with road safety. It is regrettable that the Government cannot fulfil its obligations in that area. Lack of consideration in this area is a contributing factor to the increasing road toll.

I hope that the Minister in his reply will indicate quite clearly to the Committee the steps that he had taken to remedy the situations that have been referred to in the Auditor-General's annual report.

Mr McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (7.43 p.m.): I rise to support the Estimates of the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations. The Minister has demonstrated very clearly that he is prepared to move about the State, learn about the problems that exist and try to do something constructive about them. He is also interested in promoting an atmosphere where jobs will be created. I know that in my electorate he is interested in the wine industry and the jobs that he feels will be created in that industry because of the sensible legislation introduced by the Government.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: I am told that you are a regular at the wineries around Stanthorpe.

Mr McKECHNIE: Yes, I am a regular at the wineries around Stanthorpe.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: At round about 7 o'clock on Sunday morning.

Mr McKECHNIE: Not at 7 o'clock in the morning.

The wine industry is very important to my electorate, and I support it 100 per cent. The Government is interested in creating jobs. We hear a lot of talk about unemployment. The best social service that can be given to an unemployed person is to provide him with a job. The Government is trying to promote a climate in which jobs are provided in this wonderful State of ours. Of course, we are very successful. In the 10 years to August 1980, one-quarter of the jobs in Australia were created in Queensland. That does not just happen; it is partly because of our wonderful natural resources and also because we have a Government that is prepared to give incentives to people to develop our natural resources.

I can clearly recall that during the last State election campaign I told my electors that a vote for me was a vote for jobs, development and lower taxes. That is my personal philosophy, and I am sure that it is the philosophy of the Minister, too.

An Opposition Member: Did they get lower taxes?

Mr McKECHNIE: Queensland is the lowest taxed State in Australia. It is because of the Government's philosophy that I sit on this side of the Chamber and not on the other side of the Chamber.

I was interested to hear the member for Everton say that he supported Laurie Carmichael's view on a 20-hour week.

Mr Jennings: It was shameful.

Mr McKECHNIE: It certainly was. Members of the Opposition must realise that a shorter working week does not necessarily mean that jobs will be created. On the contrary, it can destroy jobs.

The member for Everton referred to the printing industry. A good deal of printing is done overseas as the result of union pressures in New South Wales. I am told that an employer in the printing industry in New South Wales does not insert an advertisement in a newspaper seeking an employee; instead, he goes to the union and asks it to send someone along. In other words, the employer cannot select his employee; the union tells him whom he will employ. If such a situation is allowed to develop in this State, no incentive will be given to an employer to hunt round for the best employee so that he can put out the best product at the most competitive price; he will simply take anybody the union sends along. The net result, of course, will be the export of jobs.

The Minister commented that the level of building work in Queensland is at an all-time high. In 1980-81 \$1,748m worth of building activity was undertaken in Queensland. That figure was more than twice that for the previous year, which was \$754m. Those figures tell a rather dramatic story in relation to development in this State. The development is something of which this Government and the people of Queensland can be very proud.

Opposition members have criticised the development that is occurring at Gladstone. I would be the first to admit that problems are being experienced in Gladstone and that the planning of the project should have been much better than it was. Nevertheless, I would sooner see more employment and more jobs rather than less employment, fewer problems and no jobs. That philosophy is shared by all Government members. We are here to try to obtain jobs for the unemployed and to try to give them dignity in life. We are concentrating on getting to the root cause of the problem rather than on a lot of the airy-fairy nonsense talked about some union leaders.

Mr Jennings: We have performed.

Mr McKECHNIE: This Government certainly has performed.

A good deal has been said about technology. I was pleased to hear the honourable member for Everton say that he believes in technological change. Contrary to the comment of the honourable member for Lytton, technology is not to be feared. We should plan for it. I am sure the honourable member for Lytton would agree with that.

Some redundancy has occurred in Telecom. I am sorry to see exchange girls in country areas lose their jobs. The Government, however, has to make decisions in the best interests of the nation as a whole. In spite of the redundancies that have occurred, these days Telecom employs many more persons than the appropriate section of the PMG Department employed in years gone by. The reason for that is that increased technology leads to a greater use of the services, which, in turn, creates new jobs. Telecom is a good example of that.

Mr Jones: All the equipment is being made in Japan.

Mr McKECHNIE: More jobs are created in Australia by Telecom than ever before.

Mr Mackenroth: How many?

Mr McKECHNIE: I do not recall the figure off hand. I have seen the figures and I can assure honourable members and the general public that they back up my statements. As a result of technological change, the services provided by Telecom are now proportionately cheaper and more persons are employed by Telecom than in the days of manual exchanges.

One thing on which the Government and Opposition would agree is the need for better industrial relations. In today's newspaper I read that in Japan the first four letters of the word "Australia" have been translated to mean "Many strikes". I am worried that the Japanese people will think of Australia in the same way as many of us think of Britain.

The honourable member for Nudgee said that the Japanese are good negotiators and that they are preying on us. The fact of the matter is that unions and employers in Australia are giving the Japanese the bullets to fire. Unions and employers have not come to grips with the industrial relations problems. It is time to adopt a more sensible industrial relations policy. Industrial relations are like a marriage—both sides have got to work at it. Some employers have a shocking industrial relations record. They do not try. It is time that they pulled their socks up. In other instances, some of the militant unions make it almost impossible for anyone to talk to them in a sensible way. The Government should take the lead by introducing a grievance-handling procedure.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: You are one of the greatest grievances in this Parliament.

Mr McKECHNIE: We all know of the industrial relations grievance-handling procedure ALP members have. All day Opposition members have been ducking outside to meetings and counting the numbers.

Mr Mackenroth: Mr Powell, that has nothing to do with the Estimates. Will you bring the honourable member back to the point?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Powell): Order! The honourable member for Chatsworth will cease his persistent interjections.

Mr McKECHNIE: ALP members have demonstrated how a grievance-handling procedure could work. All day they have been holding meetings. They have an inept leader whom they want to get rid of, but they cannot make up their minds on who will replace him. Personally, I hope that they do not replace him. He suits me and other members of the Government very well.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: I have not been to a meeting all day.

Mr McKECHNIE: I am sure that the honourable member for Wolston thinks a lot of the Leader of the Opposition.

The Minister has played a major role in helping to institute group apprenticeship schemes as part of a number of measures that he and the department have taken to increase the apprenticeship intake. The measures have been successful, because far more apprentices have been indentured this year than last year. I congratulate the Minister and his department on their initiative. The Government believes that when the large projects we hear so much about get off the ground, the companies with the contracts should introduce training schemes for Australians so that they can do the jobs rather than import skilled labour from overseas. The Government's attitude is to be commended.

The Minister has had to deal with the controversial attempt to change shopping hours. I will make my stand on this issue very clear. I believe that, at the moment, shoppers have ample time to do their shopping. There is no need to extend shopping hours. If we were to give in to the Woolworths/Coles lobby, far from more permanent jobs being created, the number of permanent jobs would decrease because the companies would employ casuals.

Mr Milliner: Don't forget that Gabby Horan is in that.

Mr McKECHNIE: I do not care who is in it. I am putting what I and the majority of Government members think. We must resist this pressure from big business and side with the unions and small shopkeepers to ensure that the Woolworths/Coles lobby is defeated for ever.

Another subject that has been mentioned during the debate is the possibility of price control. I am one who believes that market forces are the best form of price control available—when they are working. I believe in private enterprise when there is genuine competition, but I do not believe that there is genuine competition between the multinational oil companies at the moment. If the problem of petrol prices is not solved very soon by the Federal Government then I believe that this State Government has to introduce price control. If that was done we could reduce the recommended wholesale price, because at the moment some oil companies—probably all oil companies—are selling fuel at greatly discounted rates to some clients while charging the recommended price to others. The present system is just not working, and I think we have to seriously consider price control unless the multinational oil companies change their tune and give people living in the non-discount areas a fair go. I am pleased to see the Minister for Transport in the Chamber, because he is trying to do something about those in the jobbing industry. I wish him luck with that, and hope that very soon he can solve the problem.

Weights and measures also come under the control of the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations. I agree with other speakers who have said that it is very unfair that traditional shopkeepers have to abide by all sorts of ordinances and regulations, with their associated costs, while hawkers can sell on only one day a week, usually the day when most people are out shopping, and ignore the regulations. I believe that is unfair competition. The Minister's departmental officers should do more to ensure that the weights and measures regulations are enforced and that those hawkers abide by them.

The Workers Compensation Board is a very important section of the Minister's portfolio, and one that comes in for a lot of criticism. I have found the officers of the Workers Compensation Board—in fact the officers in all the Minister's departments—very sympathetic when I go to them with a problem. However, a couple of points need thorough investigation. The first is the possibility of appeal against a decision of the Medical Board. It is suggested that there are good reasons why this should not occur, but regardless of those reasons, I think that most workers want to see an appeal system introduced. I think we have to look at the existing policy again, and either justify it in stronger terms, or change it.

The other point that worries me about workers' compensation is the problem that occurs when a Queensland employer sends an employee out of Queensland on business thinking that he is covered for workers' compensation. So he is if the employee is killed interstate and his widow sues under Queensland law. But if she chooses to sue under New South Wales law the employer is not covered. That is not good enough. I know that the Workers Compensation Board considers that there are all sorts of difficulties in trying to overcome this problem, and I am told that it could be three or four years before reciprocity is achieved between the States—if ever. I am told that the New South Wales Labor Government is not very interested, because in that State workers' compensation is handled by private enterprise and the Government does not get involved in the expense that is incurred by this Government. But in fairness to all concerned the Minister should give priority to the solution of this problem. He should talk to other State Ministers and to the manager of the Workers Compensation Board to try to achieve a quick solution to this problem, because the prospect of a solution in three or four years is just not good enough.

The Minister has become involved in the campaign for the 35-hour week. I commented earlier that one of the Opposition members supports Laurie Carmichael's statement that a 20-hour week will be achieved in the foreseeable future. All employers are

not greedy but sometimes, because of the problems created by the militant section of the union movement, they are forced into making technological changes to achieve the reliability that is not provided by people such as Laurie Carmichael.

Mr Underwood: That is rubbish.

Mr McKECHNIE: It is not rubbish. Unfortunately, machines are much more reliable than some people in industries controlled by the minority Left-wing unions. Although only a minority of unions is involved, it is not necessarily a minority of employees because the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union is the largest in Australia.

From time to time we are told that we have to do certain things because that is what the International Labour Organisation wants. It is time that a few truths were told about that organisation. Often, reference is made to what this Government and the Australian Government have ratified. Spain, for instance, has ratified every proposal that has been put up because it does not care, and it does not abide by the agreements. Many countries similar to Australia have not ratified many of the proposals that this Government has ratified. Many countries ruled by dictators have signed agreements but they do not worry about them. I think it is time that we renegotiated some of the agreements into which we have entered.

I turn now to consumer protection. I listened very carefully to the member for Warwick, who said that the best protection is "Buyer beware", and I commend that to the Minister and his officers who are doing a lot of consumer protection. I am told that the program conducted in our schools is the best in Australia. This program should be stepped up so that people are encouraged to look before they buy. So often today people just sign up for something because they see a glossy advertisement or they hear about it on television.

(Time expired.)

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (8.3 p.m.): The Minister for Employment and Labour Relations has no easy task. The administration of his portfolio requires a great deal of expertise and initiative. The Minister has shown his willingness to travel throughout the countryside and listen not only to the people in the various offices of his department but also to the people in the work-place. That is very much appreciated by the people concerned. I compliment him on that particular aspect of his operations. Not long ago the Minister came to my electorate and saw the working environment of the people in the offices of his department in that area. In the very near future he will return to my electorate to open a vehicle inspection station and also to visit other areas.

The Workers Compensation Board has received some criticism, but workers' compensation cases are not easy to deal with. Approximately three years have elapsed since workers' compensation business passed from the control of the State Government Insurance Office. In introducing his Estimates, the Minister said that the board has continued to function efficiently and to give excellent service to the public. I place on record my thanks to the staff of the board in Gympie for the assistance they have given me and the excellent way in which they have undertaken their duty and solved some of the problems presented to them. The staff is a tremendous asset to the board and to the whole area.

Many people complain about back injuries and associated problems. When compensation is involved, rightly or wrongly, a back injury is one of the first complaints that many people think of. Members of the staff have the job of differentiating between those who have a genuine case and those who may be trying to put one over the board. That causes delay and difficulty for those who have genuine cases in having their case heard by the board.

Only recently a man whom I know received notification that his case is to be heard by the board. The local officers of the board know that his case is certainly genuine. Nevertheless, he has had to wait nine months for his case to be heard by the board. In the intervening period he has been receiving compensation; I have no complaint about that angle. However, he has found the delay frustrating.

Earlier I mentioned the opening of the vehicle inspection station at Gympie, which will take place early next month. In the last 12 months almost 115 000 vehicles, most of them commercial, were inspected in Queensland. Because police officers believed that the condition of certain vehicles was suspect, 2 500 additional vehicles were produced for

inspection. From one's normal observation when driving on the roads, it is obvious that a number of vehicles are in need of attention and require inspection. Probably every unroadworthy vehicle will not be sent in for inspection, but at least many of them will be presented so that defects can be identified and rectified. That will serve a tremendously useful purpose and perhaps prevent many road accidents.

In the last couple of years, unemployment in Australia has received a great deal of attention. Last month Queensland recorded a slight percentage increase in unemployment. However, very seldom does one hear that the number of people employed has actually increased. In the two years from September 1979 to September 1981, the number of people employed in Queensland has increased from 900 000 to 985 000 or by almost 10 per cent. The target for the next 10 years is the creation of 300 000 new jobs, so the figures I have just mentioned show that the Government is well on the way to achieving that goal. In fact, if that rate of increase is maintained, over 400 000 new jobs could be created in the next 10 years.

This is something that we do not hear enough of or that we seem to ignore. More people are being employed. More people are coming to the State. It is a great credit to the department, to the work-force and to the employers that, in the present environment, jobs are being created. I certainly compliment those responsible for that aspect of the employment program.

Half an hour ago an honourable member commented on industrial relations overseas, particularly in Japan. It is interesting to compare what he said with the work-force here and how people respond. I agree with his statement that the workers in Japan take part in discussions on the requirements of the work-force, and how well that is working. We asked whether there had ever been any strikes in the plant. The comment was that there was a strike in 1952 or 1953. That certainly is an indication that the workers are prepared to assist by putting their heads down and working for their own improvement.

Worker loyalty cannot be questioned in those countries. That is an area in which we can learn something. In many of the larger factories the turnover in the work-force is approximately 5 per cent. That is no more than the turnover caused by retirement. Therefore, it could be said that once workers start in a particular factory they stay there for the rest of their lives. They do that because they are satisfied; they do it also because they want to assist that plant and are interested in the work being done. They certainly do not do it because they are being neglected or in any way disadvantaged.

One matter that has not been mentioned is that in Korea young girls were employed on the factory floor. It was also of interest that there were no married women employed. They employed only single girls and paid them a reasonably small wage. I do not imagine for a moment that we would want to take on board that sort of a policy. Other countries can teach us something in some areas, but we can teach them a thing or two in other areas.

The ability of the Australian workman compares very well with that of his counterparts in other countries. Although the Japanese workers were running round the work floor in the plant—I have often seen Australians making the same machine—it cannot be said that the Japanese are any more loyal than the Australians.

Apprenticeship is a matter that has been of concern for some time. It is necessary to give a young fellow a chance of taking on the trade of his choosing. I have come across an anomaly in the Commonwealth and State laws relating to the indentures of apprentices. One young lad was working for a firm under the work experience scheme. The firm, which was only a small one, decided it wanted to take him on as an apprentice. However, because two tradesmen in the field were not employed the employer was denied the right of putting the lad on as an apprentice. The lad was very disappointed; so was the employer. There is room for sympathetic consideration in those circumstances to enable an apprentice to be employed. It is not always the fault of the department that such a situation occurs. This procedure is often laid down in an agreement between the union and the employees concerned. I have no doubt that the lad to whom I have referred was very keen and capable. He would have received the necessary basic training without two tradesmen in control of him.

The use of manual labour in rural industries frequently arises in discussions. Problems have been created in the small crops industry, particularly in bean-picking. In a recent letter to a local newspaper, a woman complained very bitterly that farmers were not

employing labour because they were too selfish. She claimed that the farmers could not be contacted between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. because they were doing the work that the bean-pickers could have been performing. Some people ignore the fact that economic considerations apply and that manual labour in the rural field is certainly not one of the most interesting jobs. Work exists for those prepared to take on that task. Because of the lack of persons wanting to engage in work in the rural area, farmers are now using machines. They have no alternative. The cost of additional machinery is no more than engaging manual labour.

The work experience program has been very much appreciated. It has provided a tremendous benefit to the work-force. As I have pointed out, it gave the lad entering the apprenticeship an indication of what is available to him, what he is capable of doing and how he would fit into that area.

There are many different ways in which door-to-door salesmen operate. One method that is an invitation to potential thieves is the distribution of leaflets to mail-boxes. If a person is away on holidays, leaflets pile up on the lawn and in the mail-box. That advertises the fact that the occupier is away. Door-to-door salesmen are creating problems for absent home owners.

I thank the Minister for his work and interest in the areas under his portfolio, particularly for his concern for country areas. I wish him well in his portfolio.

Mr McLEAN (Bulimba) (8.19 p.m.): I wish to refer to industrial diseases and work-related illnesses and the Government's approach to those problems. A tremendous need exists for the Government to play a major role in research and study into the whole field of work-related diseases and illnesses. Very little has been done over the years by employers and Governments alike to provide a safer and more enjoyable work-place. In fact, in nearly every case where unsatisfactory work methods, unsafe working practices, unsafe products and long-term work-related health hazards exist, there has been a reluctance by employers to listen to the unions' claims about the workers affected by these problems. There is now a serious need for the Government to thoroughly research and study the effects of new technology in industry.

Day by day we see that less and less labour is required and more and more modern machinery is being used. The type of stress and strain that workers in many industries face is changing constantly. Workers are facing hidden health problems that may not reveal their effects for years to come. There will be effects, so adequate checks and safeguards that are not provided now must be provided.

Stress and strain, worry, responsibility, work environment, monotonous and dreary work, shift work, complicated machinery, the pace of everyday living, and probably other causes that I have not mentioned, can lead to very serious complications, many of which do not attract workers' compensation under the present guide-lines.

Quite often we hear of workers who suffer from heart attacks, nervous breakdowns, alcoholism, premature ageing and other social problems. Many of those problems can be traced to work-related causes, but very few, if any, would be the basis for a workers' compensation claim under the present guide-lines.

Employees in the commercial section of industry, many of whom are women, complain of eye strain caused by working long hours at visual display machines. It is suggested that other health problems can arise from microwaves that are given off by these machines. It is claimed that they cause cataracts on the eye and emit unsafe levels of radiation.

How does a worker lodge a workers' compensation claim in future years for cataracts on the eye or some other complaint that is caused by exposure to unsafe levels of radiation? That worker would not have any chance whatever of success, in spite of the fact that his or her health problems could be traced back to a work-related cause. Where does the worker who is employed in a job that has an above-average amount of stress and worry associated with it find himself when he suffers from a nervous breakdown or a heart attack? He has a very slim chance of establishing that to a large extent his responsibility and job worries were a contributing factor to his ill-health. He could find himself in a position of not being able to work again or of having to find a job that is less demanding and most certainly paying less money. He could also find himself not entitled to compensation for his illness. That is unfair, especially in view of the fact that he could have continued to work for years for his employer. When he is burned out he is thrown on the scrap-heap and has to get by the best way he can.

Some workers under heavy strain and stress begin to ease their problems by drinking and subsequently become dependent on alcohol. Generally they go downhill until their work performance or their health suffers to such an extent that they find themselves out of work and, in many instances, without their family. Again the origin of their problem can be traced back to work-related causes.

Alcohol is developing into one of the major worries in industry today. The Workers Compensation Board must accept this fact and conduct research and study into the whole question.

The effect of continuous shift work on workers has been subject to very little research. There is every indication that continuous shift work is detrimental to a worker's health. I had personal contact with many shift workers in the industry in which I worked. Those who worked regular round-the-clock shifts showed definite signs of stress and strain. Many appeared to be suffering from premature ageing or nervous disorders.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Row): Order! There is too much audible conversation on my right.

Mr McLEAN: A high percentage of those workers appear to indulge in heavy drinking, and an even higher percentage appear to be suffering from personal and family problems. A large number of their complaints can be traced back to the hours of work and the stress involved. Not one of those complaints could be the ground for a compensation claim, even though it could cause the employee to lose his job or could force him out of the work-force altogether. I repeat that research and study must be carried out into all the problems that I have referred to.

The Government must adopt a positive approach to the changing work environment. Adjustments must be made to cater for people who, because of the changing work scene, fall by the wayside.

Technology is already being implemented, so allowance must be made not only for people who are put out of work but also for people who remain in employment and operate computers and other machines. Those people are the ones who have the added responsibilities and worries, and they are the ones who will suffer from some of the complaints that I have mentioned. Employers have the responsibility to make allowance for those workers. It is not good enough that employers are able to replace workers willy-nilly with machines, simply for the sake of making higher profits, without having to pay for the side-effects.

It always seems to be the unions that have to struggle to bring about improvements in workers' safety and protection. In the past a long struggle and union action were usually required before any changes were made.

As far back as the 1930s the painters union and other concerned people in Queensland undertook a campaign against the use of lead oxide in paint. Even at that time it was known that lead poisoning could cause very serious kidney and other associated diseases, and even death.

At the time, the campaign was opposed by big business, but thankfully it resulted in the eventual banning of lead bases in paint. That happened almost 50 years ago.

Since then, many problems have been unearthed. There are far too many of them to mention tonight. The best example I can think of concerns the health problems caused by the handling of asbestos. It is a well-known, proven medical fact that asbestos fibres can cause cancer in various forms in the lungs or other parts of the body. That was not always known. Unfortunately, many thousands of workers world-wide died before the dangers were revealed. Startling records from around the world show that people who have worked in asbestos mines and asbestos affected work-places have suffered an alarming percentage of asbestosis and related cancers.

Not so many years ago the dangers associated with handling asbestos were not fully known. At this very time, there are many people in Queensland who worked in factories and work-places handling that product before any safeguards were enforced. Many of them are suffering from asbestosis. Some realise that they have the disease, but the great majority do not know what is wrong with them. People who unknowingly suffer from the disease face an eventual shortening of life. Their complaint will be diagnosed by doctors when they become worse, but there is always a chance that something else will be blamed for their illness.

Asbestosis can take 15 or more years to appear after the asbestos fibre has lodged in the body. Even if a worker is diagnosed as suffering from asbestosis, it is impossible to prove that he contracted the disease during his employment.

On many occasions I have helped to unload ships carrying asbestos. It was common cargo in many Australia ports. Shipments arrived on a regular basis in Brisbane. The unloading took days on end. Before 1970, asbestos was packed in hessian bags. That meant a lot of spillage. Workers were supplied with a pair of overalls. If the cargo was very dusty they were issued with a rag mask. They spent days on end in the ship's hold, in a confined space, lifting the bags into rope slings. By the end of a shift they were covered in asbestos. It was embedded in their shoes and socks. On many occasions articles of clothing were taken home to be handled by the family.

The handling of asbestos has changed dramatically. These days a very strict safety code is enforced. Asbestos comes into the country in sealed plastic bags on pallets, which are also covered with plastic. Any spillage is cleaned up immediately and protective clothing and masks are used.

Where do the workers who worked on this cargo before the dangers were realised stand? I have previously referred to a friend of mine who is suffering from asbestosis. He is working in a restricted sense. He knows he has the disease, that it is getting worse and that it will continue to do so. He also knows that there is no cure or treatment that will help. He is not entitled to any lump sum or weekly compensation payments until he can no longer work.

Other people on the waterfront certainly have this disease. The Waterside Workers Federation has agreed with AEWL to have all waterside workers who handled asbestos years ago undergo X-rays, lung checks, and whatever else is necessary. I believe that the results will prove alarming.

The compensation board must consider the whole problem. In cases such as the one I have cited it is totally unfair for asbestosis sufferers to suffer as that man does and to be treated so badly financially, compared with workers in other parts of the world. Such cases demand a complete review of the present workers' compensation provisions. It is not good enough for the present situation to continue when it is so difficult to establish the fact that a worker has asbestosis and that it was caused by his employment many years earlier, even though he has proved that he has worked with the product.

I now want to move on to the subject of technological change, which could develop into one of the most pressing issues that any Government will face in the 1980s. Technological change is not a new development; it has been going on for a long time, but the alarming feature is the increased acceleration in the process. I believe that the rate of acceleration will continue to increase.

It is a common claim by employers and Governments alike that the reasons for mechanisation, automation and computerisation are rising labour costs. This reasoning, which is so popular today, does not take into account the fact that human effort, no matter in what country, is the reason why there is a need for any product or service. Machines do not eat butter or meat, nor do they buy motor cars. I believe that technological change has been applied in this country in an ad hoc fashion, or its introduction has not been sufficiently planned by employers or Governments. Technology has been introduced with no thought of protecting the interests of the work-force traditionally engaged in an industry. On most occasions the evidence shows that it has been introduced with the deliberate intention of prejudicing the interests of the work-force involved.

There are a number of considerations that should be taken into account by Governments before they allow the willy-nilly implementation of new technology. Firstly, consideration must be given to the environmental impact that the advent of technology will have. The investigation of technological change should include consideration of the impact of the exchange of technology between countries, the role of the multinational or supernational companies in that area and its effect on international trade patterns. This has not been done by any Australian Government up to this stage. This Government should set up the social machinery to use technology of advantage to the people which can be introduced in a way which improves their quality of life instead of detracting from it.

It seems of utmost importance to me that technology be seen in the light of its future effects on the earth's ecology and the environment which mankind has a definite responsibility to protect for future generations.

I previously cited an industry that has seen the effects of technological change, namely, the stevedoring industry. In 1956-57 the Waterside Workers Federation comprised 26 000 men; today it has fewer than 9 000 members, yet in that period productivity has increased by some 600 per cent. Having regard to increased cargo tonnages, on past figures the industry would need something like 50 000 workers. Probably the first sign of technological change that occurred on the waterfront was in the area of the bulk handling of cargoes such as grain, sugar, chemicals and phosphates. Since that time the effects of containerisation, mechanisation and improved unitised cargo-handling techniques have all been felt.

The change-over to the bulk handling of sugar is probably the best example in Queensland of technological change and its effect on employment. In 1956 the news that bulk-handling facilities would be installed at Queensland sugar ports drew a very good reaction from people in the various sugar towns. At the time it was the opinion of townspeople, newspapers and bodies such as chambers of commerce that the change to automation in the sugar industry would cure all of the industry's ills. It was claimed that reduced stevedoring costs would reduce freight charges. It was also claimed that these reduced charges would be passed back to the industry and that reduced prices would mean cheaper sugar for all, that new and larger markets would be found and that the towns would grow because of that. Of course, not all of those prophecies have proved to be correct. In fact, many sugar towns suffered very badly as a result of the change from a labour-intensive industry to one of very small labour requirements.

The Waterside Workers Federation gained much experience in those early years and became more aware of the problems associated with technological change within its industry. In the early '60s the general secretary of that union was sent to the West Coast of America to study the effects of and developments in containerisation, a concept still in its infancy at that time. After he reported, it was decided that the federation should make long-range plans to prepare for this future development in cargo handling.

The federation had to decide where it was going in this matter, as it was becoming very clear that there was a world-wide move to containerisation and that, regardless of objections, it was here to stay. It was decided that plans for the future should be laid down as to, firstly, how best to ensure a retention of proper income levels and to later expand these to gain a better share of the profits of technology; secondly, how to maintain a maximum amount of work; and, thirdly, how best to develop an industrial relations system that would in fact assist in attaining the aims mentioned in the first two points.

At that time the labour force on the waterfront was a casual one, and it was quite obvious that a casual work-force could not meet those conditions. The federal officials of the union faced a mammoth task not only in dealing with the employers but also in convincing members that such major changes were necessary.

The Federal Government set up a national conference to investigate the stevedoring industry. Agreement was eventually reached. The federation was successful in achieving some major gains, such as a 35-hour week and a pension fund that has improved to the point where the employer contributes 10 per cent of the base rate. It is probably the first industry in Australia that has equal representation with employers on most organisational and control bodies. That scheme has worked very successfully since its implementation. Voluntary redundancy payments have been greatly improved.

Although the Waterside Workers Federation has gained reasonable conditions out of the struggle, there is little doubt about the real winner. Figures on the tonnages handled by registered waterside workers now compared with those handled before the change to mechanisation and containerisation prove where the profits are going in this industry. I feel that this industry is a typical example of what is happening to profits, but it is probably not a typical example of union organisation and understanding. However, many unions do not have the organisational ability of the Waterside Workers Federation and will come out of the technological revolution in a much worse position.

I repeat: I believe that the issues and the problems that surround technological change are the most pressing ones facing the Government today.

Mr KATTER (Flinders) (8.38 p.m.): I wish to say a few words about one of the more pressing problems facing Australia today. It really arises from a misunderstanding of how the economy works. I find it lamentable that so many people in powerful and important positions in Australia today constantly say that the money supply is causing inflation in Australia and that it was an excessive money supply that caused inflation in Australia in the Whitlam years. The logic of that is that if the money supply is restrained, inflation will be restrained.

There is a very significant co-relationship between movements in the Consumer Price Index and cost pressures from labour demands, that is, demands by unions for higher wages. I shall take the years from 1970 to 1972. In those years, the Consumer Price Index rose by 5 per cent, 6 per cent and 8 per cent. There was an increase of roughly 1 per cent to 2 per cent in each of those years leading up to the election of Mr Gough Whitlam's Government in 1972.

The increase in the average weekly wage in the same period was from 9.3 per cent to 14.9 per cent—a fairly moderate increase when one considers that from the 1972-73 year to the 1973-74 year the average weekly wage rate doubled. In the latter year, an astronomically high increase in wages was recorded. That was the same year in which inflation in Australia took off. In three years it rose from 8 per cent to 14 per cent, and then from 14 per cent to nearly 17 per cent.

Mr Wright: You are distorting the facts.

Mr KATTER: I am not distorting the facts. I do not think the honourable member would argue against me that from 1972-73, which was the year in which Gough Whitlam was elected and the year in which inflation was 8 per cent, to 1974-75 inflation increased to 17 per cent. I do not think he would question those figures.

Mr Wright: Have a look at what McMahon did in 1971.

Mr KATTER: I am pleased that I am getting some debate from the ALP on this issue, because it is fundamental to the control of the Australian economy. The honourable member is saying that McMahon loosened the money supply in his years and that Gough Whitlam was left holding the economic baby conceived by McMahon.

Mr Wright: I am not saying that.

Mr KATTER: I thought that was what the honourable member was saying.

Mr Wright: I was in Rockhampton when you admitted what McMahon had done, so it is rather strange for you to stand here now and say what you have said.

Mr KATTER: I was kind enough to take the honourable member's interjection, but, as far as I can see, he has done nothing but agree with me. I will not argue the point with him on that.

If one draws a graph of wage rises in Australia and another graph of inflation in Australia, it is too much of a coincidence that the two graphs are almost identical; they move in tandem.

I will now be quite critical of the Fraser Government. In the last year of Gough Whitlam's Government, when the then Opposition was trying to become the Government, Mr Fraser said that it was the wage push that was causing inflation in Australia. Once elected, the Fraser Government changed its tack completely and said that it was money supply that was causing the problem, that all that had to be done was to restrain the money supply and the other problems would go away.

Unfortunately the graphs prove very graphically, if honourable members will excuse the pun, that that is not true. There is no correlation between the movement of inflation and the control of the money supply, certainly nothing like the tandem graphs of the movement of wages and the inflationary figures.

The control of the money supply has had less of an effect on inflation than the wage push of the trade union movement throughout Australia. I do not say that in any way in condemnation of the Australian union movement. Union officials are elected for the primary purpose of increasing wherever and whenever possible the income of their members.

If they do not perform that function satisfactorily and successfully, then they are replaced. A horse is not trained to gallop only to be belted when it suddenly gallops across the paddock. If a union official is employed to obtain wage increases, not unnaturally he can be expected to negotiate hard and long to get them.

One might ask how Australia is to break this inflationary spiral, the net result of which has been that the ordinary worker in Australia has become disenchanted. Every wage increase he has received has been gobbled up by inflation. Because he sees the wages/inflationary spiral as a dog chasing its tail and he knows that ultimately he will get nothing out of it, the ordinary worker has become increasingly disenchanted with the drive for increased wages.

In my opinion, the real problem lies with discontent on the work-floor. To a very large degree, the Australian economy is still in a type of wage-slavery condition, if I may use that term, in which a boss gives the orders and the employee, if he wishes to collect his wage cheque at the end of the week, takes those orders.

When I was working under an employer I could never see why companies did not allow more participation in decision-making. I can remember when I was working at Mount Isa Mines that we had a compulsory half-hour every fortnight for a safety meeting. At one of those meetings I brought up the fact that I had two jobs—one early in the morning and one later in the morning—when I had to climb eight storeys on foot and I was spending between half and three-quarters of an hour wasting my time walking up stairs. If someone else did the job at the top while I did the job at the bottom, it would save my climbing those stairs and the company would get so much extra work out of me every week. I was playing sport at the time and I quite enjoyed the exercise, but I thought I was making a contribution to the prosperity of the company by taking that point. I was told in no uncertain terms by the ganger in charge of my shift that it was a safety meeting and we were not to raise anything like that. I said, "Hold on. I am not saying it for my own good. Quite frankly I quite enjoy the walk. I need the exercise. The only reason I am saying it is to save the company a bit of money. If you don't want to hear that, well and good." It is that sort of attitude which immediately alienates the employee. He suddenly feels he is of very little significance. Although he may not take it out on the company at that particular time, if he is given an opportunity on which to take it out on the company and the boss at some future date, he will most certainly take it.

One of the ways of overcoming that alienation is not by putting workers on the board—I will come to that issue later; the average employee would be completely lost if he was suddenly thrown upon a board and would look on it as just a con—but by giving them some sort of decision-making in their place of work. That is vitally important, and I think that enlightened companies will come to that view as time goes on. I can see no reason why it can't work and won't work very successfully. It takes some of the steam out of the conflict between employee and employer.

I return to the matter of the full-time, paid union official. He is elected to do everything humanly possible to raise the wages of employees. Not unnaturally, that brings conflict and a loss of man-hours through union disruption. On many occasions, it is management disruption. That brings me to the point that, where there is a full-time union official, I can see no reason in the world why he cannot be brought in at some sort of boardroom level. It is interesting that in Europe the more radical unions regard a board position for union officials as a great con by the capitalist classes. I think that they could make out a fairly strong case in that regard. However, I would have enough faith in that system to say that it is a vastly improved system on the sort of structures we are working within now. The fears of management and ownership have never proved to be real fears in the European experience. The fact is, of course, that far fewer man-hours are lost in West Germany, where it is compulsory to have a board structure which incorporates union representation, than we lose in Australia under what is presumably a vastly superior situation from the point of view of the ownership class, if I could use that expression.

I put these points forward because I like our Government and our way of life. We are guaranteeing not only its future but also its prosperity by making these people an integral part of the company. To a very large degree the answer lies in ownership

by the employees of shares in the firm in which they work. I very much commend the comments made in my own party on numerous occasions along those lines, particularly those made recently by Mr Doug Anthony.

By thinking along those lines we are getting at the underlying problems that cause the conflicts that result in the constant wages push which is driving up inflation in Australia. If we could remove that cause of inflation, we would not need a restricted money supply. We are not restraining the drive of the more powerful unions such as the Colliery Employees Union. What we are doing instead is forcing the Federal Government into restraining the money supply, because that is the only weapon at its disposal to restrain inflation in Australia.

I pay a great tribute to the union movement throughout Australia for coming to the realisation that to constantly push for ridiculous wage increases, such as those that occurred under Whitlam, can only erode the Australian economy and result in a loss to workers in the long term. It is important that we come to grips with this problem and remove one of the great underlying causes of inflation in the Australian economy—not money supply but pressure for higher wages. If we can do that, we can remove the tight money supply and, by allowing money to flow into the economy, create new mining towns and thousands of new jobs.

The biggest increase in real incomes in Australia occurred during the time of greatest expansion of our economy, which was during the mining boom in Australia. It was a truism that the workers in Australia had the greatest freedom and individual power that they had ever enjoyed in Australian history. A song by one of our great country and western singers contains the words, "I think that I'll snatch it and go far away, whenever I feel that the boss has not given me enough pay." That very much captures the sort of atmosphere that prevailed during that period. Bosses and companies had to be careful and the workers really had a freedom that they have not enjoyed since the collapse of the mining boom in Australia seven or eight years ago.

If we could inject a little more money into the Australian economy and rid ourselves of the restrictive monetary policy that applies in Queensland, we could have an absolute boom in Queensland which would give the people the freedom and power that is so essential if they are to enjoy the sort of Australia enjoyed by so many people who are happily self-employed. I ask the Minister to take these views into consideration in future deliberations. I know that on many occasions he has expressed sentiments similar to mine. I support the Minister very strongly in those views and will most certainly do so in the future.

Mr KAUS (Mansfield) (8.52 p.m.): In entering the debate on the Estimates of the Department of Employment and Labour Relations I thank the Minister and the officers of his department for the assistance they have rendered to me and my constituents in the problems we have encountered.

I have in my possession an article published by the Industrial Relations Society. On 15 October 1977, the previous Minister (Mr Campbell) attended a convention conducted by that society. He spoke about Big Brother in government. The theme of the conference was: "Will 1978 be the year of Big Brother?" The Minister referred to "Big Brother Government", and he said—

"If we are talking about Big Brother the answer is yes. If we are talking about Big Brother individual union organisations the answer is yes. So if we take it as read that there are many Big Brothers with totally different outlooks, objectives and responsibilities—or lack of responsibilities—I feel this conference should examine them. The Queensland Government happily acknowledges it is a Big Brother and that its fraternal interests will continue."

He continued—

"However, there are certain basic principles which underpin these interests, not least being a mandate or trust to govern for all people, or suffer the electoral consequences. This does not seem to be common to all associations or groups . . . The first is that we recognise industrial relations . . ."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr KAUS: The first principle enunciated was that we recognise industrial relations as the key to economic advancement and to a satisfying personal life for those who work as employees or for themselves or for their shareholders. The second is that the welfare of the State and of Queenslanders imposes a charge on all connected with industrial relations to act responsibly, enterprisingly and progressively. The third is that the Government must adopt philosophies which marry practical advance with the welfare of man. The fourth is to aim at the ultimate—the expanding economy with industrial stability, the maximum in living standards and working conditions that our economy can stand, primary and secondary industries marching forward in efficient consonance, full development of our resources by a skilled work-force and a standing of respect among all people.

The Minister must be the conciliator. He has to talk to the unions when problems arise. No doubt, with his experience he will be quite understanding and is ready to negotiate and talk.

Recently a well-known economic forecaster and philosopher Herman Khan visited Australia in the company of a Mr Thomas Pepper. They were here long enough to write a book about Australia. Its title is "Will She Be Right?". That, of course, is a reference to the classic Australian cliché, "She'll be right, mate."

In the opening passages the authors refer to the fact that in Sydney they saw a car-bumper sticker stating, "I'd rather be sailing." I have not seen the sticker, but most of us would agree that it expresses the prevalent attitude of wanting to engage in leisure and recreation instead of working.

We in Australia enjoy the highest standard of living in the world. Although the Government can take a good deal of credit for this, it cannot take all of it. Australia has benefited from an incredibly rich endowment of minerals and other natural resources. For most of the year almost all our populated regions enjoy a very good climate and good weather conditions. The Government, of course, cannot take credit for that; it can, however, take credit for having nurtured the environment. The people who live in our cities are provided with excellent facilities. The situation has improved greatly over the past 26 years. I shall quote a few figures, to illustrate my point. In 1955 it was necessary for a person to work 2 200 hours in order to obtain enough money to buy a car; in 1980-81 he had to work 1 177 hours. In 1955 he had to work for 54 months to obtain enough money to buy a house; in 1980-81 he had to work only 48 months. In 1955 he had to work six hours to obtain enough money to buy a pair of shoes; in 1981 he had to work only five hours.

I have been presenting the facts in relation to working hours in certain years. The present position is due in substantial measure to efforts made over the years, to hard work by some of us, to the adoption of new technology, and to prudent government for most of the time. It is also due to Queensland's good fortune as a State.

In that context, I refer to the State's huge mineral resources that have created wealth and to the massive overseas demand for minerals, particularly from Japan, and to a lesser degree from Korea and the EEC, whose reserves have been depleted. Queensland has earned considerable export income, which has enabled the Government to improve living standards. That improvement has been achieved relatively easily.

The argument that working hours can be reduced to a minimum standard of 35—

Mr Prest: Can you tell us something about the Belmont Rifle Range? It is more interesting.

Mr KAUS: That is to come. There is plenty of time for that. Any criticism that I make is not directed only at the unions or union members, because their attitude is common throughout the community. All honourable members should examine carefully their attitude to the work ethic and the rewards associated with it.

I have no doubt that the country could function quite adequately with shorter working hours. However, that is not the whole story. We live in close proximity to South East Asia. Indeed, Australia is the closest highly developed and industrialised nation—perhaps with the exception of Japan—to an area that encompasses about half the world's population. A very great proportion of that population lives in what Australians regard as appalling conditions.

Additionally, this country has its own poor and underprivileged. Surely we all have an obligation to share our good fortune with our less fortunate neighbours and to do all that we can to improve the lot of those who are less fortunate in this country. Indeed, we have

an obligation to do that on an even wider scale, embracing the underprivileged of the world. One can be sure that that will not be accomplished by reducing hours of work and indulging in more leisure. I stress that I direct my comments to everyone, not just to the unionists who are agitating for shorter working hours.

Does our affluent community genuinely need a shorter working week at present? More importantly, can our economy, which rises or falls on its ability to compete with other trading nations, afford it?

I have a few figures that I will put before the Committee. These are the facts: We hear much talk these days of a 35-hour week replacing the 40-hour week. It is pure fiction to suppose that we have a 40-hour week now. In any year, Australians can take off almost two weeks of working days for statutory holidays, that is, for Christmas, Easter, Melbourne Cup, and so on. Many people in the work-force are allowed four weeks' annual leave, although some are allowed five weeks. They also have two weeks' sick leave—and some people take it, whether they are sick or not. There is also an average of at least two weeks' long service leave. This adds up to nearly 10 weeks a year, or almost a fifth of the average Australian's working time. Thus the average working week is, in effect, already 32 hours and not 40, and we are therefore talking of reducing it to 27 hours a week. Does that sound reasonable?

From time to time we see statistics setting out the various facets of the Australian economy and the Australian way of life. Depending on the point of view of the person presenting the statistics, he can show that everything in the garden is lovely or that we are rapidly on our way to perdition. Tonight I thought I would cite a few statistics about which there can be little argument. I think members would agree that we cannot be too proud of them. For instance, in 1979-80 the average weekly wage in Australia was lower than the figure in the United States, Japan and West Germany. Against that, Australians worked fewer hours to earn their wages than their counterparts in those countries.

In the USA, the average working week is 40 hours, in Japan 43 hours, and in West Germany 46 hours. And, as I have noted already, on top of their not insubstantial wages, Australian workers enjoy probably the most generous range of additional benefits—long service, annual, and sick leave, public holidays, holiday leave loading and so on—of any industrialised country in the world.

Despite this situation, the productivity of Australian workers compares poorly on an international basis. The latest available figures show that in 1978 our productivity per worker was 11 per cent below that of Japanese workers, 26 per cent less than in the United States, and a massive 36 per cent less than in West Germany.

Obviously, this worrying state of affairs is related to our poor international record for working time lost through industrial disputes. Here the actual figures are worth quoting. Between 1973 and 1977, for every 100 Australian workers there were 147 working days lost each year through strikes. In the USA the comparable figure was 110 days lost, in Japan 25 days, and in West Germany only three days.

The average Australian is well known overseas as being of an independent frame of mind and not tolerating discipline easily. This, of course, is one of our virtues, but it also is the basis of one of our problems. I, for one, would hate to see us lose our national characteristic of independence, but how much better it would be if, combined with this, we could exhibit substantially more self-discipline. We do this in times of national crisis but these are few and far between.

It would be far overstating the case to say that currently there is any situation resembling a national crisis. Still, I think it can be said that the whole world is going through a more difficult period at present than it has since World War II. The genesis of the problem is no doubt the so-called oil crisis and the sky-rocketing price of liquid fuels.

I now want to quote from an excellent publication called "Facts". The article states—

"While millions of human beings, many not far from Australia, are struggling just to survive, some Australians will cease work at the drop of a hat to try to raise their already high living standards still higher, or in pursuit of more leisure time. Many others are intent on evading their proper share of taxes. What kind of a people are we?"

Do we deserve this country with all its privileges and opportunities, when people in so many parts of the world are being subjected to unspeakable horrors? While we choose to stop work and to seek more leisure, Communist forces are pushing toward the Indian Ocean and the South China Seas, ever closer to the Australian Continent. Does this ominous fact make no impression upon us?

We can deserve to retain this wonderful, lucky country only if we work for it as well as for ourselves, only if we are responsible, strong and compassionate and aware of, and concerned with, what is happening in the wider world."

I appreciate being given the opportunity to say a few words about the Minister and his officers and the assistance that they have given my constituents and me.

Mr HANSEN (Maryborough) (9.11 p.m.): The Department of Employment and Labour Relations is very important. That has been acknowledged by most of the speakers who have taken part in the debate. I have always believed that much more is achieved by evolution than by revolution, and that is one of the vast differences between the Australian Labor Party and the other political parties.

Tonight I was pleased to hear the honourable member for Flinders speak about worker participation, that is, having workers on the boards of various companies. This practice has been tried in many countries. Even the Federal Department of Industrial Relations has issued pamphlets on this scheme and has claimed that it is part of the Government's policy. Yet I have heard many members of the Liberal and National parties in this Chamber decry the suggestion that workers should be represented on the boards of companies.

I fully support worker participation because not all the brains are found in management, and the Minister's predecessor acknowledged that. Misunderstanding often arises when workers believe that they have not been told everything that is going on. They see certain things happening in the work-place and they are able to tell management about them. While some managements do not altogether accept worker participation, they acknowledge that many good ideas come from the factory floor. I am pleased that at least one member of the Government acknowledges that much can be said for worker participation.

Quite a deal has been said in the debate about the 35-hour week. The objections that have been raised tonight and on other occasions are similar to those that were raised when the 44-hour week and the 40-hour week were introduced. It was said that we could not afford them. Of course we could afford them. We have reached the stage where we must accept the reality of a shorter working week. Some honourable members have referred to advances in technology. The honourable member for Lytton pointed out how technology will change our lives.

Mr Moore: How do you put stones along a river-bank with technology? How do you erect fence posts with technology?

Mr HANSEN: Machines do the job much quicker than previously. Perhaps it is not the computer technology that was referred to by the honourable member for Lytton, but it is still technology.

Because of the inroads of technology, very few jobs are available for unskilled people, who should be retrained. To a large extent that sort of program has not occurred in Australia, and much more can be done. Retraining was talked about 20 years ago when technology made inroads into the jobs of blue-collar workers. Today those most affected are white-collar workers—the people in banks, insurance and other offices. The Federated Clerks' Union is taking note of that.

Industrial disputes are a problem within the ambit of the Minister's portfolio. The previous Minister, Mr Campbell, maintained that many disputes could have been avoided if the employers or their representatives had been made aware of matters and had been prepared to discuss them with the workers involved. A great deal can be achieved by discussion. Naturally not everybody will be satisfied. People should be prepared to make some concessions. Discussion makes both the employer and the employee aware of the problems.

The abandonment of wage indexation has caused problems. Between 1975 and 1981, partial indexation resulted in a loss of \$16.40 in a fitter's wage. Because the increase in the Consumer Price Index for the June 1981 quarter was not taken into account, he lost another \$4. That amounts to a loss of some \$20 a week in the relativity between wages and prices from 1975 to 1981. Taking into account the abolition of Medibank as it was originally and the subsequent cost of health insurance and health services, the loss to workers has been much greater than the \$20 to which I referred.

The Minister is also responsible for the Consumer Affairs Bureau, which acts as a watch-dog for the community. However, it is very difficult to protect people from themselves. When they think that they can get a bargain, it is very hard to convince them that it might not be one. When they later find faults with the product, they take their complaints to the Consumer Affairs Bureau.

The honourable member for Isis mentioned a long-established Bundaberg furniture store which opened a branch at Hervey Bay. In conjunction with the opening of that branch the store undertook a large television advertising campaign which offered furniture at half price. A number of people took advantage of what they thought was a wonderful offer. Such offers are always open to suspicion, but the people were convinced that they could buy furniture at half price. They made payments and expected delivery of their goods at Christmas, for some other special occasion or when further supplies became available, only to find that the company suddenly closed its doors and the owners disappeared. In the Maryborough area the Consumer Affairs Bureau received at least five complaints in this regard.

In some cases officers of the Consumer Affairs Bureau have incorrectly told people that they would have to take action to recover their money as it was a civil matter. That may or may not be right, but the Consumer Affairs Bureau should keep tabs on those who operate in that way. The proprietors change the names of their companies as often as they change their shirts. A number of members have spoken about that. If the Consumer Affairs Bureau was made aware of what was happening it would be in a position to guard consumers against such people, to some extent. The fact that they had records with the Consumer Affairs Bureau might act as some type of deterrent, if there is any sort of deterrent at all for people of that sort.

The member for Warwick mentioned weights and measures and agreed that sometimes a bit of dirt creates a problem. Anyone who has bought potatoes, particularly those picked in the wet, would agree that soil is being bought by the gram.

I compliment the Consumer Affairs Bureau for what it is doing. However, I think that more can be done in the fight against wrongful advertising. For instance all sorts of claims are made about what can be done with hair restorer.

Mr Moore: You don't need hair restorer. What do you want hair restorer for?

Mr HANSEN: I don't know whether the member for Windsor has tried it or whether the Minister has, but I think that the claims need to be looked into very closely.

Dr Lockwood: If you read the health papers put out by the Director-General of Health, you will see that there are quite a deal of controls on the product you have mentioned.

Mr HANSEN: I see advertisements in the weekly and week-end newspapers, but I have always had some doubt about the efficacy of the products.

Mr Moore: You have a full head of hair on your head, so it must be pretty good.

Mr HANSEN: I have never used it. If anyone has, I would be glad to hear from him.

Mr Moore: I have used it all my life and I can recommend it.

Mr HANSEN: I don't think that is any recommendation. The member for Cooroora spoke about workers' compensation. He complimented the Minister because the Workers Compensation Board had not seen fit to increase the premiums. Queensland can be grateful

that workers' compensation is handled by one company. I would not like to see that monopoly broken. It is controlled through a State instrumentality. In other States workers' compensation insurance is handled by any number of companies. It is costly to the employer to insure, and all sorts of problems arise in obtaining the compensation from the insurance company. Examples have been given during the debate of people being shortchanged and having problems even with the Workers Compensation Board. Nevertheless, I believe that the board does a good job. I have always found the staff and the board and the people associated with it to be very helpful.

The member for Cooroora spoke about portability and making compensation transferable from one State to another. I am not quite sure whether legislation would be necessary to do that. If we are talking about making compensation transferable, why not long service leave and sick leave entitlement? I believe that there are problems with the entitlement to sick pay, particularly in an industry such as the building industry, where there is difficulty in maintaining continuity of work with an employer long enough to qualify for long service leave. I personally know of many instances of people in all sorts of industries having left behind eight or 10 weeks' sick leave, or more, because they had regarded it as an insurance cover against a protracted period of illness. That applies more to older people who fear that they have more chance of becoming ill or suffering accidents.

Many people believe that they should maintain their sick leave entitlements. I know of persons who have left their employment with an entitlement to eight or ten weeks' sick leave that had already been taken into account by the company in its costing arrangements. Within a few weeks of commencing with other employers, those persons have become sick and have had little or no sick leave entitlement. Something should be done about that.

The transfer of sick leave entitlements would discourage the absenteeism that has been referred to by various members. Some people say, "I have accumulated sick leave, so I will take a sickie. Why should I leave it behind if anything happens?" I note that some companies have been prepared to acknowledge this and at least refund part of a worker's entitlement when he leaves after lengthy service. I would like to see a provision making it mandatory that long service and sick leave entitlements be transferred in an industry where there are changes in employment on a fairly regular basis.

Mr HARPER (Auburn) (9.27 p.m.): In introducing these Estimates, the Minister mentioned the major initiatives being taken by his department in reviewing the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. He said, "It is in need of critical examination." I agree wholeheartedly, and we in Government believe that the Minister is on the right track.

One of the essentials in any critical examination is an acceptance of the need for meaningful communication in the field of industrial conciliation and arbitration. A need exists for a worthwhile grievance-handling procedure to avoid unnecessary confrontation between employer and employee. Most importantly, there is a need to give the whole workforce a chance to take part in decisions that are made on their livelihoods and to assist in ironing out problems before they get out of hand.

I agree with the suggestion of the member for Southport, who spoke earlier in the debate, that union officials should also lose their pay when they goad their members into taking strike action. Very often the union officials appear to be the only ones who are receiving money. The workers, who in many cases did not want to go out on strike, are the ones who lose. Their families must suffer the inconvenience of having neither pay nor the privileges of work.

The policy of the National Party is to avoid strikes. I pay tribute to the members of our Industrial Relations Committee who developed a very worthwhile grievance-handling procedure. I pay special tribute to Joe Patti, the chairman of the committee at that time. He consulted responsible unionists and officials of the Labor movement and held discussions with them that assisted the committee in formulating a very worthwhile industrial relations policy.

In many, if not most cases, worthwhile discussion could take place with good will on both sides. I stress that it must not be on only one side. In many cases, of course, on the side of employees good will is not shown by people whose purpose is only to preserve their own positions in the union movement.

Australia simply cannot afford to have the industrial reputation that it presently has developed. It is not one of which we should be proud. This country is regarded as an unreliable supplier. Such a reputation is to the detriment of the work-force and of the nation as a whole. We must realise that Australia is not simply the boss or a multinational corporation. Australia is made up of people like you and me—people who work together and who should be entitled to work together. It is the Government's responsibility to ensure that people who want to work have the opportunity to work. I commend the Minister for indicating that he will consider this matter.

I turn now to the Industry and Commerce Training Commission. The Minister referred to it and to the fact that it has the responsibility to provide, monitor and oversee training in order that sufficient qualified personnel are available to meet the needs of the State. I appreciate the assistance given by the Minister in sorting out a couple of problems that threatened to deny young people in my electorate the right to work in the field of their choice, but I am worried when I see an indication of reluctance to meet situations as they develop.

Only last Sunday three employers in a town in my electorate, each of whom had stated that he was prepared to employ a second apprentice, were told that they should employ one apprentice between the three of them. That is totally unrealistic. Such an attitude is not in the best interests of the Government, nor does it coincide with the Minister's announcement that the Industry and Commerce Training Commission has instituted a door-knock campaign in industry with a view to increasing the intake of apprentices. Certainly we should be encouraging employers to employ more apprentices. I do not suggest that the number be reduced. I am sure that when this matter is brought to the Minister's attention he will see that the problem is overcome. However, it should not be necessary in the first place to bring such matters to his attention. There is a need to have an overall policy of encouraging employers to engage apprentices and to train them in the fields that they desire to enter.

The officers and the Minister must be congratulated on efforts that have resulted in achieving a record number of persons commencing apprenticeships in 1980-81. I commend decisions that have enabled some persons who do not possess the highest academic abilities to enter the trade of their choice and to take part in an apprenticeship scheme. Of course, high academic ability does not always go hand in hand with practical ability.

I suggest that the Minister should not worry too much about persons who, upon the completion of their apprenticeship in one trade, enter another. I fully appreciate the costs of training involved, but I am quite sure that those persons become responsible members of the community and the work-force. It is important that we promote job satisfaction as well as encourage job training.

There is a great need for increased productivity, so the Government should do all it can to avoid strike action that reduces productivity. It is only with increased productivity that the nation's economy will be restored to the stable situation that existed in the pre-Whitlam era.

I turn now to the Workers Compensation Board and the review of premium classifications that is being undertaken by the board. It is commendable that Queensland premium rates are accepted generally as being the lowest in Australia. But the review of premium classifications does not help small industries in rural areas. For instance, the premium payable by a small country service station employing three to five people is related to the highest-risk category of employee. The Workers Compensation Board should do more to encourage small businesses in country areas rather than penalise them to such an extent.

The Port Curtis Dairy Association factory at Monto is in a similar situation. In its normal operations it has long produced ice for the community. Although it will still manufacture ice for its own needs, because of a Workers Compensation Board decision it will be forced to discontinue supplying ice to the community. Thanks to a bureaucratic decision—and I use that term reluctantly—the factory will be unable to provide ice for the community. This is one small instance of bureaucracy running riot. I draw it to the Minister's attention in the hope that, for the benefit of the whole community, such problems can be avoided.

I am very appreciative of a reassessment that was made, after representations, concerning a business in a town in my electorate, but I repeat that a total policy review is warranted.

Because of your earlier ruling, Mr Miller, I will restrict my remarks on trading hours. I believe that as many people as possible should enjoy a day of rest and relaxation. I congratulate the Minister on his action to date, and the positive action that I believe he will take in the future, to protect the right of employees to enjoy relaxation particularly on Sunday and on Saturday.

The inspection of new motor vehicles is placing an imposition on many people. I understand the need to inspect second-hand vehicles, but the centralised, albeit partially decentralised vehicle inspections are detrimental in that they create unnecessary inconvenience and costs for people in rural areas who may have to take their vehicles 200 to 300 miles for inspection. These inspections should certainly not be necessary for new vehicles. A police officer should be capable of inspecting a new vehicle. Better arrangements should be made for the inspection of second-hand or older vehicles in country areas. I acknowledge the need to ensure the roadworthiness of vehicles, particularly heavy commercial vehicles, but it should be made easier to arrange inspections in rural areas. I draw the Minister's attention to the need to extend consumer protection to all people, including farmers. It is important that the protection afforded by the Government to consumers at large be extended to all people who work the land and are in need of the protection that has been given so satisfactorily to others.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would remind the honourable member that the Minister requires 15 minutes in which to reply.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Employment and Labour Relations) (9.40 p.m.): I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate and for the complimentary remarks that have been passed which I interpret as compliments to my departmental officers who do the leg work involved in implementing Government policy as well as the departmental interpretation of legislative provisions. We are fortunate to have officers of the calibre of the Under Secretary and the senior officers of the department with whom I have most contact. The public are indeed fortunate to have dedicated public servants who do so much work that is necessary to smoothly run the affairs of this State.

I do not intend to deal specifically with matters raised during the debate. Letters will be sent to individual members dealing with queries they have made. It is my practice in the handling of Estimates to circulate the "Hansard" record of the debate to departmental officers and to ask them to comment on any matters which concern them. Some points concern officers in decentralised and provincial areas of the State, and they will have to be informed about what has been said in the Chamber. I will see that they are acquainted with the debate which is, after all, an examination of the workings of the department since the last occasion on which the Estimates were debated.

A number of matters have been raised with which I intend to deal in principle, because they are of some concern. Although I have said that the officers of the department have continued to work at a very high standard, I am disturbed to hear that a number of members have had problems with the Workers Compensation Board. The board has to deal with thousands of claims. I have taken the opportunity to visit most of the offices of the Workers Compensation Board throughout the State, and I must say that I am impressed with the quality of the service that the board provides. But taking into account the fact that many of the board's clients are themselves in some distress and face special problems, it does happen from time to time that there is some degree of provocation or some misunderstanding, and very often that can be revealed by an intemperate response. I regret that that occurs, and I will ensure that it is reduced to a minimum. Nevertheless, I would say that in the vast majority of cases problems are handled very well indeed; courteously and promptly.

To give members some idea of the amount of work undertaken by the board, I point out that in Brisbane in October alone there were 8 000 cheques issued in response to workers' compensation claims, and the number is increasing. In fact, in Brisbane in the four-month period ending October there were 16 000 new claims. Those claims are

increasing, not because of unsafe conditions in the community but simply because the work-force is increasing phenomenally, and this is resulting in greater exposure to risk situations.

The percentage of claims paid at the end of one week is 54 per cent; at the end of two weeks it is 77 per cent; at the end of three weeks it is 87 per cent; at the end of four weeks it is 91 per cent and at the end of five weeks it is 95 per cent. So there is only a very small percentage of claims outstanding at the end of five weeks, and they probably pose special problems requiring some special investigation.

Claims that require referral to the Medical Board before any benefits can be paid are usually of a complex medical nature. It is necessary to have these claims investigated from both the lay and medical points of view, particularly the medical, and they are given priority for appointment with the Medical Board over other claimants already in receipt of benefits.

It is the policy of the board to inform claimants, when investigation could be prolonged and when in all probability the claim would be determined by a medical board, that, pending a determination of their claim, they should apply for sickness benefits through the Department of Social Security.

Mr Yewdale: That is not a common practice.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: It must happen frequently because of the number of complicated claims that are outstanding and subject to some dispute.

Mr Yewdale: My information is that they are not advised that way in a number of cases.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: If that is the honourable member's belief, I shall certainly bring that matter to the attention of the General Manager of the Workers Compensation Board.

In regard to the possibility of establishing country boards—the difficulty is to get on those boards people who have not had previous medical contact with the claimant. In most of the provincial areas the boards would be composed of people, one or more of whom would have had medical contact with the claimant and would therefore be debarred from being on such a board. That creates special problems in establishing boards in, say, Rockhampton and Townsville where it is most likely that the people with whom the claimant has been in touch would be on the board. However, I shall examine that suggestion in more detail to see whether it is practicable to implement it.

Members are appointed by the Governor in Council to medical boards for up to three years, and the appointments terminate on a common date. Usually the people who serve on medical boards are the top medicos in their various specialities. That creates one of the difficulties in establishing an appeal system, which several members mentioned. I am looking at the Act, and if it is possible to establish an appeal system—it would probably have to be an appeal to the District Court—I shall certainly consider it. At the moment there is no appeal from the decisions of the medical boards. I am aware of individual cases in which people feel aggrieved that there is no appeal system.

The problem of back injuries is a constant worry. The Orthopaedic Board determines the cases of long-term back injuries. Such cases are referred to the board for determination after a claimant has been on compensation for three to four years. These are subjective problems and very often they are difficult to diagnose. Many people are not able to clearly describe the symptoms and a number of examinations are required. There is no provision in the table of injuries to pay a permanent partial disability for a spinal condition. Upon determination of a long-term back injury, the Orthopaedic Board will either cease payments, which it does in a number of cases, or continue weekly compensation payments, with an option open to the General Manager of the Workers Compensation Board to finalise a claim by way of a lump-sum payment. The General Manager, except on a few rare occasions, elects to finalise the claims, which

usually makes the claimants happy. The attitude of the Orthopaedic Board is that it determines each claim on its individual merits after considering all relevant medical evidence.

In the general area of claims, the question of asbestosis was raised by several members. Queensland was the first State in Australia to recognise asbestosis as a disability in the work-place. I believe that occurred in 1944.

A number of members raised the subject of premiums. I do not intend to go into it in detail, but there has been a review of the premiums. Quite a few changes have been made. Some premiums have been increased and others have been decreased.

The honourable member for Warwick has brought certain matters to my attention. They have been reviewed and, as a result of his representations, we are getting some advice.

I will have the other wide-ranging matters relating to workers' compensation examined. In the year ended 30 June 1981, 91 300 new claims were filed. For the current year we expect about 100 000 claims. Honourable members must realise that, inevitably, circumstances will arise in which people dispute decisions. Of course, as soon as that happens, many of them approach their member of Parliament in an endeavour to have their case reconsidered. All of the matters that are brought to the attention of members, who refer them to the general manager, are seriously examined to see if all matters have been attended to in the proper way. Unfortunately, that is not an appeal, as some people think it is. All that can be done is to see that everything has been done in accordance with the rules and policies.

The honourable member for Mt Isa raised the question of the premiums paid by chiropractors and physiotherapists. He may have overlooked that there could well be a general bonus applicable to those professions and therefore those people would enjoy refunds on the premiums that they pay.

The portability of workers' compensation between the States was raised by several members. That is a subject for discussion at the very first meeting of Workers Compensation Boards of Australia, which Queensland will host in Brisbane next week. I have no doubt that that item will remain on the agenda for some time, certainly until the possibility of reciprocity and portability is sorted out. If the various authorities apply themselves to the problem, I am sure that it will be achieved in due course.

Mention has been made of the number of people who do not work under awards. I am concerned about that. Some examples are people involved in fruit-picking, strawberry-picking, letter-box distribution of literature and jobs of that nature. I have indicated that there is to be a review of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. In that review, it might be possible to consider what might be termed award-free working conditions and ensure there is no exploitation of labour and that minimum conditions will apply to people in these categories.

Mr Davis: When will that see the light of day?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The honourable member is very critical. The fact is that no review of that Act has been undertaken for 20 years. A number of submissions have been received. I was one of the principal people involved in the review that was carried out 20 years ago. That review has stood the test of time extremely well. In fact, my old files indicate exactly how much was changed at that time. That was the first attempt to review the labour legislation and it was very successful. There are very few major suggestions for amendment in the recent review of the legislation. I hope to have that available for the Assembly this time next year.

Queensland has the most up-to-date and practical system of industrial tribunals in Australia. It is the envy of other States. Ordinary matters can be filed in the registry with very little delay. Unless there is a degree of urgency about them, answers to the applications are called for within three weeks. The matters are then set down for hearing as soon as the applicant requests it. A member of the commission is available to hear these matters. The system is so impressive that some matters have been heard promptly in the State commission when matters of a similar nature have been delayed

for some days in the Federal tribunal because of the unavailability of a commissioner. I point out that Queensland has a very efficient industrial relations system through the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The commission supervises many awards and agreements which are policed by the industrial magistracy and inspectors throughout the State.

At 9.55 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 8 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Employment and Labour Relations.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

	\$
Employment and Labour Relations—	
Chief Office .. .. .	4,216,538
Balance of Vote, Consolidated Revenue and Trust and Special Funds .. .. .	179,936,756

Progress reported.

#### JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY OF NORTH QUEENSLAND AND TOWNSVILLE COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AMALGAMATION BILL

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Minister for Education), by leave, without notice:  
I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amalgamate the Townsville College of Advanced Education with the James Cook University of North Queensland and to provide for advanced education to be continued in North Queensland; to amend the James Cook University of North Queensland Act 1970-1977 in certain particulars; and for other purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

#### First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Gunn, read a first time.

#### Second Reading

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Minister for Education) (9.57 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

The Bill now before the House has been introduced as a result of a decision by the Federal Government that the two tertiary education establishments in Townsville should become one. Honourable members will be aware of the many recommendations resulting from the Review of Commonwealth Functions—the so-called razor gang—chaired by the Minister for Industry and Commerce, Sir Phillip Lynch. Among these recommendations was one, under the heading of “Education”, dealing with the rationalisation of colleges of advanced education. I quote from the statement to the House of Representatives by the Prime Minister on 30 April—

“At the tertiary level the Government has been concerned at the proliferation of separate institutions and proposes immediate action to reverse this trend and to provide for more efficient use of resources. Arising from the recommendations of the Tertiary Education Commission, the Government will promote a major rationalisation and reallocation of resources in higher education. This will involve consolidation into larger units of 30 existing colleges of advanced education, for which teacher education is the main activity, by their incorporation into multi-purpose or multi-campus colleges with a single governing body or by integration with

neighbouring universities. Additional resources will be provided for institutions which are able to expand their effort in the technology and business studies. An amount of \$5m will be earmarked within the general recurrent grants for universities and colleges of advanced education in the years 1982 and 1983 to facilitate this process. Some action has already been taken in the States and it is the Commonwealth's intention to reach agreement with each State concerning the rationalisation measures by the end of 1981. If this cannot be done, the Commonwealth will not be prepared to continue recurrent funding for the colleges concerned after the end of 1981, and if the State governments wish these colleges to continue as separate entities they will have to make their own separate financial provision."

And so, Mr Speaker, the razor was held at Queensland's throat.

We conducted lengthy and numerous discussions with Commonwealth representatives to try to get them to change their minds. At one stage I telephoned the Federal Minister almost every morning. We exchanged numerous telex messages. Others approached the Commonwealth, and all of us endeavoured to point out that the amalgamation proposals in Townsville were ill-conceived and of extremely doubtful value, both educationally and financially. We pleaded the case for Brisbane, too, with slightly better results. Honourable members may recall the Commonwealth's proposal that the Conservatorium of Music amalgamate with the Queensland Institute of Technology. I can only describe that as one of the Commonwealth's more bizarre proposals and one which even they, in the end, recognised as inappropriate.

In Brisbane, we have amalgamated four colleges of advanced education to become the Brisbane College of Advanced Education, and I have been advised that no new legislation is necessary to achieve this. In Townsville, however, we do need legislation—legislation which has in effect been dictated by the Commonwealth. It is not often that one Government in Australia tells another Government what legislation it will bring to the Parliament—and I hope it remains a rare occurrence.

The Bill now before the House contains a number of machinery provisions to transfer the Townsville College of Advanced Education to the control of the university. These cover the transfer of property, assets and liabilities and the staff and students. Contracts are also transferred to the university, which also will accept responsibility for any actions and proceedings commenced against or by the CAE. The assets, liabilities and contracts of the Students Union are also transferred to the university union. No staff is involved there. It is necessary to protect the rights of staff when they become part of the university, and the Bill preserves all those rights. Similarly, students are protected.

The transfer of the college takes effect from 1 January 1982, as required by the Commonwealth, but the Bill preserves the concept of advanced education in North Queensland by setting up as part of the university an institute of advanced education which will offer the same courses as previously offered at the CAE. The courses cannot be altered, dropped or substituted without the Minister's approval, and three months' notice of such a move is required. The Minister can apply exemptions to this provision.

The Board of Advanced Education and the Board of Teacher Education will still, of course, have significant roles in advanced education, particularly in teacher education. We would expect the university to work with the boards and we have chosen to express this in the Act. Should there be any points of disagreement on advanced education courses, the Minister will arbitrate and his decision will be binding on both parties.

To assist the university in conducting advanced education, an advisory committee for advanced education in North Queensland will be established from members of the university council. Five of the members will be new members who, under another provision, will be appointed to the university council by the Governor in Council as having a principal interest in advanced education. Four others will be appointed by the council from its membership.

The committee will advise the council of the university on such things as the implementation of this Act, the integration of CAE staff and students with those of the university, the maintenance of advanced education standards in North Queensland, the development of advanced education and the needs of North Queensland in this regard.

The composition of the university council is to be altered with the addition of a staff member involved mainly with advanced education, an advanced education student, five more Governor in Council appointees (as mentioned previously) and another convocation representative involved in advanced education. All the appointed members will initially be appointed by the Governor in Council but will be appointed according to procedures in the statutes when a new term of membership begins. The council's membership will increase by eight to 32.

Qualification for membership of convocation will be extended to include past members of the council of the CAE and graduates of the CAE.

The Bill has been prepared to meet the Commonwealth's oft-repeated requirement of "genuine amalgamation with one governing body". Certainly it introduces new concepts into tertiary education.

I must acknowledge the good offices of the university in giving certain undertakings with regard to its administration of the College of Advanced Education. These undertakings have not been treated lightly by the Government, but it will now, I hope, be apparent to all concerned that enabling legislation is required to cover the machinery requirements of amalgamation. It was the Government's view that other principles covering the continuation and development of advanced education in North Queensland should also be clearly set out rather than left to later interpretation or even to somebody's recollection of events and statements.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr Shaw: I ask the Minister to give an assurance that the Bill will lie on the table for a period of seven days.

Mr GUNN: Yes, it will.

Debate, on motion of Mr Shaw, adjourned.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That Orders of the Day Nos. 2 and 3 be postponed until a later hour of the sitting."

Mr CASEY (Mackay—Leader of the Opposition): I move the following amendment—

"Add to the motion the following words—

' , and that notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Orders and the Sessional Order of 10 March relating to the precedence of Government business, Orders of the Day Nos. 4 to 8 inclusive also be postponed and the House now move to debate General Business, Notice of Motion No. 1, standing in my name, relating to the appointment of a Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee.' "

Question—That the words proposed to be added (Mr Casey's amendment) be so added—put; and the House divided—

Ayes, 23

Blake	Jones	Wilson
Burns	Mackenroth	Wright
Casey	McLean	Yewdale
D'Arcy	Milliner	
Davis	Prest	
Eaton	Shaw	
Fouras	Smith	<i>Tellers:</i>
Gibbs, R. J.	Underwood	Vaughan
Hansen	Warburton	Kruger

## Noes, 41

Ahern	Katter	Row
Akers	Kaus	Scott-Young
Bertoni	Knox	Simpson
Bjelke-Petersen	Lane	Stephan
Booth	Lee	Tenni
Doumany	Lickiss	Tomkins
Elliott	Lockwood	Turner
Fitzgerald	McKechnie	Warner
Frawley	Menzel	Wharton
Goleby	Miller	
Greenwood	Moore	
Gunn	Muntz	<i>Tellers:</i>
Harper	Nelson	Gygar
Innes	Powell	Neal
Jennings	Randell	

## Pairs:

Scott	Lester
Hooper	Bird

Resolved in the negative.

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

## BRISBANE AND AREA WATER BOARD ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

## Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 10 November (see p. 3371) on Mr Tomkins's motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr WILSON (Townsville South) (10.15 p.m.): The Minister made the Government's intentions quite clear when he stated in his second-reading speech—

“The purpose of this Bill is to remove any doubt as to whether compensation should be payable by the Brisbane and Area Water Board to a local authority in respect of any headworks for which the board may assume control . . .”

It is one of the principles of democracy, and the law of most countries, that where property, be it land or otherwise, is resumed by a Government, adequate and proper compensation is to be paid to the person who originally owned the property. In this instance, the subject property was owned by the ratepayers of the city of Brisbane who have been paying rates for many years against the cost of dams, headworks, reticulation systems, water treatment plants and the maintenance and extension of mains, and in this sense that property is the property of the ratepayers although legal title to such property is vested in the Brisbane City Council. Many millions of dollars are required not only to provide such facilities but to maintain them.

I understand that the Brisbane and Area Water Board is now extending water supplies from the former Brisbane City Council area to the Pine Rivers, Logan and other shires, and that the ratepayers of those shires are not paying anything by way of contribution for the acquisition of such facilities but rather are simply purchasing good quality treated water for a price very similar to that being paid by the residents of Brisbane. In other words, the people living on the outskirts of the Brisbane region will reap the benefits of many years of contributions made by Brisbane City Council ratepayers.

The Government has overlooked the fact that the water board has seized a massive public facility from the Brisbane City Council without compensation. In other words, many millions of ratepayers dollars which could have been appropriated towards the improvement of roads, drainage and other municipal activities will now be lost. Certainly in the absence of the water board, the Brisbane City Council was obliged to provide water to its citizens, and the provision of such water cost many millions of dollars. It is only just that the people

of Brisbane be compensated for the cost of providing such facilities. The water board should pay adequate compensation to the Brisbane City Council, and seek to recover the interest and redemption charges from future sales of water. There must be few cases in the English-speaking world where a Government has seized the property of a corporate body, transferred it to a Government instrumentality and not paid compensation.

It is arrant nonsense to suggest that Brisbane ratepayers will be no worse off than they were previously. I should think that the total water facilities in the Brisbane city area would be valued at in the region of \$500m. Brisbane city ratepayers, after having contributed towards the acquisition of those facilities, will now be obliged to pay increased water charges for their own area, and will also have to share the cost of providing an extension of water services to outlying shire areas. Indeed, as long as the water board exists they will pay a share of water services for any future development in the extensive south-eastern region of the State. There is nothing to say that the water board's present area will not be extended to cover the whole of the South-east Queensland area. The whole object of this amendment appears to be simply to ensure that the water board can proceed to expand water services for the development of outlying shires using Brisbane City Council water facilities for such purposes and without being answerable to the Brisbane City Council. The Government has created a very dangerous precedent and should be condemned for it.

The Brisbane and Area Water Board was established in July 1979 pursuant to the Brisbane and Area Water Board Act of 1979. The board was concerned with procedural matters for the first six months, but early in 1980 it started to make moves to take over the Somerset and North Pine Dams from the council. On 10 January 1980 the board's secretary requested the council to enter into negotiations under the provisions of the Act. This set the stage for much of what has subsequently happened, because the board had not empowered its secretary by resolution to approach the council. On the other hand, the council had been careful from the outset to observe the requirements of the Act and to authorise the actions of its officers at required administrative levels.

The secretary's letter was rejected, and the board then authorised him in February 1980 to enter into negotiations with the council and also to ascertain from the council the assets and liabilities applying to the Somerset and North Pine Dams. This request was somewhat surprising as it is normally recognised in dealings between private individuals that the purchaser, so to speak, has to identify what he wants, not the other way round. This action illustrates another feature about the board, and one that is becoming more obvious with time.

The board is an amateur organisation with no experience and expertise on dams and frankly has little idea of the magnitude of the task that it has taken on. This is plainly obvious and distressing not only to the council staff but also to the four elected council representatives on the board as they see the board floundering from one crisis of ineptitude to another. I understand that from the outset the council has gone out of its way to be helpful and co-operative with the board but has been determined to keep within the provisions of the Act lest it be accused of improper dealings. In line with this policy, the council went to considerable trouble and expense to provide the board with schedules of all the land descriptions at the two dams, assets, outstanding loan liabilities, operating costs, manpower and other information. The council need not have supplied any of this information under the provisions of the Act, but could have let the board find it out slowly for itself. However, the council chose to be co-operative.

At its March meeting the board resolved to ask the council the terms and conditions on which it would be prepared to operate and maintain the dams for the board. These matters were joined together, and the council replied to the board on 20 August 1980, giving both the detailed schedules and the replies requested by the board about assets, liabilities, operating costs, etc. of the dams, and also advising the terms and conditions under which it would be prepared to operate and retain the dams for the board. This latter part contained the proviso that, before the council would undertake to carry out any work for the board on the recreational use of the dams and the supervision of leases, it required the board to demonstrate that the Act contained sufficient authority for the board and the council to do such work by agreement. The council considered the Act to be deficient in these areas and, as it will be seen, the board subsequently agreed. After August 1980 the board seemed to go into hibernation until the end of January 1981.

In this period there was no communication from the board about the transfer of the dams from the council. It can only be guessed that the board was under instructions from the Government not to rock the boat before the State election in November 1980.

In the interim period the council refuted the insolent letter from the Somerset Dam Lessees' Association to the board alleging all manner of improper actions and general inefficiency in dealing with lessees and lease matters. The council was able to show that no lessee had been disadvantaged, that a number of lessees were to blame for the difficulty they found themselves in and that, because of the Somerset Dam Catchment Area Declaratory Act, the council faced an immense task to work out the apportionment of local authority rates.

Most outstanding matters, including the quite unnecessary renewal of the lease inherited by the council when it took over the Somerset Dam in 1959, have been finalised, but the council is still awaiting advice from the Valuer-General's Department on land values for rate apportionment.

Having wasted five months, the board awoke from its long sleep at the end of January 1981 and served a formal notice on the council requiring it to enter into negotiations for the transfer of the Somerset and North Pine Dams.

It is worth noting that the Brisbane and Area Water Board Act is significantly different from the Electricity Act 1977. The Brisbane and Area Water Board Act is conditional. It states that the board may assume control of local authority dams and sets out the long procedure that must be followed if the board decides that it wants a particular dam. The first step involves negotiations between the board and the council to agree, if possible, on which dams should be transferred. In the Act they are called "headworks". In the case of each dam, agreement must be reached on which land, other assets, liabilities and obligations should be transferred to the board.

The Act specifies that if the board and the council agree on these matters a joint notification is to be sent to the Minister identifying all the matters on which the two bodies have agreed. An Order in Council will be promulgated to effect the transfer of the dam. If the board and the council do not agree on what should be transferred, the board can report a dispute to the Minister who, after investigation, can settle the matter via an Order in Council.

That reveals that the transfer of dams from the council to the board is not a simple matter. In practice, a vast amount of work is involved in the transfer and that alone has been a source of contention between the board and the council. The first negotiation session between the officers of the board and the council was held on 5 March 1981. From the outset the board's representatives pressed for the transfer of the dam to be effective from 1 July 1981, but all parties agreed at that early date that the necessary details could not be completed by then, and possibly not by 1 January 1982. Council officers made the point that in addition to the transfer of the dams and their associated property and liabilities, there had to be a series of agreements between the board and the council covering such things as easements, licences, indemnities and permits as well as an agreement for the council to carry out the operation and maintenance of the dam for the board, an agreement under the Act for the board to supply the council with water and an agreement to protect the staff at the dam at the end of the operation agreement, as the Act makes provision for staff only at the time of transfer of the dam. The council emphasised that all agreements must operate from the same date as the transfer of the dam, or the control of the financing of the dam would become chaotic.

The board was so anxious or determined to take over the dams from 1 July 1981 that at a meeting held at the end of February its officers proposed that the board and the council should reach an agreement in principle to allow the board to start trading in the sale of raw water on 1 July 1981. This would have involved an agreement to agree subsequently on all those things that could not be settled by 1 July 1981.

A series of negotiation meetings was held between the board and council officers at which the various matters to be agreed between the parties were discussed. Agreement was reached on many matters. These were submitted to the board at its monthly meetings and it adopted policy progressively as the negotiations progressed, although, as will be seen later, some of the policy decisions were premature and had to be amended. The council

preferred to wait till the negotiations between officers had reached the stage at which the series of complete resolutions could be adopted by the council to finalise the matter. From the outset, the council refused in principle to consider the agreement proposed by the board, on the ground that an agreement to agree is legally no agreement at all and is tantamount to signing a blank cheque.

Towards the end of April 1981, a section of the board became very vocal about wanting to take over the dams on 1 July 1981 and began openly accusing the council of deliberately stalling. At its meeting held on 24 April 1981, the board adopted another resolution defining the land and assets it wanted at the Somerset and North Pine Dams and, in a letter dated 6 May 1981, called for a reply from the council by 12 May 1981.

In spite of the negotiations that were taking place between the board and the council's officers, the board's secretary and legal adviser sought and obtained a discussion with the Acting Town Clerk and the City Solicitor on 7 May 1981. The board's secretary again raised the matter of an agreement in principle to expedite the transfer of the dams to the board by 1 July 1981, stating that it might take 12 to 18 months to settle all the details of the agreements that the council wanted to have finalised before agreeing to the transfer.

It was pointed out to the board's representative that neither officers of the board nor officers of the council could commit their parent bodies to any course of action, and that resolutions of the board and council are required to be legal and binding. For that reason, a council reply to the board's request was not feasible by 12 May.

However, on 12 May 1981 the Acting Town Clerk wrote to the board agreeing that the Somerset and North Pine Dams were the dams concerned for the purposes of the Act. He then listed seven respects in which the request of the board could not be met, for a variety of valid reasons, ranging from incorrect descriptions in the schedules forwarded by the board to the council to the vital need for all arrangements to operate simultaneously with the transfer of the dams to the board. He also pointed out that the board had yet to prepare and forward a draft of the operating agreement for the dams for council's perusal.

On the same day, 12 May, the board sent the council the first draft of an operating agreement for the dams, quite obviously copied from the Gladstone Water Board agreement and simply changing the names, and quite unworkable for the requirements of Brisbane.

I refer honourable members to a question asked in this Chamber on 11 November 1981 by the member for Mansfield of the Treasurer—

"Is he aware of a report in the 'Telegraph' today that the Brisbane City Council is a \$26m loser as a result of legislation introduced by the Government? Is the report correct? If not, what is the correct position?"

The Treasurer replied—

"The Brisbane City Council is not a loser in any form whatsoever . . . we indicated from the very beginning that there would be no compensation whatsoever paid to the Brisbane City Council. In fact, it is not the Brisbane City Council's money that we are talking about, it belongs to the people of Brisbane. The people of Brisbane will still get their water from the same authority. That position was resolved right from the beginning."

If that was so, why did the Brisbane and Area Water Board find itself in court defending an action claiming \$26m by the Brisbane City Council which held legal title to the property for and on behalf of the people of Brisbane?

The people have large sums of money invested in the dam. For the Treasurer to say that the people of Brisbane will still get their water from the same authority is not correct. It is true that the water will come through the same reticulation service owned by the Brisbane City Council and that the water will come from the same dam. Firstly, the water will be sold to the Brisbane City Council by the Brisbane and Area Water Board. The council in turn will sell it to the people of Brisbane who will pay for it by way of water charges or rates. The Brisbane and Area Water Board is a different authority from the Brisbane City Council. The fact that there are now two authorities involved in the

supply of water to the people of Brisbane will mean higher charges for water as two authorities will be making a profit in order to carry out any extension and maintenance of services.

The Treasurer said that the Government was talking about the money of the people of Brisbane. That is so. As the Brisbane City Council only holds legal title on behalf of the people of Brisbane, the people of Brisbane are entitled to some compensation, and this would be achieved by way of better roads, footpaths, public parks and so on. I dare say that the people of Brisbane will bear this in mind when they go to the polls at the Brisbane City Council elections next March.

On 12 November 1981 the member for Sandgate (Mr Warburton) directed the following question to the Minister for Water Resources—

“Is it not a fact that the water board’s solicitors sought an adjournment of the Supreme Court hearing on Tuesday, 10 November, which was the day before the Minister introduced the Bill?”

The answer to that, of course, is “Yes.” A further part of the question stated—

“Is it not a fact that the adjournment was granted because Mr Callinan, QC, representing the board, was supposedly unavailable?”

If the answer to that question is “Yes”, why was Mr Callinan unavailable? Had he met with an accident? Was he sick or was it for business reasons? If it was for business reasons, surely we are entitled to ask why Mr Callinan could not arrange his business activities to allow him to meet his commitments in the Supreme Court. If it was none of those reasons, what was the reason? Surely the people of Brisbane have a right to know.

The next part of the question was—

“Is this not a clear indication that the Minister and the Government, the National Party dominated board and the board’s legal representatives have acted in collusion and have connived to prevent justice being done through the Queensland courts?”

The Minister’s answer was a classic when he said—

“I rather take exception to that question. The court is a place where the law is upheld. Parliament is a different place altogether.”

Under the present National-Liberal Party coalition Government I suppose it is. The Minister continued—

“I was not alone in moving for the introduction of the Bill, as was alleged by somebody in the Press this morning. It was a unanimous Government decision.”

No doubt the people of Brisbane will remember that both the National Party and the Liberal Party were in the move to have legislation passed in the Parliament that will, if passed, stop the court from granting compensation to the Brisbane City Council and, through that authority, to the people of Brisbane. No doubt they will remember that when they go to the polls at the Brisbane City Council elections in March 1982.

The reason for the introduction of the amendment to the Act is to cut across the court action instigated by the Brisbane City Council in its claim for compensation from the Brisbane and Area Water Board. The Government proposes to amend the present Act by inserting the following new subclause:—

“30A. No entitlement to compensation. (1) Compensation shall not be payable—

- (a) to a Local Authority on account of the Board’s assuming control of headworks of the Local Authority or acquiring property of the Local Authority in the exercise of a power under this Act; or
- (b) to the Board on account of its assuming any liability or obligation of a Local Authority in the exercise of a power under this Act,

and the authority of the Board to enter into negotiations for the purpose of exercising its powers under section 29 does not extend to its agreeing to pay or give or to its agreeing to receive or take that compensation.

(2) The provisions of this Act shall be read and construed as if subsection (1) had, at all times, been a provision of this Act."

Firstly, the amendment sets out that compensation shall not be payable; secondly, it states that the provisions of the Bill shall be read and construed as if subsection (1) had at all times been a provision of the Bill.

We know that action has been taken in the court by the Brisbane City Council against the Brisbane and Area Water Board to obtain compensation for the board's taking over the council's water resources. The court action was in progress until Tuesday, 10 November this year, when counsel for the water board sought an adjournment. By a strange coincidence, the Minister for Water Resources introduced the Brisbane and Area Water Board Act Amendment Bill at approximately 11 o'clock that night. The Bill provides for no entitlement to compensation and for its provisions to be backdated to 20 June 1979, the date on which the Act was assented to.

We of the Australian Labor Party, and, no doubt, the people of Brisbane, can come to only one conclusion: the Bill was designed and introduced as the result of the unanimous decision of the National and Liberal Parties to deny the Brisbane City Council and through it the people of Brisbane their right to compensation.

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate) (10.42 p.m.): I join with the Opposition spokesman (Mr Wilson) in vehemently opposing the Bill. It is noticeable that, although there is a lot of squawking from Government members, they are somewhat reticent in coming forward to support their Minister.

Mr Moore: Wait and see.

Mr WARBURTON: We will see how good the honourable member for Windsor is. He indulges in a good deal of squawking from the back benches, but generally his contributions amount to nothing.

When the Brisbane and Area Water Board Bill was debated in 1979, the Opposition pointed out very correctly that, if the legislation was passed, a duplicate bureaucracy would be established by the State-appointed statutory body to do the same work as was being done by the Brisbane City Council in what was widely acknowledged as a highly efficient manner. The council was able to give consumers one of the cheapest water rates in Australia. It was backed up by a department with a long track record of efficient, trouble-free operations.

The only reason with any merit put forward by the Government for introducing the legislation and for wanting to add to its long list of statutory bodies—a move that the Treasurer often publicly criticises but nevertheless continues to support—was that it wanted to give outlying rural areas and shires more say in the planning, pricing and supply of water to their domains. At that time a simple amendment to legislation would have been adequate to meet such a requirement. Yet the Government was intent on proceeding with the formation of the board. Despite widespread opposition to the take-over of the council's water resources, the Government proceeded with its legislation, which has been found wanting in many respects.

On a number of occasions the ratepayers of Brisbane have been a convenient target of National-Liberal Government experiments, but none has been as costly or disruptive as the take-over of the Brisbane City Council's Department of Electricity. In relation to the present Bill, a recent "Telegraph" editorial said that the Brisbane ratepayers might be excused for thinking that they had been the victims of a three-card trick by the Queensland Government.

As the honourable member for Townsville South said, Liberal and National Party members unanimously approved the proposed legislation to ensure non-payment of compensation. That point was made clearly by the Minister in answer to a question that I asked him last Thursday. I join with the honourable member for Townsville South in saying that in the forthcoming local authority election the voters of Brisbane will know which political party truly represents their requirements, feelings and aspirations.

The National Party can forget about winning Brisbane seats in the council or in this Parliament, and once again the Liberals have been shown up for what they really are.

The fact that the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police, when speaking on the Brisbane and Area Water Board Bill, stated that the Government did not see compensation payable to the Brisbane City Council as an issue, and that the Government was opposed to payment of compensation to the council for the loss of assets, does not necessarily mean that the Minister and the Government are correct in their thinking. It is sufficient to say, that if the question of compensation was put to the ratepayers of Brisbane, without doubt they would be overwhelmingly opposed to the National-Liberal Government on this issue. The question to be decided is whether or not the Brisbane City Council is entitled to expect some millions of dollars in compensation for loss of assets at the Somerset and North Pine Dams. The Government's attitude, as expressed by the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs, is that the assets in the two dams belong to the community and that under this legislation there will be only a change in nominal ownership.

Mr Davis: That's rubbish!

Mr WARBURTON: That is the principle that has been applied. Those were the Minister's words. He made a rather simplistic statement, which I personally see as an instance of political deception at its worst.

The assets that were carefully accumulated by the citizens of Brisbane over a long period from Brisbane's loan allocations are now to be used for the benefit of a much wider community group which, to date, has made no contribution to the capital cost of building the headworks. It is reasonable to ask whether this wider group should pay for the privilege. Or should it enjoy it cheaply?

Strangely enough, on the one hand, both the water board and the Queensland Government seem to recognise the principle; on the other, they oppose the payment of compensation to Brisbane ratepayers. Perhaps it is a case of agreeing when it suits to agree.

In support of what I have said, I point out that it is not commonly known that the water board has been pushing the Government to make the Redland Shire Council join the board so that the Redland Shire Council can be made to pay by precept a share of the interest and redemption payments on the Wivenhoe Dam. In a few years' time the Redland Shire will need a bulk supply of water from the Wivenhoe Dam.

The water board is of the opinion—I believe this is a reasonable principle—that the shire should start paying for the privilege now instead of being allowed to buy into and benefit from the scheme much more cheaply in the future when part of the interest and redemption burden on the dam will already have been paid for by other water board members, including Brisbane. So the principle of the user having to meet a fair share of the cost is applied by the water board in the case of the Redland Shire, yet when it is suggested to the National Party-dominated water board that the blatant take-over of Brisbane's assets should result in an equitable sharing of capital cost to date, the boot is suddenly on the other foot.

When a matter of principle is involved, the State Government is cast in the same mould as the water board. For instance, when the infamous electricity rationalisation program came into being, the New South Wales Government took over the responsibility for distribution in some of the northern areas of New South Wales previously under the control of the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland. The Queensland Government demanded, and finally obtained, some millions of dollars in compensation as a result of that action. Where was the Government's so-called set of principles on that occasion? Did not the electricity assets in fact belong to the community they served, and in that particular case was not all that happened simply a change of nominal ownership? This, after all, is what we are being told by the Minister; that this is the principle that should apply in all cases. It did apply in New South Wales, and it applied in other cases, as I am about to show.

As I have said in this House on many occasions, inconsistency is one of the hallmarks of the present National-Liberal Queensland Government, and decisions such as the one that led to this Bill are politically inspired. What sort of principle is involved when

the Minister introduces a Bill purposely designed to prostitute justice through the courts of Queensland? Anyone who disagrees with that proposition should cast his mind back to what occurred on the last sitting day of the Queensland Parliament in December 1978. On that day a Bill concerning the charging of rates on submerged lands at Somerset Dam, which has a direct connection with this matter, was forced through all stages. Like the Bill presently before the House, no preliminary notice was given of it.

When the Brisbane City Council took over the Somerset Dam in 1959, what it did was to follow the Co-ordinator-General's practice of not paying rates on submerged land. The Co-ordinator-General had control of the dam prior to the Brisbane City Council's acquisition. The Somerset Dam lessees committee, led by National Party stalwart, Mr McAulay, of the Kilcoy Shire Council, made representations to the Queensland Government which resulted in the legislation known as the Somerset Dam Catchment Area Declaratory Act. It provided that the Brisbane City Council should meet that proportion of the rates attributable to submerged lands, and that the lessees should meet the proportion of rates attributable to emerged lands. The Valuer-General decided in his wisdom that he would value the submerged lands that were under the control of the Brisbane City Council as if they were not inundated by the waters of Somerset Dam. Here was a complete about-face. A whole new set of Government principles appeared.

The Brisbane City Council rightly objected to having to pay rates in such circumstances to the Kilcoy Shire and took the matter to court. The appeal first went to the Land Court, and the successive appeals went before the Supreme Court and then the High Court, which finally ruled in favour of the Brisbane City Council; the effect being to reduce the valuation and consequently the rates on the submerged lands under the control of the Brisbane City Council by something like 46 per cent. Because of that 1978 legislation, the Brisbane City Council is the only authority in Australia that is forced to pay rates on land under water. On that final sitting day of the Parliament in December 1978 this Government introduced legislation that overturned a decision of the High Court of Australia. That is the type of action that we have come to expect from this Government.

A very important matter of principle was at stake on that occasion. The High Court of Australia brought down a decision in favour of the council, and one would have rightfully expected it would have received complete Government acceptance. Not to be undone, in December 1978 the National-Liberal Government of Queensland forced through legislation that provides that the unimproved value of Somerset Dam lands will be determined without regard to the fact that they are inundated by the waters of the dam. In other words, damn the High Court decision, the Brisbane City Council and the ratepayers and good on the National Party's Mr McAulay and his Kilcoy Shire Council for being able to convince the Queensland Government that principles should apply only when they suit the National Party! That 1978 legislation was analogous with the legislation that we are considering tonight. It is another example of the Queensland National-Liberal Party Government forcing through legislation to overthrow the decisions of the courts or, alternatively, to interfere with the correct processes of law in our State.

As I said initially, we are vehemently opposed to that principle. We agree with some of the other principles that have been outlined but, unfortunately, they are not being adhered to by this Government. The Deputy Premier and Treasurer, in answering a question in the House last Wednesday, suggested that the Opposition wants to ensure that the water board will not work. I say to him: quite frankly, the incompetence of the Government and the board will take care of that matter. What is the sense in the board's having absolute control over the headworks when it cannot carry out expected functions because of a badly written Act? It is a badly written Act, and the provisions do not allow the board to correctly carry out its functions.

The board itself now realises that, under the provisions of the Brisbane and Area Water Board Act, it has no real power to deal with the recreational use of the two dams. Unless the Act is suitably amended, the board will have no power to control the public on the dams or to build amenities for the public at the dams. The Act does not allow the board to appoint rangers to control public behaviour either on the water or on the shore. Imagine the chaos that will ensue under those conditions. Rather than giving priority to the passage of hastily-prepared legislation such as that which we are considering tonight, that is designed to cheat Brisbane ratepayers of fair compensation for their

assets, the Government should be introducing amendments to the Act to allow the board that it brought into being to function properly. The Government is not introducing necessary amendments so that the board can function correctly; instead, it is pushing through this House legislation that is designed to circumvent justice in this State.

I say that quite clearly because that is the position; nobody will convince me otherwise. If the principle which the board has already tried to apply to the Redland Shire Council is the one to be adopted, other local authorities or the Government should be paying for late entry into the water-supply system.

The Minister claimed that he knew nothing about the proceedings before the Supreme Court in which the council is seeking a determination on whether the board can take the council's assets without paying compensation. In fairness to him, let me say he indicated that he did not know what had occurred last Tuesday prior to his introduction of the legislation into the House.

Following an adjournment for a month from 30 October 1981, the board's legal representatives sought a further adjournment on the ground of the unavailability of the board's senior counsel. That adjournment was sought and granted last Tuesday, 10 November, the day prior to the introduction of this Bill. The Minister wants honourable members and the public to believe that he was not a party to any conspiracy to circumvent the court proceedings.

Mr Akers: You know very well that this Parliament never intended any compensation to be paid. It is not upsetting anything at all.

Mr WARBURTON: All I know is that the Government, the honourable member for Pine Rivers included, does not intend to allow the Brisbane City Council to pursue through the courts its claim for compensation for the loss of assets.

If in fact the Minister was not aware of what had happened in the court last Tuesday, 10 November, one must conclude that the board knew of the introduction of the Bill and evidently it was the board that took the action to ensure that the court was stymied prior to the legislation being forced through this place by the Government. That is the only conclusion one can reach. To suggest in this place that an adjournment of a court action is sought the day before legislation is introduced for the reason that people are unavailable and that the people who are totally concerned with the matter are supposedly completely unaware of what happened is quite incomprehensible. The Opposition does not believe that. It sticks to the accusation that there was some sort of collusion.

The Minister introduced legislation the day after the adjournment was granted. If he was not aware of that, the board was. Some members of the board, in collusion with their legal representatives, in my opinion have acted improperly. I think it is to their detriment and certainly to their shame that that happened. We are talking about legislation being forced through by the Government in the face of a case presently before the courts of Queensland.

The Minister has denied that he knew anything about the court case. The other possibility is that the board did know and acted unilaterally without the knowledge of the Minister. Whatever the true position is, it is little wonder that the public shake their heads in wonderment and disdain at the decisions of the Government that obviously fly in the face of public opinion. I ask all honourable members to look to themselves on this occasion.

Mr Tenni: Are you supporting the Bill?

Mr WARBURTON: I oppose it vehemently. I said that previously and I say it on behalf of the Opposition.

The Opposition will not be a party to such things as happened in 1978, when legislation was introduced into the House on the last day of the December session. It will not tolerate being a party to overturning a High Court decision; nor will it on this occasion tolerate being asked to be a party to legislation when the matter covered in it is presently before the Queensland courts.

Mr KRUGER (Murrumba) (11.5 p.m.): My contribution will be brief, but a few points need to be raised.

I say at the outset that the Government has introduced the Bill to counter the decision in a court case. As the honourable member for Sandgate said, there is no way in the world that it has been introduced for any other reason.

The supply and reticulation of water should be the responsibility of government. That ought always to have been the position. When regions were introduced into the various States of Australia, that principle was opposed by the Government of this State. Now it desires to introduce a proposal for regionalisation of water boards.

Regions were introduced to some advantage during the Whitlam era, but the idea was outlawed and condemned by the Queensland Government. Because of that the State missed out in some respects. Other projects were not finalised and were never given a chance to be finalised. The Wivenhoe Dam, the North Pine Dam and the Somerset Dam are, and should be, assets of the State of Queensland and Australia. However, this Government does not see it that way, other than when it is convenient for it to do so.

Let me turn now to the reaction of some councils to the establishment of the water board. I recall quite clearly that when the North Pine Dam was being considered, some members of the Pine Rivers Shire Council suggested that the shire could build the dam. The Government of the day, under the leadership of Frank Nicklin, then Premier of the State, and a former Speaker of this Assembly, Sir David Nicholson, suggested that it was not capable of doing so. In the early hours of the morning, the Government put through legislation enabling the Brisbane City Council to build the North Pine Dam.

At that time, it was considered reasonable for that council to build the dam, the idea being that the dam would eventually supply Redcliffe and the Pine Rivers Shire as well as assist to meet the water requirements of the city of Brisbane. That was a decision of the National-Liberal Party coalition in Queensland. If it was not the right thing to do, the Government should not have allowed it to happen.

It was the request of the Pine Rivers Shire Council that certain decisions be made at that time. They were never adhered to; nor did the Government consider the Pine Rivers Shire Council at that time.

When the formation of the water board was proposed, the Pine Rivers Shire Council strongly objected to it. During the course of the debate, I was approached by certain members of the Pine Rivers Shire Council, with a representative of the council, indicating that it wanted nothing to do with the formation of the board. Having put up their reasons, they said that the trunk mains and other items connected with the reticulation of water in the shire ought to remain the property of the Pine Rivers Shire. Now the Government believes that we ought to take from the Brisbane City Council the money that it put into reticulation.

Today it was reported in "The Courier-Mail" that Alderman Smith, a National Party alderman and formerly a Liberal alderman who was sacked, said that the Brisbane City Council had in fact paid nothing towards the construction of the dam because only a certain amount had been paid off. He also said that if the take-over does not apply now, the people are going to pay twice. How can a person pay twice for nothing? That is a typical statement by a person in the position of Alderman Smith who has run from one party to another to try to back up his beliefs. I am not trying to decide between the shires as to who should bear the costs.

Mr Lee: You're having two bob each way.

Mr KRUGER: Don't give me that tripe. Government members leave me cold because they do not know what they are talking about. I know what I am talking about, but Government members are not prepared to listen because it hurts their feelings. Contributions towards the supply of water ought to be the responsibility of the State Government. In no way should the responsibility be solely that of a local authority. The point I am making is this—

Mr Akers: You are not making it very well.

Mr KRUGER: Listen to that tripe! It was the colleagues of the member for Pine Rivers in the Pine Rivers Shire who begged me to try to get some common sense brought to bear on the matter because the Government was being led astray in the formation of

the Brisbane and Area Water Board. His mates in the Pine Rivers Shire Council, including Councillor Campbell and others from the Liberal Party who controlled the council at the time, begged me to try to get some sanity in this place.

At the time the Pine Rivers Shire Council also objected strongly to the fact that it was not getting any rates because of the inundation of land in the North Pine Dam catchment area. Various things have affected the shire. That is the main reason why, if honourable members opposite want to put it that way, I have been having two bob each way. Certain shires have been affected by the water board. My greatest concern is that the councils close to Brisbane have objected to the water board. The Pine Rivers Shire now has a representative on the board. This Government is railroading the Brisbane City Council. It is concerned that it has been ripped off to the extent that it has not retained its entitlements. The Brisbane City Council wants to prove that. The reason for the introduction of the Bill is that the Government does not want the Brisbane City Council to have a chance to say whether it has some entitlements for the expenditure it has already incurred.

The amount of money that has been spent on the establishment of the dam and the water supply by the Brisbane City Council could be debated. There has been a lot of involvement by the city council at great expense to the ratepayers. The city council has been deprived of an opportunity to try to prove whether in fact it has entitlements. The Bill is designed to quash any decision that might be made by the courts.

Hon. K. B. TOMKINS (Roma—Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs) (11.15 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. A fairly simple amendment is being made to the Act. The reasons for it are fairly plain. Irrelevant material has been put before the House as the reasons for the proposed amendment. The new board has taken over entirely the loans on the North Pine Dam and the Somerset Dam.

They were completed in 1954 and 1975 respectively at a final cost of \$6.5m and \$20.5m respectively. After allowance was made for State subsidies, the actual cost to the Brisbane City Council for the dams was \$3.5m and \$16.3m respectively. These dams have been taken over by the Brisbane and Area Water Board and it is now responsible for them.

Any suggestion that the city council should be repaid for those dams falls flat, because to date actual redemption payments made by the council for the dams total \$2.7m and \$1.9m respectively. It will be apparent that the board will be assuming responsibility for \$15.2m, or almost 77 per cent, of the \$19.8m actual cost to the council of the two dams.

That is the position. I cannot see why the honourable member for Sandgate and other Opposition members should claim that the Government is taking down the Brisbane City Council. Nothing would be further from the truth. To get down to fantasy—it could be that the council would claim \$130m. That is the figure mentioned to me by the Lord Mayor. On the other hand, somebody else has claimed that the council stood to lose \$26m.

Mr Davis: Are you frightened to let it go to court?

Mr TOMKINS: I am not frightened of litigation. The best thing that could be done to save needless expense for both the council and the board was to introduce legislation such as this. It is obvious to me that this legislation should have been introduced in the first place. I am at a loss to understand why it was not.

The member for Townsville South attempted to mislead the House when he spoke of expenditure incurred by the Brisbane City Council on treatment plants, major trunk mains and reticulation as well as on major dams. The board seeks to assume control of only the Somerset and the North Pine Dams, as it will assume control of Wivenhoe Dam when it is completed in 1984. As I indicated in my second-reading speech, the actual cost to the Brisbane City Council of the two dams, after allowing for subsidy and so on, was \$19.8m.

As at 30 June 1980 some \$15.3m of this debt remained unpaid, and responsibility for this debt will be assumed by the board. This debt, plus the expenditure on the Wivenhoe Dam, will be borne, as it has been in the past, by the users of the water.

It is a fact that 20 per cent of the water actually being used within the Greater Brisbane Area is being used within local authority areas surrounding the Brisbane City

Council. The water users in these areas have been contributing towards the interest and redemption payments for the Somerset Dam and the North Pine Dam. They will continue to do so in the future.

An Opposition member claimed that the board's counsel sought an adjournment because we were not au fait with the matter. The reason why the board's counsel sought an adjournment of the summons action was that he had a prior commitment on the day in question. The summons was lodged only 10 days or so before the initial hearing set down for Tuesday, 10 November. It was not unexpected that counsel had a prior commitment.

Mr Davis: You believe in Santa Claus.

Mr TOMKINS: I don't have to answer that comment.

All I am saying is that if we had not stepped in with this simple amendment there would have been no end to court cases involving the Brisbane City Council and the board, and the costs would have amounted to a fortune.

Motion (Mr Tomkins) agreed to.

#### Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Miller, Ithaca) in the chair; Hon. K. B. Tomkins (Roma—Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—New s. 30A; No entitlement to compensation—

Mr WILSON (11.21 p.m.): As I said in the earlier debate, Opposition members are clearly of the opinion that the Bill was introduced to upset the course of justice. It was brought here when the court proceedings were taking place and it came before us after an adjournment had been sought in the court. There is no way in the world that anyone could come to a conclusion other than that that was done deliberately by the Government and the board. On that basis we oppose this clause.

Mr AKERS: When the honourable member for Murrumba was speaking I interjected. I now want to get the basis of my interjection onto the record. The honourable member for Murrumba and other Opposition members called upon the people of Redcliffe and the Pine Rivers Shire to pay millions of dollars to the general ratepayers in Brisbane city. The people in the Murrumba electorate should know what their member is proposing. As the member for Murrumba, he should become aware of what he is doing, rather than blindly following his party leaders.

Mr Frawley: He has ratted on Murrumba.

Mr AKERS: He has ratted on Murrumba, the Pine Rivers Shire and Redcliffe city. Simply put, the member for Murrumba was saying that he wants the voters of Murrumba to pay money directly to someone else. He has absolutely no consideration for his people.

If honourable members opposite really understood what is proposed, they would note what Parliament, the highest court in the State, said when discussing the matter originally. It said that there would be no question of any compensation payable because compensation could not be calculated as payable. The ratepayers in the whole of the area will still own the dams. They are paying for the dams and they will continue to pay for them. The board's coming into being makes no difference at all to what they would have paid. There is no way that compensation can be charged against anyone.

The honourable member for Murrumba and other Opposition spokesmen seemed to think that compensation should be paid. It is frightening that the honourable member for Murrumba, who represents people in Redcliffe and the Pine River Shire, should propose, even on a false basis, that those people should shell out money for no good purpose.

Mr PREST: The Opposition opposes this amendment. Originally the Act provided that compensation may be paid. I am speaking on this amendment tonight because the Brisbane City Council has been done an injustice. Furthermore, it was seen to be done when this Bill was introduced just last week. At that time a case between the Brisbane

City Council and the Brisbane and Area Water Board was proceeding in the Supreme Court. On any other occasion, because the matter was before the court it would have been ruled sub judice, but just because this Government is hell-bent on taking away the powers and entitlements of the Brisbane City Council these amendments have been introduced.

The honourable member for Pine Rivers said that the dams are the property of the people in the area. That is so under the Act. The dams have been taken over by the Brisbane and Area Water Board, and 11 or 12 local authorities are now drawing water from them. But those authorities have not made a contribution to the cost of those dams, as the ratepayers of Brisbane have done. We know that there is still some money owing on these dams. The construction of one dam was commenced in 1956. What would be the actual cost of constructing that dam now? What would be adequate compensation for the take-over of such assets?

Normally when resumptions are made compensation is awarded by a magistrate or a judge. That should have happened in this instance. But the Government is not satisfied to sit back and allow a judge to make a decision, it has introduced this amending Bill. Its provisions should include the payment of compensation, but this clause specifically excludes such compensation. That is why we say that an injustice is being done not only to the Brisbane City Council but also to the ratepayers of Brisbane. Therefore we oppose this clause.

Mr WARBURTON: I do not suppose that the heading to this clause, "No entitlement to compensation", could be any clearer an indication of the Government's intention.

Mr Akers: It has always been the intention of the Parliament.

Mr WARBURTON: The intention of the Government; not the intention of the Parliament at all. That is why I want to take the honourable member for Pine Rivers, who has so much to say at this late stage, to task. It was not the opinion of the Parliament, it was the opinion of the Government. It is the Government's legislation that will be forced through this Parliament despite the points that we have made and despite our complete opposition to the principles that are being adopted by this Government.

The very fact that this amendment is before this Assembly tonight shows that the Act was deficient. As the honourable member for Port Curtis said, when an Act is deficient surely any party who has a stake in its provisions has the right to go to court to test those provisions. It is a right that everybody has, and we as a Parliament should be ensuring that that right is maintained.

I pointed out previously what happened when the High Court of Australia—the honourable member for Pine Rivers regards this Parliament as the highest court in the State, which it is—ruled in relation to rateable lands at Somerset Dam. Surely when the High Court makes a ruling, the honourable member cannot suggest here tonight that this Government should force through a Bill, as it did in 1978, to virtually overturn that decision of the High Court.

Mr Akers interjected.

Mr WARBURTON: That is what happened, and there is an analogy with what is happening here tonight. The Opposition is being asked to agree to what the Government is doing, that is, to ensure that the proceedings being undertaken before the Supreme Court by the Brisbane City Council can no longer continue. The judge can certainly forget about hearing the case any further.

As late as only a day or so ago, the legal representatives were deciding the dates on which the proceedings should continue. In fact, I believe that they had decided on some dates early in December. There is no shadow of doubt in my mind as to why the legislation is presently before us. All Opposition speakers have clearly said that we, the Opposition, should not be asked to join with the Government to ensure that this sort of legislation is processed through the Queensland Parliament.

Mr TOMKINS: In reply to the honourable members for Port Curtis, Sandgate and Townsville South, I point out that initially loans were arranged to finance both dams. Those loans were taken over by the Brisbane and Area Water Board under legislation that was passed in 1978. In taking over those loans, the board also took over any claims for compensation and any debts that were previously incurred. This legislation deals with that situation.

I shall not labour the point, and will leave it at that.

Mr AKERS: The Opposition adopts a very strange attitude about what this Parliament is all about.

Mr Jones: Now we will get a lecture on statute law.

Mr AKERS: No, I will not give the honourable member a lecture on statute law. I will just tell him what Parliament is all about. Parliament makes the laws. It does not have to obey the High Court or any other court. People have to obey the laws of the land until Parliament changes those laws, and that is what this is all about.

The member for Sandgate said that by changing the law we are not obeying the High Court. Changing the law is what Parliament is about, and surely the Opposition knows it. The member for Mackay (Mr Casey) holds himself up as the Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, but he just does not seem to know what this Parliament is about. This is the place where laws are made. We are elected to make laws, not to obey the High Court. The High Court does not tell us what to do. It interprets what the laws mean. It is very clear that the Opposition has no idea of what the Parliament is about. It is trying in a shabby, political way to mislead the people of Brisbane. The member for Port Curtis misled the whole of the Parliament. The member for Sandgate totally distorted and misrepresented what Parliament is all about.

I suggest to the people of Queensland that they look at the Opposition's attitude to Parliament and decide whether the members of the Opposition are even fit to be here.

Mr PREST: The Minister seems to base his case on the \$15m liability that the board has taken over. The Opposition takes the point on the liability, but I ask the Minister to tell us what the assets are worth. What would it cost to build those dams today? It would be far in excess of \$15m. Does the Minister claim that the liabilities are greater than the assets?

The Minister said that somebody who takes over a business takes over the liabilities. Doesn't the Minister think that something should be paid towards the assets that have been taken over? The people who owned those assets are the Brisbane City Council and its ratepayers. If the Minister bases his case on liability, he should place some weight on the assets that have been taken over and pay something for them.

Mr CASEY: I rise merely to comment on a couple of statements made in the last few minutes. The first was a classic example of the blatant arrogance of the Queensland Government. The member for Pine Rivers stated that the courts, even the High Court, mean absolutely nothing to him or the Government.

That is what the Bill is all about—the complete and flagrant disregard by the Government for the courts and the laws. The legislation that the Opposition is being asked to approve is a cover for the Government because it is afraid that its own Act may be found to be illegal by its own courts. How often has that happened under this Government?

The arrogant attitude displayed by the member for Pine Rivers, the Minister and other Government members this evening will lead to the Government's downfall. It is tying itself up in its own arrogance and disregard for the institutions and the people of the land.

Mr TOMKINS: In reply to the Leader of the Opposition, I quote again what the Minister for Local Government said on 2 May 1979.

Mr Casey: It does not matter what he said.

Mr TOMKINS: It is a very worthwhile argument. He said—

“The question of compensation does not arise, as both assets and liabilities will be taken over, and the water consumers, inside and outside Brisbane, will continue to receive the benefits from the assets and be responsible for the liabilities, as they are now. The dams and other assets really belong to the consumers of water and not to the Brisbane City Council.”

I say no more.

Question—That clause 2, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

Ayes, 47

Ahern	Jennings	Randell
Akers	Katter	Row
Bertoni	Kaus	Scassola
Booth	Knox	Simpson
Borbidge	Kyburz	Stephan
Doumany	Lane	Sullivan
Elliott	Lee	Tenni
Fitzgerald	Lester	Tomkins
Frawley	Lickiss	Turner
Gibbs, I. J.	Lockwood	Warner
Glasson	McKechnie	Wharton
Goleby	Menzel	
Greenwood	Moore	
Gunn	Muntz	<i>Tellers:</i>
Harper	Nelson	Gygar
Hewitt	Powell	Neal
Innes	Prentice	

Noes, 23

Blake	Jones	Vaughan
Burns	Kruger	Wright
Casey	Mackenroth	Yewdale
D'Arcy	McLean	
Davis	Milliner	
Eaton	Prest	<i>Tellers:</i>
Fouras	Shaw	Warburton
Gibbs, R. J.	Smith	Wilson
Hansen	Underwood	

Pairs:

Bjelke-Petersen	Hooper
Bird	Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Tomkins, by leave, read a third time.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—  
“That the House do now adjourn.”

#### Nursing Sisters, School Health Section

Mr HANSEN (Maryborough) (11.48 p.m.): I wish to speak tonight about the nursing sisters of the Division of School Health Services. They play a very important role in the early detection of health defects in young children.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr HANSEN: I was saying that the sisters play an important role in the early detection of defects, such as sight and hearing impediments, in young children.

Many defects are not recognised by parents or by teachers. I am personally grateful to the sisters for their early detection of a defect in one of my daughter's eyes. It was something that was not readily noticed, but apparently she was not using the eye to its fullest extent. Because of the early detection of the defect, the sight in that eye was preserved.

The diversity of the examinations carried out by the sisters necessitates the transport of quite a large quantity of fairly heavy equipment. Some of the schools visited are many kilometres apart, and the sisters are told to use public transport. In a few cases, sisters are provided with motor cars. Outside the metropolitan area very little suburban public transport is available. It is necessary for them to hire a taxi or use their own car. Sometimes they travel into the country. The sister based in Maryborough travels round the Burnett region. I do not know how long ago it was that the Minister for Works and Housing last caught a train from Maryborough to Gayndah. I would not wish the journey on him. The railmotor leaves at approximately 1.20 a.m. and chugs along during the early hours of the morning.

If the nurse has to go to Biggenden, she finds that the town does not have a taxi, so she has to rely on the goodwill of a teacher or someone else to help her lug her cases round to the school and to take her around. Gayndah has a taxi, but Mundubbera, Eidsvold and Monto do not have taxis.

The Auditor-General's report shows that a large number of cars used by public servants are not being used full time. It is wrong that these sisters should be denied the use of a car. They should be provided with vehicles by the Health Department. For a while the sister in Maryborough had the use of the car from Longreach. I am not quite sure how the car got to Maryborough.

No member who has paid attention to the work done by these sisters would deny that they do a wonderful job. More consideration could be shown to them to enable them to carry out their duties for the benefit of the future citizens of this State.

#### Gatton Rail Services

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (11.52 p.m.): Recently an alteration was made to the timetable of the Gatton rail services. I have been asked to comment on the new timetable. I was told that it would be an improvement.

On 22 October a group of children from the Gatton Convent came to Brisbane for the purpose of seeing how Parliament worked. They were able to catch a train that left Gatton at 8.15 a.m. This morning the other half of the class came to Parliament House to see Parliament at work. I asked the children what time they left Gatton and they told me that they would have had to catch the 6.38 a.m. train from Gatton. It takes me only one hour and 15 minutes to drive from Gatton to Parliament House, yet those children would have been forced to catch the 6.38 train this morning. They chose to catch the co-ordinated service, which left just after 7 a.m.

I have received a number of complaints from pensioners who claim that they would rather travel by rail. Now that the timetable has been altered, they will not be able to travel by rail; the most popular service for pensioners, the 8.15 a.m. train from Gatton, no longer runs. That is terrible. Pensioners do not like getting into and out of buses; they would rather travel by train.

I am in favour of rail services, wherever they can be provided. To help overcome the traffic problems, buses should be kept off the road as much as possible. However, I will concede that the Railway Department has provided more services to Gatton. But as the most popular service has been cut out, people are forced to catch the morning train to Brisbane to do their shopping and to return home at night.

Those kiddies who got out of bed at about 6 o'clock this morning and came to Brisbane today would not have got back to Gatton until about 6.20 tonight. They had a very long day just to see Parliament. I will be sending the people of Gatton copies of this speech to let them know that I and others are aware of the problems that confront them. It is not right that an area such as Gatton and the Lockyer should suffer from a curtailment of rail services.

Rail passenger services in the metropolitan area cost Queensland taxpayers a good deal of money, but for many years the Government has been willing to provide them at a loss. Rail services to Gatton should not be curtailed simply because they are running at a loss. We are entitled to a service, and it should not be curtailed in any way.

Passengers on the co-ordinated service running from Toowoomba to Ipswich board an electric train at Ipswich. The co-ordinated service runs simultaneously with the rail

service to Gatton and Helidon. Although the trip takes a little longer than the bus trip, pensioners prefer to travel by rail because it is more comfortable. I ask the Minister to review the timetable as soon as possible and, if possible, to extend to Gatton the service that arrives in Laidley at 8.30 a.m. and leaves at 8.45 to return to Ipswich. That would require a slight alteration of the timetable on the eastern side of Laidley. In this way the Gatton people would enjoy the comforts of the rail service that they have enjoyed for years.

Modern rail cars must be provided on this service. In the past a number of old trains have been used. At one time I wondered whether the Railway Department was making a conscious effort to cut back the number of passengers using the service by providing old trains that generally ran late and were very inconvenient for the travelling public.

#### Queensland Rugby League

Dr LOCKWOOD (Toowoomba North) (11.57 p.m.): I rise to assure the Queensland Rugby League that country clubs are just as concerned about its new policy as are the metropolitan clubs. The Queensland Rugby League need not look to the country for support of its new three-point policy, which is designed to raise funds. Firstly, in 1982 all A-grade clubs will be required to purchase new jerseys from the Queensland Rugby League marketing division. Secondly, every Rugby League player will be required to take out insurance with the QRL's insurer. Thirdly, clubs will be required to purchase all strapping, sticking plaster and first-aid requirements from the QRL marketing division.

A problem arises because the policy is not optional. All clubs must purchase requirements from the QRL marketing division. The QRL could get away with it if its costs were more competitive. Its purchasing policy completely ignores the life of a Rugby League jersey. The QRL is mistaken if it believes that all clubs buy a full set of new jerseys every year. They use the jerseys for as long as they are serviceable.

The QRL is keeping for itself the discount for bulk purchases, and a further 10 per cent on top of the wholesale price as a profit on sale. It is also keeping for itself the commission on club jerseys sold to club supporters through normal retail outlets.

I am told that the QRL could get \$30,000 from its jersey policy in 1982, and perhaps \$250,000 in 1983, if all clubs are forced to buy all their jerseys from it.

The QRL's insurance scheme proposal should be given wide publicity, especially if injured players are to be disadvantaged by the change-over from the SGIO policy.

Mr Prest: What will the QRL do with the money it makes out of it?

Dr LOCKWOOD: I will tell the honourable member.

Will the change-over mean that clubs will pay the same premium as for the SGIO cover, but injured players will get \$20 a week less? Will players be covered for 26 weeks rather than the 52 weeks covered by the SGIO policy? Does it mean that a player will lose the convenience of the Statewide branches of the SGIO and have to traipse down to Brisbane to a central office to tell the story of his football injury.

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I think members have to recognise that only professional player/coaches enjoy workers' compensation insurance benefits from the Workers Compensation Board. The purchase of jerseys, strapping, first-aid requirements and insurance from the QRL will rob clubs of funds and local support. All clubs, and country clubs in particular, will not receive the benefits—here is where the honourable member for Port Curtis might care to take notice—of the few southern star players who are attracted to Brisbane. I appeal to the QRL to meet all clubs to discuss with them the impact of its proposals. I believe if it does that it will see the sense of amending its policies in the interests of all Rugby League players.

## Department of Employment and Labour Relations

Mr YEWDAL (Rockhampton North) (12.1 a.m.): Owing to the limited time available in the debate on the Estimates of the Department of Employment and Labour Relations, I was unable to stress a few points in respect to the many sections of the Minister's portfolio.

I want to refer specifically to the overall staffing situation as outlined in the Budget documents presented to this House by the Treasurer earlier this year. On my arithmetic, in 1981-82 there will be an increase in the staff of the department of only seven people, and that is not many when spread throughout the entire department. Having heard from the Minister today about increasing production and employment opportunities in this State and the resultant increase in the number of compensation claims, my criticism of the Minister and his Government is that the quality of service provided by the department is clearly declining. I base my criticism on the Minister's statement that the number of compensation claims is increasing. In other words, the Minister is telling us that because of the greater number in the work-force a greater number of people are claiming compensation, but as there has been such a small increase in the number of staff the level of service provided to the community must decline.

We were told that the Government has distributed something like \$32m to employers by way of bonuses on their workers' compensation premiums at the rate of 60 per cent where the claim-premiums ratio has been satisfactory. A further general 7½ per cent bonus has been allowed to all employers, and a 5 per cent bonus has been paid to employers who provide an ambulance service. I would be the last to say that employers should not be recognised in some way because of their approach to workers' compensation or the premiums that have been paid, but it seems to me that it is a one-sided affair because although the Government has distributed something like \$32m to employers the recipients of compensation are not receiving what I believed to be a reasonable income to maintain themselves and their families.

The 26-week make-up pay that has applied in the workers' compensation field for many years is still being maintained. The Minister argues that there are not many people who are off work for more than 26 weeks and consequently 26 weeks is a fair mean cut-off point. I suggest that a worker who is off work for a considerable period up to 26 weeks would say to his doctor, "If it is possible for me to go back to work now I would like to go back because next week I come back to the base payment and lose the make-up pay." The make-up pay is the average of that person's earnings over a certain period. So perhaps that is the reason why not many people remain on compensation after 26 weeks. It seems also that the payments in the disability and lump-sum areas could be revised. I repeat that if it is good enough for the Government to pay out \$32m in bonuses to employers it is good enough to increase the payments to those workers in receipt of compensation.

Another area of the Minister's portfolio on which I wish to elaborate is that of motor vehicle and other machinery inspections carried out by his department. The inspector of motor vehicles in Rockhampton has complained and made personal representations about the totally inadequate staffing of the centre in Rockhampton. He covers a wide area from Rockhampton to the hinterland and through the mining areas in Central Queensland. He is overworked and unable to satisfy the needs of the community.

It has been pointed out that the Minister's department has failed miserably in accepting its responsibilities for vehicle inspections as well as industrial inspections. Although the Minister talks about his department in glowing terms, the quality of service that it provides is declining. The inspection of motor vehicles, in particular, is declining. In these days when many road accidents are occurring, the Minister should be more conscious of the fact that vehicles have to be inspected. I am sure that many of the accidents could be attributed to defects in motor vehicles.

Employers have been complaining for quite some time that many people in industry are not being tested on the vehicles that they drive. Although these people operate these machines for fairly lengthy periods of time, they still have to be tested by the inspector.

(Time expired.)

## Great Barrier Reef

Mrs KYBURZ (Salisbury) (12.6 a.m.): Tonight I wish to express my disgust at the public arguments about the spurious concern about one of Australia's most precious heritages, the Great Barrier Reef. The time has come when political leaders have to realise that the reef is above cheap political trading and grandstanding, and that point scoring is out and discussion is in. I am not referring just to the head-kicking discussion in which some political leaders like to indulge. The people of Queensland, and indeed of the whole of Australia, do not give a brass razoo about who controls the reef, but they do demand that it be protected. If Governments cannot or will not do that, they should not be in office.

Because the Commonwealth has the jurisdiction, it should exercise its power over the Great Barrier Reef. That is what the Australian population expects it to do. The reef is not a tourist attraction that is known only in Australia; it is famous throughout the world.

Frankly, I am suspicious about the motives of some of the people involved in this political shilly-shallying. There are no silver stars for guessing the correct motives. Every time I read a Press release about the Great Barrier Reef I try to read between the lines.

It is obvious that there is more going on behind the scenes than what is printed in the Press. As I say, I am totally suspicious about the motives. Could they involve oil-drilling or off-shore mining or matters related to the fishing industry? The Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Ahern) has assured us that the fishing industry is not involved, and I say here and now that he is one of the few people involved in this matter whom I actually trust and whom I believe the Queensland public trusts.

The public should be able to trust its Governments, particularly on issues like the Great Barrier Reef. We need more explanation. Most of all, we need to know the truth. Anyone involved in this shilly-shallying who has any share interest in any off-shore drilling project should declare that interest because, quite frankly, he does not have the right to have a say about the Great Barrier Reef. In fact, he should withdraw from all Cabinet and public discussion of the matter.

As I have said, obviously there are motives behind the political grandstanding that is taking place and, if those motives involve mining interests or any other interest, that should be stated. The public are not as foolish as some people claim they are. They realise that there is a boxing contest going on between the State and Commonwealth Governments.

I urge both this Government and the Federal Government to realise that the Great Barrier Reef is of paramount importance. Quite frankly, I do not care who controls it. As far as I am concerned, the best body to exercise control is the Marine Park Authority, which has the necessary expertise. I do not believe that any other body should have total control over the reef. I hope that both Governments get on with the job, as the reef is far more important than cheap political grandstanding.

## Licensing of Fuel Depots; Rescue Helicopters for the Gulf Country

Mr KATTER (Flinders) (12.10 a.m.): I wish to make a few brief comments about fuel depots in country areas of Queensland. In the electorate of Flinders some five, six or seven fuel depots have closed. I am sure that other members who represent western areas could cite similar figures. The big oil companies are undertaking a process of rationalisation—a lovely word that has some fairly horrific consequences for country people. It is a word that makes strong men tremble, because some people will suddenly lose their employment. People in country areas in which petrol depots are closed should be fearful that they will be left without petrol supplies.

At present, with no strikes taking place in this country and no disruptions in the Middle East, Australia has a reasonable flow of oil. A whole series of events may disrupt the flow of petrol, and when that happens the areas with large holding tanks will have supplies of petrol and the areas without them will not. During the last shortage of aviation fuel, people in Melbourne, which is close to the big source of supply of aviation fuel in Australia, had plentiful supplies; but the further one got away from the big holding depots, the scarcer aviation fuel became. That is a reasonable statement to make.

Mr Jones: I have been told that two Ampol tankers take fuel out of Australia each week because there is not enough storage for it here.

Mr KATTER: That is an interesting comment made by way of interjection. The problem is very serious.

The time has come for the licensing of fuel depots in Queensland. With that provision in force, if a company decided to close a depot at Julia Creek, the Government could then tell it to choose which depot in Brisbane or Townsville it wished to close also. That would be a fairly good deterrent to the closure of country fuel depots.

At present, a number of people are carting petrol by road tanker in Queensland in defiance of the law. A number of people who are obeying the law are being forced to the wall because they cannot compete financially with the law-breakers. It appears to me that the Minister's department has absolutely no ability to stop that illegal cartage. If a law cannot be enforced, it should be removed from the statute-book. As I said, people who are obeying the law and acting legally are being forced to the wall. I will not embarrass anybody by mentioning names in the House. However, unfortunately that is occurring.

Both of these problems can be solved by licensing, and the time has come for the licensing of petrol depots in this State. That is an alternative to the Government's simply standing back and watching the closure of all country fuel depots, which would leave all of the country areas of Queensland entirely at the mercy of the big oil companies—a very unsatisfactory state of affairs.

In closing, I comment upon the need to station a helicopter in the Gulf country during the wet season. I serve notice on the House that I will turn very nasty on the Government if a helicopter is not there for the wet season. Year after year I have stood back and watched people die in the Gulf country because there is no way of air-lifting them out. I hope and pray that people who are out on the frontiers of Australian civilisation do not hear the ridiculous remarks made in this place about the need for a helicopter in that area. Suffice to say that the only helicopters in North Queensland are based in Townsville. On account of their very limited range of approximately 250 miles, they are virtually useless for any sort of work in the Gulf country.

For those who are short on geography, the Gulf area is 500 or 600 miles from Townsville. Therefore, the helicopters based in Townsville are fairly ineffective, if not totally useless, during the wet season in the Gulf country. Once it begins to rain, there is no possible way for people to get out. I will give honourable members an instance of an emergency. Once a lady with an ectopic pregnancy starts to go into labour, she and the baby die. In this instance when she started to go into labour, there was no way of flying her out.

(Time expired.)

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.15 a.m. (Wednesday).

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