

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 1981

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

PAPER

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

Report of the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development for the year ended 30 June 1981.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Appointment of Adviser on Fire Brigade Administration

Hon. W. D. HEWITT (Greenslopes—Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services) (11.2 a.m.): I advise the House that Gayle Paltridge, former State Fire Commissioner for Tasmania, will take up the position of adviser on fire brigade administration and related matters from 14 December 1981.

Mr Paltridge has been instrumental in re-organising fire brigade services in Tasmania and was a driving force in introducing a property-based fire levy, a proposal that Cabinet has approved in principle for implementation in Queensland.

The Premier of Tasmania (Mr Holgate), in expressing disappointment in losing the services of one of his top advisers, has described him as an excellent senior administrator.

It now costs over \$45m per annum to finance brigades in Queensland. Their administration is substantially in the hands of 81 boards with overall control exercised by the State Fire Services Council.

I have little criticism of the present arrangements but in the time-consuming process of attending to day to day affairs, insufficient time is devoted to such issues as—

- Fire Prevention;
- Research, Education, Training;
- Auxiliary Fire Services;
- Relationship between Urban and Bush Brigades;
- Funding; and
- Forward planning and strategies.

Mr Paltridge's expertise will be invaluable to me in addressing myself to those matters. He will be contracted to me as an adviser for a 3-year term.

I propose making a comprehensive statement to the House on my funding proposals in the next few days.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

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

1. Brisbane College of Advanced Education Council

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Education—

(1) What is the composition of the council of the new Brisbane College of Advanced Education?

(2) Who are the persons elected to the positions subject to election and what qualifications, if any, do they hold?

Answer:—

(1) The composition of the council for the new Brisbane College of Advanced Education, in accordance with the provisions of section 51E of the Education Act, is as follows:—

Thirteen members nominated by the Minister for Education, one of whom is designated chairman;

The director of the college;

A nominee of the Director-General of Education;

Four staff members elected by the staff;

Two student members elected by the students; and

Two additional members nominated by the other members of the council.

The names of the appointed persons appeared in the issue of the Government Gazette of 5 September.

(2) The persons elected by the staff and their qualifications are—

Mr Robert Wesley Brownlie, Assistant Registrar, Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education;

Mr Geoffrey Edmondson, Executive Office, Administrative Services, Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education;

Miss Helen Margaret Routh, ALAA, Reader, Education Librarian, North Brisbane College of Advanced Education; and

Mr David William Spann, B.A.(Qld), Personnel Officer, Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education.

The persons elected by the students are—

Mr Robin George McEwan, and

Miss Katherine Ann Miller.

They are at present enrolled in courses at Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education and Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education, respectively.

2. Maryborough and Bundaberg Fish Board Depots

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to the answer given to the member for Maryborough on 12 November, which can be interpreted to mean that the Maryborough Fish Board Depot made a profit of about \$100,000 for the trading year ended 30 April 1981—

(1) Will he explain why this seemingly profitable depot is to be sold?

(2) Will he further explain his remark that those claiming the depot's profitability have misinterpreted the figures given to the honourable member for Maryborough?

(3) Will he supply income and expenditure details on both Maryborough and Bundaberg depots which clearly indicate their respective trading positions?

Answer:—

(1) I do not agree with the honourable member's interpretation of the data contained in my answer of 12 November to the question by the honourable member for Maryborough.

The board's decision to rationalise its presence in Maryborough was not taken purely on profit and loss grounds but was motivated by the need to realise those properties which have a significant cash value in order to reduce its current excessive capital debt burden.

I would emphasise again that it is the Queensland Fish Board's intention to maintain its presence in the Maryborough region. In fact, the board sees Maryborough as an important part of the Queensland fish-marketing system. To this end, the board is presently considering a number of options and is encouraging local fishermen to purchase the fish market portion of the existing facility. To this end, discussions were held recently between representatives of the board and local fishermen.

(2) The honourable member is presumably referring to my comment that, as only about 30 per cent of the produce which arrives in Maryborough is sold locally, costs associated with the sale of the balance must be accommodated, in part, in the Maryborough depot's costs. Produce which cannot be disposed of locally is transported to other depots, notably Colmslie, for sale. The costs incurred, included in board general overhead costs, are allocated back to all regional depots on a proportional basis. This allocation of overhead costs naturally has an effect on the local profitability of the Maryborough depot as matters presently stand.

(3) As I have already indicated, income and expenditure data at individual depots do not necessarily reflect their respective trading positions.

3. Torbanlea-Hervey Bay Road; Burrum Heads Road

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

Will he use his influence to have the Woocoo Shire Council face up to its responsibilities to maintain the shoulders on its section of the Torbanlea-Hervey Bay road and on the Burrum Heads road, both of which are in a deplorably dangerous state?

Answer:—

Inspections of declared roads in this area have been made by departmental and council officers. Work is programed to be carried out before Christmas. Although there have been some delays recently in the performance of works by Woocoo Shire, I trust the honourable member will soon see improvements in the areas he has mentioned.

4. Bore Licences, Greenvale Catchment Area

Dr Scott-Young asked the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs—

(1) What number of bore licences to obtain water were issued in the Greenvale catchment area under the Greenvale Agreement Act of 1970?

(2) What number of these licences are still operative and what is the capacity of each such licence?

(3) In the case of licences not being used, will the present holders be able to retain the licences?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) There are some hundreds of bore licences issued in the area delineated in the Greenvale Agreement Act of 1970 and the information required is not immediately available. However, the information is being obtained and will be supplied as soon as it can be collated.

(3) Bore licences are issued for a period which is specified in the licence. When a licence expires, it is usually renewed by the Commissioner of Water Resources on the application of the licensee. However, it is not intended that water supplies be reserved indefinitely by licensees who do not construct bores, and where this condition applies, consideration would be given to refusing an application for renewal.

5. Pre-school Centre, Rasmussen

Dr Scott-Young asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the considerable increase in population in the Rasmussen area, so much so that (a) 30 children were unable to be placed in pre-school this year, (b) 104 children are already enrolled for 1982 and (c) 88 children are already enrolled for 1983—

(1) Are plans in hand for the further development of the pre-school centre at Rasmussen?

(2) Will he instruct his departmental officers to investigate this situation as a matter of urgency?

Answer:—

(1) It has not been possible to make provision for expansion of facilities at this centre during 1981-82.

(2) The situation has been investigated by regional officers who are presently formulating recommendations for the 1982-83 program.

6. Queensland Abattoir System

Dr Scott-Young asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Is there any reason why the present abattoir system in Queensland should not continue?

(2) Is the system likely to collapse and need massive financial aid like the New South Wales system did, or is it likely to be restructured in any way in the foreseeable future?

Answer:—

(1) At this stage I see no reason why the present abattoir system should not continue.

(2) In common with those in most meatworks, throughput levels have declined over the past 12 months while costs have continued to increase. In a number of instances meatworks have operated at a loss. However, of the five public abattoirs, only one is operating at a loss, mainly through the high debt burden. Steps are being taken to overcome this problem, and possible alternatives are being investigated by a committee comprising officers of the Treasury, the Queensland Meat Industry Organisation and Marketing Authority and my department.

7. Babinda Bypass Road

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

When will the proposed Babinda bypass road be commenced and what stage has planning reached for this work?

Answer:—

As yet no firm indication has been given by the Commonwealth Government regarding the level of national highway funding in Queensland beyond the end of this financial year. It is therefore impossible to make a firm prediction of the date on which construction of the proposed bypass of Babinda might commence. Owing to other major commitments, it is not likely to be before 1984.

Following representations to me by interested parties in the Babinda area, further investigations of the alternative alignments have been initiated by departmental officers, and it is expected that a preliminary report will be ready early in the new year and a recommendation on the alignment by July 1982.

8. Kuranda Scenic Railway Service

Mr Tenni asked the Minister for Transport—

With reference to his visit to North Queensland in July and his promise that action would be taken to make improvements to the Kuranda scenic railway service—what action has been taken or progress made to date?

Answer:—

I am pleased to be able to inform the honourable member that, following my inspection of North Queensland and our discussions on the spot, 24 carriages of similar outline and four vans have been selected and a program of upgrading has commenced. These carriages will retain the traditional historical appearance. Seats are being modified in height to permit of the best possible view being obtained by passengers, hand-brakes are being fitted and all of the cars will be painted on the basis of a red and cream colour scheme, with a special weather-resistant paint. In addition, 12 of the cars will have the words "Kuranda Tourist Train" painted on both sides. Under this arrangement, all of the cars will carry this sign during the period that one train operates and every second car will be so designated on the occasions that two trains run.

Five cars are at present under overhaul in the Townsville workshops and others are being prepared at the Ipswich workshops. The trains will be ready to operate during the next tourist season commencing in May and I hope to be able to flag the first one away from Cairns.

9. Northern Beaches State High School

Mr Tenni asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Has the tender for the clearing of the Northern Beaches State high school been approved and, if so, who is the successful tenderer, what price was tendered and when will this job commence?

(2) Have plans been completed for this high school and when will tenders be called?

(3) Will fencing be constructed on this block of land and when will the fencing be completed?

(4) Will the specifications include complete preparation of the ground such as playing fields, lawns and trees?

Answer:—

(1) A quotation of \$948.75 from T. N. Pirovich for the initial clearing of the Northern Beaches (Smithfield State High School) site has been accepted. An order was placed on 12 November 1981, and work is to commence within two weeks of that date and be completed in five days.

(2 to 4) Plans for the school have been prepared and are presently being reviewed by officers of the Department of Education. The extent of fencing, groundworks and landscaping to the building zone to prevent erosion is also being considered. It is expected that tenders will be called early in the new year.

10. Business Transactions Involving Cabinet Ministers, Cairns/Townsville Areas

Mr Jones asked the Premier—

(1) Is he aware of any recent purchases of interests by Cabinet Ministers in quarrying industries within the Cairns area?

(2) What was/were the (a) number of quarries purchased, (b) extent of the interest, (c) overall amounts invested and (d) tenure, whether freehold or leasehold?

(3) If leasehold, what are the (a) names of the lessees in the transaction, both sellers and purchasers, (b) details and conditions of the lease and (c) rents charged?

(4) Have any other similar purchases or agreements been recently negotiated or other business deals likewise pending involving Ministers of the Crown?

(5) Will he make a public announcement to alleviate public disquiet listing all transactions entered into on behalf of his Ministers in the Cairns and Townsville areas since casino applications have been received and airport developments announced?

Answer:—

(1 to 5) I am not aware of the involvement of any of my ministerial colleagues in any of the matters to which the honourable member has referred. If the honourable member has any factual information to support the basis of his questions, he should make the details available to me.

11. Fuel Prices Paid by Torres Strait Fishermen

Mr Jones asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) (a) What was the fuel subsidy paid to fishing companies and/or operatives in Torres Strait during 1980 and to date?

(b) What was approximate rebated cost per litre flowing onto individual fishermen?

(2) Have fishermen operating in Torres Strait been receiving the benefits of subsidies passed on in the form of lower fuel prices?

(3) Is he aware of the complaints from fishermen purchasing diesel fuel at that time in this area that low-grade fuel of a dirty deep-brown colour and poor texture was costing 31 and 32c per litre?

(4) If such differentiations did exist, what redress is available to fishermen who were required to pay these higher prices?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) The matters raised by the honourable member involve a number of complicated issues. Full details are not presently available to me since I do not have access to individual company data. However, I shall endeavour to obtain as much information as I can and advise the honourable member accordingly.

In the case of the Queensland Fish Board, I am able to advise that the fuel subsidy payable at Yorke Island during 1980 and early 1981 was 18.6 cents per litre. The board passed this subsidy entirely on to fishermen in the Torres Strait, together with other discounts the board was able to negotiate on occasions.

I am not aware of any complaints by fishermen in the Torres Strait on the quality of fuel provided by the Queensland Fish Board, but I am aware that a problem did exist in a southern area. I would further advise that the board took steps which were successful in rectifying the problem.

12. Housing Commission Activities, Cairns

Mr Jones asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) How many applications for housing accommodation in their respective categories of priority are at present registered as outstanding with the Queensland Housing Commission through the Clerk of the Court, Cairns?

(2) How many rental houses have been allocated for the year to 30 June 1981 and to date this financial year?

(3) During the same period, how many (a) new houses (b) duplexes (c) pensioner units (d) houses through co-operative societies and (e) houses through other funding were erected?

(4) How many building sites for (a) homes and (b) duplexes are presently held at Cairns for commission requirements?

(5) Has the QHC taken cognisance of changing family structures, for example, dramatic increase in lone supporting parent pensioners and the decrease in average family sizes to 2.3 children, in its forward planning programs?

(6) In view of the critical shortage of low-cost accommodation experienced in Cairns for the past year, which in the Cairns Welfare Council's assessment shows no signs of improving, will Cairns receive special consideration from the QHC in this financial year's allocations?

Answer:—

(1)—

Family applications	'A' priority	1
	'B' priority	61
	Nil priority	113
Pensioner		58

(2)—

	1980-81	1981-82 (to date)
Family	56	20
Pensioner	17	2

(3)—

	1980-81	1981-82 (to date)
(a)	9	10
(b)	Nil	Nil
(c)	12	Nil
(d)	5	Nil
(e)	37	21

There are 28 under construction.

(4) Forty-two home sites, of which about one in seven are allowable as duplexes by agreement with council. In addition, there are sites for 42 medium density units and raw land for about 230 house sites.

(5) Yes. The evidence is on the grounds of the variety of size and type of accommodation.

(6) Cairns has always been favourably considered, as the member knows. The completion statistics given above, the investment in land for future use, the 28 dwelling units under construction and the supply of 49 pensioner units are adequate demonstration. To the 30 June 1981 the commission has supplied a total of 769 dwelling units in Cairns.

13.

Driver's Licence Testing, Cleveland

Mr Goleby asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware of the urgent need for the appointment of a driver's licence testing officer to be stationed at Cleveland to cope with the increase in licence applications, which at present is occupying the time of two policemen?

(2) How many licences are issued at Cleveland?

(3) What action can he take to release these policemen so that they can resume normal police duties?

Answer:—

(1) Owing to the honourable member's persistent representations to me, I am aware that there is an urgent need to appoint a licence-inspecting officer in the Cleveland area.

(2) For 12 months ended 31 October 1981, there were 1 720 learners' permits issued, 1 720 provisional licences issued and 5 181 licences renewed.

(3) I have asked the Honourable the Deputy Premier and Treasurer and also the chairman of the Public Service Board, as a matter of urgency, for an increase in the number of civilian testing officers employed by the Department of Transport so that the testing of applicants for drivers' licences at Cleveland may be taken over by these officers, thereby relieving police officers of these duties.

14. Bus Interchange, Capalaba

Mr Goleby asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) How far has work proceeded in the construction of the bus interchange at Capalaba?

(2) When will the new timetables be introduced and when will the new service begin?

(3) Will he give an assurance that any dispute involving the Wynnum Plaza Bus Interchange will not delay the implementation of the new Redlands bus timetable and service?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Work is well advanced on the construction of the Capalaba bus interchange and it is intended that it will be completed well in time for the opening of the new services which are scheduled to commence on 14 December. New timetables for the new routes servicing the interchange are presently at the printers and will be distributed to all householders in the Redlands area about a week prior to that opening.

(3) The new bus schedules which have been devised by the Metropolitan Transit Authority and approved by my Department of Transport provide for vastly improved services both to the Redlands area and the Wynnum bayside area. In the interests of efficiency of operation the two services are linked and it would require extensive and lengthy rescheduling to separate them.

I am confident that common sense will prevail in the acceptance of these new services and they will both commence on the scheduled operating date.

15. Commonwealth Funding of Water Resources Projects

Dr Lockwood asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to Commonwealth funding of water resources projects—

(1) Would Cressbrook Dam be higher than seventh on the State priority list if the Commonwealth had honoured Deputy Prime Minister Mr Anthony's promise of \$4m per annum for each of eight years, beyond the Commonwealth's usual level of funding for the Bundaberg Isis Irrigation Scheme, and maintained the proposed funding rate for the Commonwealth's own five-year/\$200m scheme to aid irrigation, flood mitigation and urban water supply?

(2) How much has Queensland lost as the direct result of the Commonwealth Government's refusal to honour Mr Anthony's promise?

(3) What is the present shortfall in Commonwealth funding of its \$200m per year scheme for Australia as a whole, and Queensland in particular?

Answer:—

(1) On the understanding that the Commonwealth would provide financial assistance in 1981-82 to the Bundaberg Irrigation Project outside the National Water Resources Program, Cressbrook Creek Dam rated No. 6 on the priority list for Queensland schemes. There has been no change in the priority rating as a consequence of the change in the Commonwealth's position or for any other reason.

(2) I would point out to the honourable member that the matter of promised Commonwealth funding for the Bundaberg scheme has been taken up with the Prime Minister but no reply is to hand. It would therefore be premature to come to firm conclusions on the State's position at this time.

(3) In 1977, the Commonwealth agreed to provide \$200m to the States over the 5-year period 1978-79 to 1982-83 under the National Water Resources Program. According to Commonwealth Budget documents, funds allocated to the program have totalled \$102.6m including an estimated \$35m in 1981-82. If the Commonwealth is to honour its commitment then approximately \$97m will need to be allocated to the program in 1982-83. This, of course, will be a matter for the Commonwealth Government to consider in the context of its Budget policies next year.

In view of the fact that there are no clearly defined criteria for annual allocations or apportionment of them amongst the States, it is not possible to arrive at a figure on the present shortfall.

16. Ramp Access to Public Buildings

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Is the Government progressively providing level access or ramp access to allow handicapped people, including the aged, injured and permanently disabled to all Government owned, rented or leased accommodation?

(2) Does the department insist on access for handicapped people in all new buildings and has the Government been able to influence private builders of public buildings similarly to provide access for handicapped persons?

Answer:—

(1) Policy adopted by the Department of Works is that in the design of new Government buildings used by the public, provisions are to be made for access by handicapped persons. Furthermore, the provisions of similar functions in existing buildings is included when major renovations are undertaken. All other individual cases are considered in the light of merit and availability of funds. The lessee would be responsible for any provisions of this nature in regard to access to a building containing leased accommodation.

(2) The Building Act 1975-1978 requires all new buildings to be designed in accordance with AS 1428—"Design Rules for Access by the Disabled". This department pays particular attention to this when reviewing subsidy projects.

17. Babies Drugged and Left to Die

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) Has his attention been directed to media reports that in England the Director of Public Prosecutions decided to take no action against a Dr Hugh Jolly, and also that a Dr Leonard Arthur was acquitted after having been separately charged with murder and/or attempted murder, after live babies were drugged and left to die?

(2) Will Crown Law officers in Queensland prosecute in all cases where evidence indicates that live babies died as a result of administration of drugs or privation and neglect?

(3) At Queensland law, could it ever be held that a baby (a) has the right to die and (b) is capable of reaching and expressing that decision?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I am aware from reports in the media of the two English cases mentioned. In the second of such cases the charge of attempted murder was left to the jury but the jury acquitted.

In Queensland the Criminal Code, in Chapters 27 and 28, deals with the most relevant offences, including causing the death of a child. Each case must be judged in the light of its own facts. Jury decisions, whether in England or in Queensland, do not establish the law. I cannot comment on the English cases as I am not aware of all relevant details.

18. Queensland Fish Board Facilities, Bundaberg

Mr Blake asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Is he aware that Bundaberg fishermen interested in assessing the prospective viability of an enterprise based on facilities for sale or lease by the Fish Board are handicapped by the lack of factual information provided by the board?

(2) Why has the QCFO (Bundaberg Branch) request for a visit from a senior departmental officer been denied, considering his previous assurance that such officers would be made available to groups interested in participating in the board's restructuring?

(3) Will he ensure that normal criteria necessary for an informed assessment are provided regarding asset value, trading and marketing restrictions, leasing and associated charges on that section of the board's premises on offer, instead of the board's present attitude of "make an offer"?

Answer:—

(1) It is the policy of the Queensland Fish Board to continue to operate the wet-fish market in Bundaberg but to dispose of the processing facility. The board is also negotiating the sale of its residence in Bundaberg.

The board is seriously encouraging local co-operatives or fishermen groups to enter into meaningful negotiations on the sale or lease of various centres along the coast. I would encourage Bundaberg fishermen therefore to take this action with the board.

(2) At the first available opportunity, an officer of my department will visit Bundaberg to have discussions with fishermen. However, at the present time, my department's staff resources are extended to the limit in servicing similar requests in many ports throughout Queensland.

I would add, however, that it is not my intention that officers of my department negotiate the sale or lease of Queensland Fish Board facilities with fishermen groups, this function being that of officials of the Queensland Fish Board.

(3) The value of the board's Bundaberg processing facility can be established only by negotiation between interested parties and the Queensland Fish Board.

I am advised that negotiations are well advanced on the sale of the board's residence in Bundaberg.

19. Research into Effects of Fluoride Fall-out

Mr Blake asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Has he or his department received representations from concerned primary producer organisations or associated groups seeking university research into the effects of aluminium smelter fluoride fall-out on sugar-cane and other agricultural and pastoral products?

(2) As there is little evidence of research into the effects of fluoride fall-out on sugar-cane, but considerable evidence that fluoride is detrimental to chlorophyll, an essential element in the production of sugar by photosynthesis in cane, does he support such research in the interests of Queensland's sugar and other primary industries?

(3) If so, when is such research expected to be instituted, by whom will it be carried out, and how will it be funded?

Answer:—

(1) I have had representations from concerned groups and organisations seeking research into aluminium smelter fluoride fall-out on sugar-cane and other crops.

(2) The information presented by the company suggests that there would not be significant direct visible damage to sugar-cane or other crops. However, I agree that there is insufficient information on the indirect effects of fluoride on sugar production. We have indicated the need for additional research to the company concerned and requested that it confer with officers of my department.

The honourable member will be aware that the company's plans are in abeyance but I believe that the time should be utilised in obtaining this information.

(3) Neither the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations nor my department has the staff or financial resources to undertake this research at present. Officers of the bureau and of the department are investigating the costs and feasibility of the research

and have had discussions with university researchers in Queensland and interstate. With the assistance of aluminium industry funds there are some studies in progress at present, but not with sugar-cane.

If additional funds can be obtained it is likely that some initial studies with sugar-cane could be undertaken by the University of Queensland with the co-operation of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations. I am seeking the support of the company concerned for this research. I am unable to state how soon such research could be commenced but if the support sought is forthcoming, I would hope that some work could commence early next year.

20. Quarantine Period for Refugees

Mr Blake asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to a report in the Bundaberg "News-Mail" of 8 October reporting concern by the Bundaberg District Local Government Association and Bundaberg Base Hospital staff that a family of six Vietnamese had arrived in Bundaberg under the Community Refugee Settlement Scheme without any official medical papers and without undergoing a quarantine period and without prejudice to the persons involved—

(1) Is it normal practice for sponsored refugees to enter Australia and settle directly into Queensland communities unaccompanied by official health and quarantine clearance documents?

(2) Is it confirmed officially that concerned health, local government and other responsible officials accept that refugees sponsored by reputable organisations are exempted from production of certification of health-clearance requirements and, if not, what health checks and medical-observation periods, if any, are such persons to be subjected to in the public interest?

(3) In view of his recent public warning of the dangers of introduction by host persons of insect-spread killer diseases into Queensland, with regard to incubation periods of such diseases, should a quarantine period after arrival be mandatory, irrespective of so-called health clearances issued in refugee-camp conditions in disease-prevalent countries?

Answer:—

(1) There are specific arrangements that refugees from certain areas can go directly to Queensland communities. These persons have all the requisite medical clearances. A quarantine period is not necessary.

(2) All Indo-Chinese refugees from camps in South East Asia are treated similarly. They receive normal medical clearance for immigration into Australia. After arrival, they are screened for diseases particular to their areas, and offered treatment and immunisation for relevant conditions. It should be realised that this observation is an ongoing process that can be accomplished very successfully in small communities.

(3) While it is admitted that migrants to Australia may be incubating a specific condition, this is true of all migrants. There seems no reason why a group who have been screened as well as, if not better than, any other group of citizens, should be involved in a quarantine period.

21. Bridge, Lockyer Creek

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

What is the expected completion date for the bridge over the Lockyer Creek on the Flagstone Creek to Helidon secondary road?

Answer:—

The structure will be substantially complete by the Christmas close-down. The approaches will be completed early in March 1982. Financial authority for the approach works is in the course of approval.

22. Gatton-Brisbane Rail Service

Mr Fitzgerald asked the Minister for Transport—

With reference to the Gatton to Brisbane rail service—

(1) Is he aware that the 8.15 a.m. service from Gatton to Brisbane has been terminated and that no co-ordinated rail-road service replaces it?

(2) Is he aware that it was the most used service from Gatton before the recent changes to the timetable?

(3) When will the timetable be reviewed?

(4) Will consideration be given to extending the 8.45 a.m. Laidley service to Gatton?

Answer:—

(1) My inquiries with the Railway Department confirm that this service was not included in the re-arrangement of the Toowoomba/Brisbane co-ordinated rail/road service which has been operating since 8 November 1981. It has been replaced by an additional service from Helidon which departs from Gatton at 6.38 a.m., for which there had been numerous requests from Forest Hill, Laidley and Gatton and it is very heavily patronised.

The present schedules were based on the best use of available rail motors to provide maximum overall benefit. Helidon is still well served by four services daily, Monday to Friday, and two services daily on Saturdays and Sundays, and there has been an increase in the services to Gatton and Laidley.

An additional co-ordinated service is being scheduled which will depart from Gatton at 9.15 a.m. and connect at Ipswich with an electric train arriving in Brisbane at 10.58 a.m.

(2) Departmental records disclose that an average of 10 passengers travelled from Gatton to Roma Street on the 8.16 a.m. railmotor.

(3) I assure the honourable member that the operation of the co-ordinated service will be kept under review with a view to ensuring that the best possible service is provided.

(4) This service is heavily patronised and carries as many as 80 passengers. Rescheduling to extend it to Gatton would be to the disadvantage of those passengers. However, as I have already indicated that could be subject to alteration if a definite need becomes evident.

23. New Railway Line, Toowoomba Range

Mr Fitzgerald asked the Minister for Transport—

When will the report by the consulting engineers into the feasibility of a new railway line down the Toowoomba Range be released?

Answer:—

I am advised by the Commissioner for Railways that the consultants, Gutteridge Haskins and Davey, expect to present their report within three weeks. It will then need to be analysed by technical officers of the Railway Department and as soon as this analysis has been completed I shall make an appropriate announcement.

The honourable member can rest assured that I shall keep him informed regarding progress.

24. Home Loans

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

With reference to the statement by the Executive Director of the Association of Permanent Building Societies, Mr Maurice Stitt, reported on 17 November, which, whilst revealing that the total amount of loan moneys is being maintained

in Queensland, stated that the average home loan is now approximately \$39,000—what is the usual term of such loans and what are the monthly repayments at present interest rates over such term?

Answer:—

I have been advised that Mr Stitt's full statement was that the average loan for a new home was \$39,876, and \$32,559 for an existing home.

The usual terms of such loans are 25 years and the monthly repayments for this term at the present interest rate on a loan of \$39,876 are approximately \$465.

25. Prohibition of Dredging, Brisbane River

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

What criteria were used in declaring certain areas of the Brisbane River from Oxley Creek upstream to the Jindalee Reach prohibited to dredging?

Answer:—

The criteria used in the closure of specified areas to dredging relate to the need to maintain adequate distance from river banks susceptible to erosion, particularly on bends in the river. This aspect is also safeguarded in the general permit conditions which prohibit dredging closer than 30 metres from the banks and which require the maintenance of minimum batters.

Restrictions on the permitted hours for dredging are related to noise and visual aspects and the problem of policing permit conditions during the hours of darkness.

26. Laundry Contracts with Health Department and/or Hospitals Boards

Mr Underwood asked the Minister for Health—

(1) What are the names of the firms with which his department and/or hospital boards have laundry contracts?

(2) What is the price per kilogram for each contract?

(3) What are the commencement and expiry dates of each contract?

(4) On whose authority was each contract let?

(5) What method of selection was used before accepting each contract?

(6) Are further laundry contracts envisaged and, if so, what are the details?

Answer:—

(1)—

Halwyn Centre—Woolloongabba Laundry; Redcliffe Hospital—Caloundra Delux Dry Cleaners; Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee—Sutnik Enterprises; Rockhampton Hospital (Nurses polyester/cotton uniforms only)—Chevron Dry Cleaners and Steam Laundry; Eventide Sandgate—Bishop Dry Cleaners and Launderers.

(2)—

Halwyn Centre—\$78,066.72 for term of contract. Tender invited on a price per article laundered basis; Redcliffe Hospital—\$710,391 for term of contract (Price per kg not readily available); Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital—48 cents per kg for general linen, Blankets and foul linen—67 cents each for female uniforms and \$1.20 each for male uniforms, i.e., shirt and trousers; Rockhampton Hospital—65 cents per uniform; Eventide Sandgate—Tender based on a price per article laundered.

(3)—					Commenced	Terminate
Halwyn Centre	..	..	..	..	1-10-1981	30-9-1982
Redcliffe Hospital	..	..	..	..	1-7-1981	30-6-1983
Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital	..	..	..	..	December 1980	30-6-1982
Rockhampton Hospital	..	..	..	..	12-8-1981	on-going
Eventide Sandgate	..	..	..	..	1-8-1980	31-3-1982
(4)—						
Halwyn Centre	..	..	..	..	} Departmental approval was issued to "Eventide" and hospitals boards concerned.	
Redcliffe Hospital	..	..	..	..		
Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital	..	..	..	..		
Rockhampton Hospital	..	..	..	..		
Eventide Sandgate	..	..	..	..		

(5) The normal Government tender system was followed, that is, lowest or lowest conforming tender to be accepted and adequate reasons for passing over lower tenders must be given.

(6) In instances where laundry upgrading is considered, the aspect of private contracts is also taken into consideration. A determination is then made on all the facts available at that time. There is no consideration being given currently to any further contracts.

27. People Detained under Mental Health Act

Mr Underwood asked the Minister for Health—

For the years 1978-79, 1979-80, 1980-81 and 1981-82 for people detained under the Mental Health Act—

(1) How many have died, what were the causes of death and what were the exact locations where the deaths occurred?

(2) How many have been seriously injured, what were the causes of serious injury and what were the exact locations where the injuries were inflicted?

(3) What measures have been taken to protect these people against injury and death?

(4) How many have absconded from detention, how often if more than once for each, what institutions did each abscond from, what are the details of the methods used to apprehend absconders, were apprehended absconders consulted by an independent adviser, legal or otherwise, and, if so, what were the reasons for each absconding and what action was taken in each case to alleviate the individuals' distress resulting in their absconding?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) There is no requirement under the Mental Health Act for the return of statistics in regard to those who are compulsorily detained under Parts II, III and IV of the Act.

The Mental Health Act applies to private hospitals, public hospitals, security patients' hospitals, training institutions, psychiatric hospitals and institutions within the meaning of the Inebriates Institutions Acts. The statistics requested are simply not obtainable.

The honourable member apparently fails to understand the differentiation between patients who are absent without leave under section 47 of the Act and persons who have escaped from legal custody under section 67 of the Act. This fine but extremely important differentiation is well set out in the provisions of the Mental Health Act.

Should the honourable member wish to make specific inquiry of particular matters in regard to any specific institution, I would be pleased to answer those inquiries by correspondence. However, I do point out that such inquiries do incur considerable expense and the resources of the department are not directed towards the accumulation of data of this nature.

(3) Persons requiring custody and safety as well as treatment are contained in either closed wards or a security patients' hospital. Persons under care and treatment are, in so far as is consistent with their own personal safety, nursed under open and liberal conditions. The dignity of risk is not deliberately taken from them and this element is an important aspect of treatment.

(4) See (1 & 2).

28. Ipswich Senior Citizens' Complex

Mr Underwood asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) What progress has he made in representations to provide and obtain funds for the Ipswich Senior Citizens' complex?

(2) Will an announcement of the provision of necessary funds be made and, if so, when?

(3) What will be the terms of the provisions of such funds?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I am unable to comment on progress of any representations being made in regard to this or any other particular project of this nature.

However, I can say that the question of funding for senior citizens' centres is primarily one for consideration and determination by the Commonwealth Government which has responsibility for the major component of Government subsidy involved. For its part, the State makes its share of subsidy available as and when the Commonwealth funds are approved.

I am aware that limitations on Commonwealth funding have resulted in delays to a number of projects. However, this is a matter that should be taken up with the Commonwealth Government.

29. Industrial Relations in Electricity Industry

Mrs Nelson asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to a photograph and article in "The Courier-Mail" of 10 November in which a poster has the slogan "SEQEB tribe all chiefs few Indians—costly electricity and no service"—

(1) What action is being taken by him to implement better industrial relations within the electricity industry?

(2) When will proposed amendments to the Electricity Act come before the House?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) As the honourable member is aware, the Government is currently conducting an investigation into the organisation of the electricity industry in Queensland and, in particular, into the aspect of industrial relations. In addition, I recently undertook a four-day interstate visit to compare Queensland's electricity industry with that in the other States. I expect that, in the near future, I shall have some firm proposals to take to Cabinet.

30. Employment of Disabled Persons

Mrs Nelson asked the Minister for Employment and Labour Relations—

As a spokesman of the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Youth Affairs claimed recently that there was a lack of awareness among Australian

employers in relation to the employment of disabled people, is his department doing anything to assist in the employment of disabled persons in Queensland and what is the general attitude of Queensland employers to disabled workers?

Answer:—

My department is represented on the State Planning Committee for the International Year of Disabled Persons and an officer is chairman of the Employment Subcommittee. The subcommittee has written to 800 major employers in Queensland seeking information on their policy on the employment of disabled persons and to the rehabilitation of injured workers. The subcommittee has been pleased with the response from employers, many of whom have been playing their part in providing employment for disabled people for a number of years. The response to the project by the Employment Subcommittee has been overwhelmingly supportive of the subcommittee's aims and objectives to increase employment opportunities for disabled persons.

Employers who have responded have indicated that

- (a) they are already employing people with a disability,
- (b) they would employ such people if possible, or
- (c) they seek advice as to how they can further assist.

Of those who were not employing disabled persons at the present time, those who sought advice or further assistance will be followed up when all responses from employers have been analysed.

There were some employers who were critical of the assistance that had been given them by the various agencies, both public and private, that were associated with the placing of disabled persons. In many instances, employers have a specific disability in mind and it is not always possible to meet their specific requirements at a given point in time.

There is also the mistaken assumption that all disabled persons have a physical disability, as categories such as epileptics, asthmatics, alcoholics, mentally retarded, and many others, are also in the disabled category.

Employment of disabled persons in both the Queensland region and the metropolitan area show a 59 per cent increase for the June quarter 1981 over the June quarter 1980. I pay a tribute to my officers for the work that they have done in achieving that target.

Whatever is achieved through the International Year of Disabled Persons, the hard statistics indicate that a significant number of additional employment opportunities have been obtained. The thrust will be to ensure that these employment opportunities continue in 1982 and subsequent years.

31. School Transport Assistance in Outlying Brisbane Suburbs

Mrs Nelson asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Is he aware of the difficulties in relation to school transport faced by parents of schoolchildren living in outlying suburbs of metropolitan Brisbane, such as Albany Creek Road, Aspley and Bridgeman Downs?

(2) Because the Brisbane City Council provides no council bus services to these areas, and as children have to rely on private bus services to get to the closest State schools and a family with three school age children has to spend over \$10 per week to send their children to and from school, will he investigate this anomaly and provide these families with at least the same level of assistance as is provided to users of regular Brisbane City Council bus services?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I am aware of the difficulties faced by many Queensland parents in the conveyance of their children to school, not only those living in outlying Brisbane suburbs.

My department presently provides assistance for children under ten years of age resident more than 3.2 km from the nearest State school and for children ten years of age and over resident more than 4.8 km from the nearest State school. At the present time, resources are not available to allow a reduction in these limitations.

32. Land Resumptions for Power-station, Stanwell

Mr Hartwig asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) When will the exact siting of the new power station at Stanwell be known?

(2) As many landholders are somewhat apprehensive of their future in the vicinity of Stanwell, will he make an announcement informing landholders whose land could be resumed (a) what time would they have to purchase other land, (b) the length of time from resumption notice to settlement and (c) what right of appeal landholders would have in relation to resumption prices for land acquired by the QEGB?

Answer:—

(1) Now that a decision has been made on the siting for the 1400 MW Central Queensland power-station at Stanwell, the State Electricity Commission of Queensland is proceeding to have the exact land requirements for the power-station delineated.

(2) I appreciate that the knowledge that there will be a power-station constructed in the area is a matter of concern for landholders. I can assure the honourable member that every endeavour will be made to have land dealings finalised at the earliest possible time so that minimum inconvenience is caused to local landholders. Once agreement on compensation is reached, payment will be made promptly. Any resumptions would be pursuant to the provisions of the Electricity Act 1976-1980 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1967-1977. In the event of disagreement as to the amount of compensation payable, either party has the right to refer the matter to the Land Court for determination.

33. Gracemere State School Dental Clinic

Mr Hartwig asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the forthcoming visit of the school dental clinic to the Gracemere State School—will he consider allowing the pupils from adjacent schools such as Bouldercombe, Stanwell, Kalapa, Westwood and Gogango, who have not attended a dental clinic for a long period of time, to visit the dental clinic at Gracemere?

Answer:—

All of the schools mentioned have been included on the itinerary of the mobile dental clinic which is to service Gracemere School and will be visited progressively by that clinic on completion of treatment at Gracemere.

34. Leave and Expenses of Commissioner of Police

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

(1) When was Terence Murray Lewis appointed as Commissioner of Police?

(2) What was the amount of study or recreation leave taken by Mr Lewis since his appointment to 31 October?

(3) What were his expenses for the year ended 30 June and from 30 June to 31 October?

(4) Is the Commissioner, Mr Lewis, at present overseas and, if so, what is the nature of his business overseas?

Answer:—

(1) 29 November 1976.

(2) 168 days' recreation leave. No study leave.

(3) The Commissioner of Police is provided with an expenses of office allowance of \$2,500 per annum in addition to his salary.

(4) The Police Commissioner (Mr Lewis) is at present overseas, having attended the 50th General Assembly of Interpol held in Nice, France, from 3 to 10 November 1981. He is currently visiting the United Kingdom and the United States on official business.

35. Constable B. Marlin, Beenleigh Police Station

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

(1) Was Constable B. Marlin of the Beenleigh Police Station recently involved in a motor vehicle accident in the Woodridge area?

(2) Was he taken to the Royal Brisbane Hospital for treatment of injuries sustained in the accident and to have a blood sample taken to ascertain if he was under the influence of liquor when the accident occurred?

(3) Did officers from the Mt Gravatt C.I.B. remove him from the hospital before a blood sample could be taken and, if so, who authorised his removal from the hospital and for what reason?

Answer:—

(1) Plain Clothes Constable B. Marlin, of the Upper Mt Gravatt CI Branch, was involved in a two-vehicle traffic accident in the Woodridge area on 30 April 1981.

(2) No.

(3) No.

36. Money Owed by John Hannay to Government Departments

Mr Hooper asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to the disclosure in the Auditor-General's report that State Government departments lost an estimated \$8 million in 1979-80 and 1980-81 through bad debts and other causes—

(1) How much is owed at present to Government departments by John Hannay the hotel proprietor of Mackay and in what capacities is such money owed?

(2) What amounts owed by Hannay in the past have been written off by Government departments and in what capacities did such bad debts occur when they were written off?

(3) Has Hannay been prosecuted or fined in relation to non payment of Government charges and, if so, when, what was the amount involved in each action and the amount of any fine concerned?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I am advised that there is no information available within the Treasury which would provide a comprehensive answer to the honourable member's question.

I am sure the honourable member is aware that the all-embracing nature of his question would require considerable time and research by each and every Government department that levies a fee or charge if a comprehensive answer was to be provided. I could not justify the considerable expenditure of public funds that would be involved.

However, I am sure that, if the honourable member has an area of particular concern, then the relevant Minister would be quite prepared to meet any reasonable request for specific information.

37. Staff Tables for State Primary Schools

Mr Gygar asked the Minister for Education—

In view of the increase of 756 teachers provided in the last State Budget, does he anticipate that the staff tables for State primary schools will be amended for the coming year and, if so, to what extent and in what detail?

Answer:—

On 27 October 1981, in answer to a question from another honourable member, I advised the House that 193 of the additional teachers would be employed in primary schools. They will be appointed to schools with particular needs.

I would like to take this opportunity to point out to the honourable member that staffing scales are used to determine the basic staffing allocation required at each school. However, additional teachers are then appointed to many schools to cater for special circumstances and local requirements. These can include demographic changes, difficult class arrangements, students with learning problems and so on.

38. Revolving-chamber Carbines

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

With reference to the recent Order in Council banning the ownership of revolving-chamber carbines and the expiry of the amnesty for their surrender or disposal on 31 October—

(1) How many of these carbines were surrendered during the amnesty?

(2) Were any of the surrendered carbines cut down or in the process of being cut down?

(3) How many criminal activities or incidents were recorded in the 12 months prior to 31 October which involved the use of these cut-down carbines?

(4) What percentage of these carbines which have been sold in Queensland had been accounted for as at 31 October?

(5) What action do he and the Police Department intend to take in respect of those carbines which remain unaccounted for?

Answer:—

(1) Six.

(2) No.

(3) Statistics of this nature are not kept by the Police Department.

(4) No record is kept by the Police Department of the number of revolving-chamber carbines sold in Queensland.

(5) In any instance where a person is found unlawfully in possession of these weapons, appropriate action will be taken.

39. Petrol Prices

Mr Gygar asked the Minister for Commerce and Industry—

(1) Is he aware that oil companies are still engaging in selective pricing practices which allow company outlets to retail petrol at prices lower than the wholesale prices offered to other outlets?

(2) As this situation has now persisted for some years and been the subject of considerable dispute and protest, has he received any indication from the companies that this grossly unfair and discriminatory practice will cease?

(3) As petrol companies are able to retail petrol at prices lower than the standard wholesale price, will he take whatever action is open to him to bring about an immediate across-the-board decrease in petrol prices charged by oil companies of at least four cents a litre?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2) I have received no indication that oil companies voluntarily propose to discontinue or amend their current practice of selling petrol through company-owned retail outlets.

(3) The subject of divorcement of oil companies from petrol retailing was discussed by Commonwealth and State Ministers for Consumer Affairs at a recent conference in Adelaide. As a consequence of this discussion, a working party of Commonwealth and State officials including Queensland representatives has been established in order to consider the matter in detail and recommend measures which may lead to the adoption of relatively uniform prices of petrol throughout Australia as well as greater separation of wholesaling and retailing activities in this market.

40. Exchange of Land Between Cardwell Shire Council and Lands Department

Mr Row asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

What is the current situation pertaining to the proposal for an exchange of land between the Cardwell Shire Council and the Lands Department in order to secure adequate provision for the future development of the town of Cardwell?

Answer:—

On 5 May 1979, following representations made by the Council of the Shire of Cardwell, an area of about 119 hectares was excised from State Forest 461 for the purpose of urban expansion. This area is presently vacant Crown land. The Department of Forestry is at present giving consideration to a proposal submitted by the Cardwell Shire Council for an exchange of council freehold portion 247, parish of Glenbora, for a further part of State Forest 461.

41. Lucinda Wharf

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

With reference to the Lucinda Wharf—

(1) What section of the wharf is for public use?

(2) What kind of restrictions should be applied to the wharf because of the existence of the bulk sugar terminal in the adjoining area?

Answer:—

(1) There is no public jetty at Lucinda; the public jetty is located at Dungeness. The Harbour Corporation of Queensland has commercial wharves at Lucinda. As part of the jetty stem to the older wharf a finger pier was constructed to aid the construction of the new wharf. No part of these wharves is considered to be public. However, the berthing of tourist launches and other smaller vessels is permitted to the finger pier. It is stressed that this pier is not a public jetty, such facility being funded by and maintained from revenues relating to commercial harbour operations.

(2) Control of the Harbours Corporation's wharves are governed by the harbour's by-laws. Concerning the restriction of public use for reasons of the bulk sugar terminal it is advised that a security fence surrounds the terminal. Pedestrian and limited vehicle access is permitted to the old wharf area which is outside such fence but secured by a secondary enclosure.

42. Tourist Information Centre, Cardwell

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

What factors are delaying the approval for the construction of a tourist information centre at Cardwell?

Answer:—

The honourable member and I discussed during my recent visit to North Queensland the proposed establishment by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of an information and interpretive centre on a site at Cardwell deemed eminently suitable for the purpose. My colleague the Minister for Lands and Forestry will be seeking Governor-in-Council approval to the excision of land from a recreation reserve at Cardwell for subsequent reservation for the purpose stated above, under the control of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife Service as trustee. This will give all our tourists and others travelling via the Bruce Highway to North Queensland an opportunity to obtain all the relevant information and advice about the national parks and other points of interest they can see and enjoy in that beautiful part of the State.

43. Spectacle Frames Supplied at Public Hospitals

Mr Kruger asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the answer to my question of 31 March about the type and colour of spectacles available at public hospitals—

(1) Will he investigate allegations in the form of complaints that I have received from my constituents and patients generally in respect to the optometrist at Redcliffe Hospital showing only one spectacle frame, as contrary to the answer given on 31 March?

(2) Will he stamp out what appears to be an agency-type operation at hospitals between optometrists and spectacle-frame manufacturers?

Answer:—

(1) Types of frames available to eligible patients are displayed at the main office. Written advice of the types of frames available is issued to patients eligible for the supply of free spectacles after means testing.

(2) Sample frames of each tenderer are forwarded to the department, along with the tenders submitted for each hospital contract. The department examines the board's recommendation before giving approval to accept a tender for optometrical services at each hospitals board throughout the State.

44. Jojoba International Pty Ltd and Red Champ Research Station Pty Ltd

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

(1) Is he aware of the company trading as Jojoba International Pty Ltd in conjunction with Red Champ Research Station Pty Ltd?

(2) Does the companies' offer of investment in the Raglan Jojoba Nut Plantation constitute an "interest" as defined in section 76 of part IV, division 5, of the Companies Act (Queensland) and, therefore, subject to its provisions?

(3) Will he authorise a search to ascertain if the sales agreements and management deed of Red Champ Research Station Pty Ltd are "caught" by the above provisions of the Companies Act?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2 & 3) The matters raised are under consideration by the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs and the Solicitor-General.

45. Timber Production from Rain Forests

Mr Kruger asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

With reference to the Forestry Department seminar papers “Marketing in the Eighties” dated 21-25 July, 1980, particularly the issues raised by Mr S. Dansie, Inspector of Forests—

(1) Will he comment on the statement by Mr Dansie that allocation of timber from the virgin rain forests of the Mount Windsor Tableland to all mills can hardly be regarded as a realistic approach to the problems of timber shortfall from all other areas?

(2) As the Forestry Department will drop timber quotas by only 10 per cent for the four years after 1981-82, why has Mr Dansie’s concern that the quota system “does result in over-production and timber wastage” not been referred to or acted on in the Forestry Department’s White Paper on Timber Production from North Queensland Rainforests?

(3) In view of Mr Dansie’s advice that rain forests are basically a one-cut relatively low-production forest and that a sustained yield is not possible except over a very long term of perhaps 80-100 years, why does the Forestry Department persist with the notion that it can recut these forests every 35-48 years?

Answer:—

(1) The allocation of timber from the virgin rain forests of Mount Windsor tableland includes most, but not all, North Queensland sawmilling groups, and was a sensible approach to the programmed reduction of the North Queensland allowable cut.

(2) The allocation system does not result in over-production and timber wastage.

(3) As stated in the position paper recently tabled in this House, the allowable-cut calculations are based on the application of cutting cycle analysis techniques to inventory and growth data. This has shown that a second cut is possible in a relatively short term, with the period between first and second cuts averaging about 40 years.

Mr Dansie is a harvesting and marketing inspector primarily responsible through the district forester for the maintenance of marketing standards in the field. He has peripheral involvement only in resources matters and is not involved in yield calculation and the determination of allowable cut. His views on this allocation question represent personal opinion only. The personal opinions of departmental officers are respected. However, in the development of departmental policy in any particular field, the views of officers with expertise in that field supported by firm technical data are of primary importance.

46. Report by Inter-departmental Committee on Electricity Industry

Mr Scassola asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) Was an inter-departmental committee appointed to inquire into the electricity industry?

(2) Has that committee furnished a report to the Government?

(3) If the report has not yet been received, when does he anticipate receiving the same?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

(3) In the near future.

The honourable member will find the answer to question 29 asked by the honourable member for Aspley (Mrs Nelson) useful to add to this answer.

47. Sunnybank High School

Mr Scassola asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

What action will be taken to alleviate the anticipated accommodation crisis in 1982 at Sunnybank High School?

Answer:—

The accommodation requirement for Sunnybank State High School for 1982 has been reviewed by officers of the Department of Works and the Department of Education and is considered adequate for anticipated enrolments. Further review will be made when actual enrolments are known.

48. Additional Teachers, Brisbane South Region

Mr Scassola asked the Minister for Education—

(1) How many of the additional teachers, numbering more than 700, to be engaged by his department will be appointed to primary and secondary schools in the Brisbane South Region?

(2) In particular, to which schools will any such teachers be assigned?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I advised the honourable member on 27 October 1981 that progressive adjustments will have to be made to regional allocations of teachers early in 1982. This will follow the collection of information about enrolment patterns that emerge in the new school year. However, present planning is for almost 240 additional teachers to be appointed to schools in the Brisbane South Region.

Regional staffing officers will be making many staff adjustments during the next three months because of resignations, retirements and the taking of leave. As a large number of changes must occur, the identification of schools which will benefit directly from additional appointees is not possible.

49. Flood Mitigation, Brisbane Metropolitan Area

Mr Fouras asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Did the State Government in 1972 commission consultants to prepare feasibility studies for flood mitigation works in the Brisbane metropolitan area?

(2) Were the following creeks studied by the consultants: (a) Enoggera, (b) Breakfast, (c) Oxley, and (d) Kedron Brook?

(3) What money has been spent and what were the contributions from the Commonwealth Government, State Government and Brisbane City Council respectively?

(4) Why was Norman Creek not included in the consultants' survey?

(5) Since many of my constituents in low-lying areas in the vicinity of Norman Creek are forced to live with the worry of severe financial losses from floods, will a flood mitigation study of Norman Creek be undertaken and funds supplied to alleviate this problem?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Total expenditure on the works to 30 June 1981 was \$8.1m. This was met on the basis of 40 per cent Commonwealth Government, 40 per cent State Government, and 20 per cent council, contributions thus being approximately \$3.2m from each Government and \$1.7m from the Brisbane City Council.

(4) The decision to commission the study was primarily consequential on the two floods in 1972, neither of which affected the Norman Creek areas with the degree of severity to which areas in the vicinity of the other four creeks were affected.

(5) The question of whether any action is to be taken in relation to Norman Creek is a matter for consideration by the Brisbane City Council. Should a decision be taken to undertake works on the creek, an application for State Government subsidy at the approved rate would be considered.

50. Additional Funds for Rental Accommodation

Mr Fouras asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Is he aware of the open letter to the Prime Minister from the Victorian Minister for Housing published in all major Victorian newspapers on 5 November?

(2) Does he believe, as does the Victorian Minister, that the first priority of Government should be the housing of low-income families, one-parent families, pensioners and homeless youths?

(3) How then does he justify the 1981-82 Budget allocation of \$63m to people borrowing to buy their own houses and a mere \$22.6m for the building of rental accommodation?

(4) Will he join with the Victorian Housing Minister to seek a special housing grant to the States to alleviate the housing tragedy, and will he ensure that a fairer share of housing funds have been allocated to rental accommodation as a matter of urgency?

Answer:—

(1) Yes. I am also aware that he was the subject of a censure motion moved by the ALP Opposition criticising the waste of Government funds on the advertising costs.

(2) It is a matter of record in the transcript of the Housing Ministers' September conference in Sydney that I expressed the opinion that the Commonwealth did not give sufficient priority to housing in its Budget allocations.

(3) This persistent knocking of the policy of giving poor people an option of owning or renting is disturbing. I repeat: the majority of those who get some financial assistance towards ownership would otherwise be on rental wait lists. They are the same people. We merely try to give another option, just as we have tried to create locational options in rental stock.

Just to correct the record—the capital expenditure figures for 1981-82 are estimated at \$53.7m ownership and \$32.1m into rental. As I have said before, some of the spending from ownership is transferred to rental account to enable replacement of rental stock sold to tenants.

Considerable proportions of both funds are tied to the original purpose and are not interchangeable.

(4) I have made unilateral approaches to Canberra and have joined with other Ministers in reasoned statistically-based approaches to convince Canberra of the needs.

However, like most other State Ministers of varying political complexions, I seek to be sure that the tactics used to convince Canberra of the needs are not counter-productive to the cause.

51. Supplying of Confidential Information by Department of Children's Services

Mr Fouras asked the Minister for Welfare Services—

(1) Is he aware that some 300 miners working for the Dampier Mining Company at Blackwater went on strike for about two weeks because the company refused one of their members, Kevin Royal, a house?

(2) Is he aware that the reason for the strike was the miners' allegation that the house was refused because the company was provided with what they considered to be highly personal and confidential information by the Department of Children's Services?

(3) What information was passed on to the company by the department?

(4) Does he consider that his departmental officers acted with propriety in passing on this information?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) I am aware of a Press report that a dispute at Blackwater relating to the type of accommodation offered to an employee of the Dampier Mining Company arose from an allegation that information of a confidential nature had been supplied by the Department of Children's Services to the mine management.

I am advised that, although certain discussions took place with the mine management, at no time was confidential information supplied by any of my officers to either party to the dispute.

52. Restoration of The Mansions

Mr Prentice asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

Given the Government's commitment to restoring The Mansions—

(1) What action has been taken to date?

(2) What is the anticipated date by which the restoration work will be finalised?

Answer:—

(1) The Mansions restoration and renovation is part of the comprehensive development of the Government Precinct, that is, to include renovation and restoration of Harris Court, construction of new Government office accommodation and the provision of car-parking areas for Government vehicles.

The precinct development also envisages a landscaped mall running behind both The Mansions and Harris Court. The planning, development and construction of these various elements must be handled comprehensively and must take into account the effects of the heavy construction work likely to be adjacent to the buildings being restored. Accordingly, a pre-design report has been prepared on The Mansions covering method of restoration and renovation, proposed funding and implementation program, proposed occupancy, and estimates of cost for the various elements, and is now being reviewed prior to completion of detailed design and implementation documentation.

(2) In view of the circumstances outlined in (1), it is not possible at this stage to advise when the restoration work will be finalised.

53. Radar Detection Devices

Mr Prentice asked the Minister for Transport—

With reference to my earlier question to the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police and his response in which he stated that there were no laws to prevent the use or installation of devices to warn motorists of radar traps—what action will he take to outlaw their use?

Answer:—

I am having this matter examined in conjunction with my review of the Traffic Act and Regulations.

As the honourable member is on my ministerial transport committee, I am sure that he will raise this matter at its next meeting so that we can have a look at the position generally in relation to these and similar devices.

54. Spinal Unit, Princess Alexandra Hospital

Mrs Kyburz asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the disgusting tardiness in the renovations of the spinal unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital when will the much needed renovations begin and why has this project been constantly set back in priority?

Answer:—

The partial redevelopment at the Princess Alexandra Hospital includes the provision of a new building to incorporate the proposed new Spinal Injuries Unit and the South Brisbane Hospitals Board has submitted sketch plans for the proposed unit. These are presently being reviewed.

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. In the meantime, approval has been given for the air-conditioning of the existing Spinal Injuries Unit.

55. Warning Devices on Trucks Parked on Public Roads

Mrs Kyburz asked the Minister for Transport—

With reference to regulations relating to trucks parked on public roads displaying an iridescent triangle—is the regulation concerning the parking of trucks on public roads for prolonged periods without safety warning devices of some kind policed and will he list the main regulations relating to parking trucks so that both the public and truck owners can easily understand?

Answer:—

I assume the honourable member is referring to the parking of commercial-type vehicles, which would include semi-trailers and heavy vehicles. Apart from the general parking regulations which apply to all vehicles, as indicated by official traffic signs, Traffic Regulations 57 and 75A deal especially with the type of commercial vehicle which does cause problems to other road users.

At the outset, might I say that these regulations are policed and appropriate action taken against vehicles which are parked for prolonged periods in contravention of the regulations.

So far as a semi-trailer or a vehicle having an overall length greater than eight metres, including its load, is concerned, Traffic Regulation 57 prohibits parking except for a maximum period of one hour on a carriageway in a built-up area,

on such part of a carriageway and at such times and under such conditions as are permitted by the District Superintendent of Traffic or outside a built-up area on the shoulders of a carriageway or the lateral parts of a carriageway not used by the main body of moving traffic. Failure to observe this regulation attracts a Traffic Offence Notice penalty of \$5.

In addition, Traffic Regulation 75A deals with a heavy motor vehicle of a laden or unladen weight of more than 4 tonnes. It requires the driver of such vehicle to carry three portable warning signs conforming with the prescribed requirements.

When such a heavy vehicle is standing disabled upon a road outside a built-up area during hours of darkness, the driver must display one warning sign to the rear of the vehicle and one to the front of the vehicle between 50 and 150 metres from it and one of the signs at the side of the vehicle nearer the centre line of the carriageway.

As the honourable member has indicated, these signs take the form of a triangle with three sides with an open centre, have a minimum height of 290 mm or, for those who are not conversant with metric measurements, approximately one foot. The sign has a triangle on the front and back on a white background of red reflecting sheeting or nine red reflectors equally spaced to show four reflectors on each side of the triangle. The reflecting sheeting or reflectors must be capable of being visible for a distance of 200 metres or approximately 220 yards. Failure to comply with these requirements attracts a Traffic Offence Notice penalty of \$30.

While these regulations are explained in Chapter 9 of the Department of Transport's publication "The Queensland Traffic Code", which is widely distributed, I am aware of some public concern of drivers who fail to observe the law and any complaint is investigated.

Police officers, including officers of the Transport Police, pay particular attention to the traffic laws relating to heavy motor vehicles. The illegal parking of a heavy motor vehicle where it constitutes a traffic hazard is dealt with promptly.

I will ensure that this aspect of road safety is included in appropriate courses or lectures given by field officers of the Queensland Road Safety Council, particularly in its Fleet Safety Course, which is directed towards the drivers of commercial vehicles.

56. Kuraby Railway Station Car-park

Mrs Kyburz asked the Minister for Transport—

What priority has the Metropolitan Transit Authority given to the upgrading of the Kuraby Railway Station car-park?

Answer:—

The proposed car-park has high priority in the MTA interchange program for 1981-82.

I am pleased to inform the honourable member that the design is complete and tenders should be called within the next fortnight for the construction of car-parking facilities to accommodate 143 vehicles. The new facilities will be constructed to the normal MTA standard, which includes complete paving, landscaping and security lighting.

Work is well advanced on the extension of a pedestrian overbridge from the car-park to the rail platforms.

I would like to take this opportunity to place on record my thanks to the honourable member who has made persistent representations on behalf of her constituents to have this new facility constructed. I will keep the honourable member informed on progress.

In answer to the honourable member the proposed car-park at the Kuraby Railway Station has a high priority in the Metropolitan Transit Authority interchange program for 1981-82.

57.

Consumer Credit Legislation

Mr R. J. Gibbs asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) Is he aware that a Bill has been introduced into the New South Wales Parliament which will comprehensively regulate consumer credit?

(2) Will the passage of this legislation and similar legislation through the South Australian Parliament end the uniformity that existed among States on the matter of consumer credit under the Hire Purchase Acts?

(3) Is he aware that the legislation will provide for the licensing of all credit providers and that any person will be entitled to object to the granting of a licence or seek its revocation?

(4) Is he aware that the Bill will forbid repossession once 75 per cent of the amount payable under the contract has been paid?

(5) Has he taken any action to ensure that Queensland does not get out of line with the other States in the area of consumer credit?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2 to 5) The introduction of credit legislation in Queensland has been under consideration for some time and I am aware of the provisions of legislation introduced or contemplated in other States.

58.

Deregulation of Interest Rates

Mr R. J. Gibbs asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Is he aware that the Campbell inquiry into Australia's financial system is going to recommend the complete deregulation of interest rates?

(2) Is he aware that deregulation will lead to an interest rate spiral that will put the once-cherished principle of home-ownership even further from the grasp of the average Australian?

(3) Will he give an undertaking to review his Government's budgetary priorities with a view to implementing his party's program to assist those attempting to purchase their first home?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The Government is, of course, quite aware of the recommendations of the Campbell inquiry including the proposal in relation to deregulation of interest rates and other forms of Government intervention.

The report is a very wide-ranging, comprehensive and complex one which deals with the full spectrum of the financial structure of the country.

The reasoning and rationale behind the recommendations are under intensive study and it will be quite some time before a complete assessment of the likely impact and the recommendations or indeed the justifications for them are available.

Certainly the Government is not prepared to jump to conclusions on one particular aspect of the report as the honourable member for Wolston has done, without a careful appraisal of all the associated factors which the report maintains should offset the tendency towards a spiralling of interest rates.

I will say, however, that the State Government has a firm and long-standing policy of ensuring within the best of its ability that interest rates for home owners, small businessmen and the rural sector are maintained at reasonable levels.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The questions remaining unanswered will appear on the Notices of Questions for the next day of sitting.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT, 1982-83

Mr SPEAKER read a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that the following provision be made on account of the services of the year ending 30 June 1983—

From the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the sum of five hundred million dollars;

From the Trust and Special Funds, the sum of six hundred and fifty million dollars;

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

Message referred to Committee of Supply.

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—Fifteenth and Sixteenth Allotted Days

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

Estimates-in-Chief, 1981-82

Education

Chief Office

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Minister for Education) (12.1 p.m.): I move—

“That \$11,458,363 be granted for ‘Department of Education—Chief Office’.”

The provision of \$702,501,236 in consolidated revenue for 1981-82 to meet the costs of educational services is \$101,580,543 higher than the Budget allocation of \$600,920,693 for 1980-81. The percentage increase is 16.9.

Financial assistance payable by the Commonwealth Government in 1981-82 towards the operating costs of schools and colleges totals \$76,870,000. Spending of this sum, which represents about an 11 per cent share of the operating costs for the year, has been provided for in the consolidated revenue allocation of \$702,501,236. The balance of the cost of 1981-82 educational services, \$625,631,236, or about an 89 per cent share, will be financed from State Government resources.

Special emphasis has been given in the Education allocation for 1981-82 to the growth in enrolments in schools and colleges arising from an expanding population in Queensland as well as to the necessary specialist services required in the schools. Provision has been made for the employment of an additional 756 teachers in 1981-82, including 95 for remedial, guidance and other specialist duties and 135 for technical and further education. Employment opportunities for teachers will be greater in Queensland than in all other Australian States, where the trend is generally towards a downward movement in teacher establishment numbers, or a no-growth situation.

The 1981-82 financial provisions for improved facilities for training in the technical and further education sector indicate a further significant area of commitment by the Government to respond to the increasing needs of industry seeking a skilled work-force.

Other budgetary enhancements for 1981-82 include—

Real increase in resources to the non-Government schools' sector by increasing per capita grants for primary students by 16 per cent to \$261 per annum and for secondary students by 15.7 per cent to \$420 per annum. The additional cost in 1981-82 will be \$3,040,000.

Payments to school bus operators generally to increase by 12 per cent from 1 November 1981 at an extra cost of \$898,000 in 1981-82.

Grants to creche and kindergarten associations to cost \$5,547,017 in 1981-82, representing an increase of about \$1m on the 1980-81 allocation for grants to the associations.

Upgradings of the Remote Area Allowances Scheme as well as the Senior Remote Area Scholarship Scheme to cost an additional sum of \$100,000 in 1981-82.

It is a matter of great satisfaction to me that I can introduce such a healthy education Budget to the House. The children of Queensland deserve the best we can provide. Since becoming Minister, my already high opinion of the Queensland education system has been confirmed and enhanced. I have found that Queensland is the envy of other States.

The schools are well-served by the majority of teachers, and I am grateful for the dedication of my Director-General, other senior officers and the support staff who work tirelessly to facilitate learning in schools. I must also thank the many people from within and outside the profession who serve unselfishly on the many statutory and advisory boards and councils which meet regularly to provide advice on many aspects of education.

Queensland students perform well in national testing surveys, and there is ample objective evidence available to show that the great majority of Queenslanders support our schools and perceive them as fulfilling the needs of the community.

Enrolment Patterns in Queensland

Much has been made in recent years of the declining birth rate and its effect on school enrolments, and subsequently on the need for teaching staff and school buildings. Even though Queensland experienced decreased numbers of births during the 1970s, the effect on school enrolments has been "cushioned" to a large extent by a flow of families into Queensland from interstate. This influx of people with young, school-age families has been in sufficient numbers to offset to a large extent the effect of the decline in births. For example, enrolments in State schools in Queensland rose by almost 4 500 primary pupils and 2 500 secondary students between 1980 and 1981. Even pre-school enrolments, which are particularly susceptible to fluctuations in birth patterns, increased by some 1 300 children in this period.

Obviously, it takes some time for children to work their way through the education system. It seems, therefore, that the enrolment slump, which as recently as last year was expected to continue into the mid 1980s in Queensland, has been well and truly postponed. It seems clear, too, that when—or if—that slump does occur, it will not be as severe as anticipated earlier.

These enrolment gains in Queensland appear to have been largely at the expense of other States, which were, in any case, expecting significant declines in primary enrolments during the first half of the 1980s. For example, primary enrolments in New South Wales were shown in a recent forecast as being expected to decline by some 75 000 between 1981 and 1987, with Victoria's primary schools declining by 64 000 in the same period. These forecasts will most likely have to be revised again to take account of the flow from other States into Queensland.

Clearly, Queensland would appear to be gaining population at the expense of other States. A significant proportion of the school-age children of this population gain are enrolled in the State school system, which can confidently be expected to experience overall enrolment growth until at least the second half of the decade, and possibly beyond.

As school enrolments are still growing in overall terms, it is important to realise that the Government must continue to provide for increasing numbers of students. As well, it is necessary to provide for schools in new and developing areas, a provision which often requires comparatively large numbers of teachers.

In the case of pre-school education, between the 1980 and 1981 censuses, a further 25 pre-school centres were opened, and 21 additional early-education classes were established in association with small schools in country areas. In July 1980, 24 800 children were attending State pre-school centres. By July 1981 this had grown to 26 120. For 1982, it is expected that, as pre-school services are extended, enrolments will increase again, although not at the same rate as in the past.

Despite the trends in other States, growth again occurred in primary school enrolments. The 1981 school census showed that a record 246 500 pupils were enrolled in primary schools, an increase of 4 500 over the 1980 level. Forecasting of enrolments has become more difficult because of the unpredictable nature of migration into Queensland from interstate. It could well be that Queensland will again experience an increase in enrolments as the influx of families with school-age children offsets the effect of the decline in births during the previous decade.

It is inevitable that State secondary enrolments are set to increase rapidly after their brief and almost negligible decline in 1979. Between 1980 and 1981, enrolments rose by

over 2 500 to almost 108 300. An increase of over 3 000 is anticipated in 1982, with the subsequent four years bringing a further 15 000 secondary students into State schools for a peak 1986 enrolment of 126 000.

Increases have also occurred in numbers attending special schools and units, as the Government has continued its efforts to make special education available to handicapped children. It must be remembered, however, that the enrolments for special education do not tell the complete story about special education services. With my department's active policy of integration of children with disabilities into the mainstream of school life, these children, although assisted by special teachers, are counted amongst primary, secondary or pre-school enrolments. Similarly, the children assisted on a withdrawal basis by special personnel such as remedial/resource teachers are also not reported separately. It is anticipated that these special education services will continue to develop in 1982.

Provision of Staff

Despite the enrolment increases which have occurred in recent years, my department's record in providing for the education of these children is a good one. It is true that the increases have temporarily delayed the improvements in class size that one would have liked to have made, but the situation is not as desperate as our critics, and the Queensland Teachers Union in particular, would have the public believe. For example, the number of single-teacher classes over 35 in primary schools in 1981 represented less than 2 per cent of the total number of single-teacher classes in those schools. Moreover, the number of classes over 35 in 1981 was less than half the number of classes of the same size only five years ago. I should also mention one class size statistic which is rarely acknowledged by the critics: almost a quarter of the State's single-teacher classes have fewer than 25 children in them, and this does not include one-teacher schools.

What needs to be appreciated by those who would push for immediate reductions in class size is the tremendous additional financial resources which would be required. For example, up to 2 000 additional teachers would be required to fulfil the recommendations on class size by the parliamentary Select Committee on Education in Queensland. This would require almost a 10 per cent increase in teacher establishment and hence teacher salaries. The capital costs are similarly substantial.

Improvements in class sizes will continue, but at a steady rate related to the share of the State's resources which the Government feels is fair and reasonable, in the light of competing demands for other services and facilities.

As evidence of this steady progress, the Budget for 1981-82 provides for an increase in teacher establishment by 621 teachers to 21 377. Built into this provision is allowance for a number of teachers to reduce class sizes, particularly in the larger schools. The number is, admittedly, not as large as many would like, but it is designed to ensure the maintenance and improvement of the favourable staffing standards which schools have enjoyed in recent years.

Generally speaking, changes in teacher staffing for 1982 will be commensurate with enrolment increases. They will, as indicated, make some class size reductions possible but will also be used to provide for some specialist teacher positions and to make allowance for the increased amount of leave-taking by teachers. In this latter category, for example, is the inevitable and legitimate build-up of long service leave credits of those large numbers of teachers recruited during the last 10 to 20 years. Consequently it is expected that pupil-teacher ratios—which, at best, are very crude indicators of what happens in staffing of schools—will, next year, be in the vicinity of 22.1:1 for primary schools and 14:1 for secondary schools.

When considered in the light of interstate or international comparisons, these ratios must be regarded as reasonable. As far as other Australian States are concerned, Queensland's staffing levels in recent years are not very far from the average. In the financial circumstances that the State has experienced in recent years, Queensland's middle of the road position seems both reasonable and responsible. As indicated previously, this year's Budget continues that responsibility and at the same time allows for some gains to be made in staffing schools.

The Budget has also allowed the continuation of my department's policy to stabilise staffing levels throughout the year. This will mean that it should be possible to replace

all teachers who resign or retire from the service as these losses occur. This should make the operation of most schools as stable as possible, with losses being replaced quickly, thus reducing the disruption normally caused by the loss of a teacher. If suitable teachers are available, it should be possible to replace teachers lost on a one for one basis, ensuring that undesirable rearrangements of timetables and classes are kept to a minimum.

In effect, the employment prospects for teachers in 1982 are currently looking quite bright, and as I have said on other occasions, I would encourage students leaving school to seriously consider undertaking courses of teacher education. The market for teachers looks quite good at the moment, and there should be no fears about massive unemployment for teachers in Queensland in the foreseeable future. For example, if one considers that over 600 additional teachers are to be employed in 1982, and that replacements will be required for the 550 teachers expected to resign over the Christmas vacation alone, then there will be employment opportunities for close to 1200 teachers for the start of the 1982 school year. Of course, teachers who are suitably qualified and prepared to be flexible in their appointment location preferences will have the best prospects of early employment.

The provision of ancillary staff continues to be given high priority by my department. It is misleading to consider the staffing provision in schools in terms of teacher numbers alone, as all staff—professional, para-professional, administrative and ancillary—contribute towards the improvement of the learning environment of schools. Teachers do not—and cannot—operate in isolation in the school. Team-work is necessary between teachers, aides and administrative staff, if the best service is to be delivered to Queensland school-children. The acceptance of the teacher aide program by all concerned—the teachers, the children and the school community in general—is testimony to the fact that this is happening.

Queensland continues to put a high priority on the use of teacher aides, and I contend that we have a very effective mix of human resources in class-rooms. It is a mix which promotes the professional role and function of teachers by allowing them to get on with the job they were trained for, and at the same time ensures that routine but essential tasks are efficiently attended to. It also gives the children useful experience and contact with a wider range of adults than would otherwise be the case. This undoubtedly assists in the child's development.

Overall, I think it fair to say that staffing levels for teachers are comparable with those elsewhere in Australia, while the level of employment of ancillary staff, and particularly teacher aides, is quite generous when compared with other States. It seems to be an effective and economic mix of resources.

Pre-school Education

My Government can be proud of its initiatives in the area of pre-school education. On the one hand it has implemented the finest and most comprehensive co-ordinated system of free pre-school facilities to be found anywhere in the world; and, on the other, it has sustained realistic financial subsidies to help community kindergartens continue a complementary service primarily for children one year younger.

There is clear evidence that a child's early experiences have important effects on language, emotional, social, intellectual and physical development. The fact that over 26 000 Queensland children are presently enrolled in State pre-school centres means that in most parts of Queensland a majority of 4 to 5-year-old children are voluntarily participating in activities and experiences which promote balanced development across these areas. The new pre-school correspondence program has been very well received by parents.

In order to expand State pre-school services as quickly as possible, new pre-school facilities have been opened at an average rate of two per school week since 1973. While such expansion of pre-school facilities has been a major achievement for the Government, the real successes of the pre-school scheme lie in the enthusiasm and support for pre-school education which have been displayed by parents from all parts of the State, and the evidence of increased sensitivity within the community to the educational needs of pre-school-age children. These signs indicate that the community at large has judged State pre-school education to be a success.

Primary Education

Demographic surveys confirm a continuing trend to considerable population shifts in our expanding economy. This is particularly true of our mining centres, their coastal terminals and the burgeoning tourist and residential centres to the north and south of Brisbane. Added to general population shifts is the social phenomenon of increased family mobility evident in the school population as large numbers of pupils move from school to school throughout the State during the school year.

Given major advances in knowledge and technology and an increasing diversity in the social and cultural background of pupils, there is an ongoing need for the Primary Curriculum Committee to update syllabuses, revise curriculum offerings and strengthen teacher support services.

One major thrust in the current financial year is the publication and dissemination of a new science syllabus and a series of source books for primary science which will encourage scientific investigation and inquiry by primary pupils through practical application of the processes of science. The source books will assist the teacher by providing appropriate guide-lines, activities and experiments at each Year level.

An inter-divisional committee has been formed recently to co-ordinate and monitor efforts in developing a greater degree of curriculum continuity from pre-school through the years of primary schooling and lower secondary schooling to Year 10. Continuity from one stage of schooling to the next—for example, pre-school to primary and primary to secondary—will be considered as well as some degree of continuity from school to school to meet the needs of a highly mobile pupil population. Above all, curriculum continuity implies an emphasis on the total well-rounded development of each individual child.

Provision has been made for increased funding in the areas of grants in aid of school library and resource services, physical education and music, special program schools and multicultural education. An increased issue of art materials will be made to all primary schools. Primary school equipment and materials as well as services and incidentals alone will increase cumulatively to \$12m.

The injection of a further 193 teachers into the field of primary education will cater for anticipated growth and bring the total to 11 088 teachers.

In the area of distance education, an additional frequency will be provided for the School of the Air, Mt Isa, and there is an increase in the number of itinerant teachers in the field. New equipment for the Primary Correspondence School will improve the service to isolated correspondence pupils.

The Primary Division Capital Works Program is keeping pace with the needs of fast-growing areas in the State, although I must acknowledge that it is a matter of concern to me that it is not possible to meet all demands for new schools as quickly as I would like. During the current financial year, new primary schools will be opened at Birkdale South, Shailer Park, Sunshine Beach, Kin Kora (Gladstone) and Mt Archer (Rockhampton).

Secondary Education

The provision of high schools in areas of large population growth has continued to be a feature of the expansion of secondary education facilities. Each year from 1979 to 1981 has seen the commencement of three new secondary schools. These schools have all been planned to provide facilities in staged development sufficient to cater for a school population of 1 200 students. Such carefully planned staging allows the building program to be accelerated or retarded to meet the actual growth-rate patterns of the local areas. The benefit of this type of planning is that schools have appropriate facilities available at all stages of their growth.

The schools opened have been Burnside (Nambour), Kirwan (Townsville) and Merrimac (Gold Coast) in 1979; Ferny Grove, Shailer Park and Benowa (Gold Coast) in 1980; and Loganlea, Morayfield and Toolooa (Gladstone) in 1981. In 1982 it is planned that new schools will open at Albany Creek, Nanango and Dysart.

As well as these large high schools, smaller high schools were opened at Miles (1979) and Rosewood (1980), and a secondary department was constructed at Dysart in 1979 on a new site which has allowed for its growth to a high school in 1982 as development of the area continues. Secondary education facilities have also been provided in the Aboriginal communities of Aurukun, Doomadgee, Kowanyama, Mornington Island, Yarrabah and Palm Island.

There has been a continued monitoring of the design of new buildings and modifications have been made as necessary to ensure that the best facilities are provided to meet current and future needs. The provision of music blocks and multi-purpose shelters has increased the scope for schools to provide a wider range of learning experiences for their students.

Certain isolated schools centred around Cloncurry and Longreach have been involved in a trial in which two subject masters assist in curricular development. This initiative has immense potential for expansion in other areas of the State in both secondary departments and small high schools.

Other initiatives taken in 1980 in relation to the method of staffing Gulf schools and Aboriginal community schools have resulted in increased stability of staffing and improved services by teachers in those schools.

Careful consideration has also been given to the curriculum in secondary schools and improvements continue to be made in this area. The range of subjects available to students in Years 11 and 12 in many schools has been broadened to cater more adequately for students, especially those intending to move directly from school to employment. New subjects have a greater emphasis on the development of practical skills, while at the same time maintaining a firm underpinning of theory. Transition from school to work has been given special emphasis, with work experience and career education programs being important components of such programs. In that respect, attention continues to be focused on improving the teaching of basic competencies in Years 8 to 10. This is to ensure that students continue to leave school equipped with the necessary skills to communicate, to calculate and to solve problems, based on a sound knowledge and understanding of the society in which they live, and the ability to meet their responsibilities as citizens.

Board of Secondary School Studies

Approval of the principles embodied in "A Review of School-Based Assessment" (known as ROSBA) has cleared the way for the board to prepare for the implementation of the major recommendations in the report. Schools involved in the first of three phases of implementation are at present developing, for board accreditation, subject work programs based on redrafted board syllabuses. Students in Years 9 and 11 of eleven State high and six independent schools will become involved in 1982. Progressively, all 320 secondary schools in the State will be included until the implementation is completed in 1985.

The short-term advantages of ROSBA include the thorough re-examination of the objectives of the syllabus in each board subject and hence of the suitability of the subject work programs produced by schools for students in the 80s. Longer-term advantages will include improvement in the relevance of the secondary school curriculum for a wide range of ability levels.

Characteristic of ROSBA is the shift from a norm-referenced to a standards-based system in which a student's achievement is assessed with reference to an appropriate standard related to the objectives of the syllabus and agreed criteria for assessing. This represents an attempt to achieve a more open, accountable evaluation system, particularly as it affects that part of the board's responsibilities associated with accreditation and certification.

The board is attempting to provide information about these changes to the many groups concerned: students, school authorities, parents, teachers, employers, tertiary institutions and interstate authorities.

As ROSBA principles are phased into Queensland secondary schools, the Board of Secondary School Studies is faced with the administration of a dual system. It is mindful, however, of its responsibilities towards those students who are involved with the old as well as the new procedures. The provision of a tertiary entrance score to all eligible students will continue at least in the immediate future.

ROSBA is not a totally new system. It represents a refinement and an improvement in the policies and procedures for school-based assessment approved by the Government in 1971. These policies and procedures place the needs of students as a first priority while attaching due import to the claims of the community and the public accountability of the teaching profession.

Special Education

Special Education is a division of my department which exists to supplement the efforts of regular schools for children with extraordinary needs in learning and teaching. Special schools provide for children who require specialised programs and a large number of disabled children are supported in the mainstream of education by specialist personnel. Services are being expanded and decentralised as rapidly as resources permit to ensure that as many children as possible are suitably educated near to their homes. More special schools and units have been established and there has been a marked increase in the number of remedial teachers, advisory teachers, speech therapists and guidance officers in recent years.

More than 20 additional remedial centres will be opened during 1982. Additional remedial teachers have been recruited to serve the needs of country areas, particularly groups of smaller schools.

In line with a policy of integration, more and more disabled children are being supported in local schools. As a result, the nature of special schools is changing significantly because they are providing for more severely disabled children with intellectual, physical, sensory or emotional handicaps for which special educational programs are necessary. In addition, some very handicapped children, such as those with multiple handicaps, are receiving an education program for the first time.

Special education is an area where co-operation between teachers and other professionals, such as doctors, therapists and social workers, is often necessary. My department has developed close and strong co-operation with other Government departments and with community agencies serving the disabled. Both formal and informal meetings have already resulted in better co-ordination of services for children and families, and that trend is continuing.

Because special education is relatively new in historical terms and because of the variety of learning problems experienced by the disabled, curricula in special schools are not yet well defined. Considerable effort is being given to the development of suitable guide-lines for teachers and parents in deciding what is to be taught and how children learn. Modern technology is also being applied in some cases, but the main emphasis is on the establishment of appropriate learning environments for children.

Recent major initiatives have involved children of all ages with special needs. A pilot early intervention scheme in special pre-school units was undertaken by my department and monitored by the University of Queensland. The report which was released recently is a useful description of the project which forms a basis for planning future provisions for very young children with special needs. At the opposite end of the school-age range, a variety of programs for school-leavers has been developed.

Since the proclamation of the Student Education (Work Experience) Act of 1978, more special schools have participated in work experience programs. A further option which has emerged for the older child in special schools has been the "link" program with TAFE colleges. Recent initiatives in transition education have given impetus to pre-vocational programs in special schools and units and have enhanced parent and community involvement, which has always been encouraged.

A promising new development is the establishment of the Special Education Vocational Outreach School which is a "school without walls". Using an existing residential facility in Brisbane, students from any part of the State will be able to participate in either work experience or "link" programs which are not available in their home town. In addition, considerable effort will be given to monitoring job placements in collaboration with the Commonwealth Employment Service.

Recently, my department has co-operated with the Commonwealth Schools Commission in a number of projects which have been designed to survey the extent of need for special education provision and which will enable small pilot schemes to be developed with appropriate resources for both integrated and severely handicapped children. These are examples of joint projects that characterise my firm resolve that all efforts for children with special needs be co-ordinated in the most effective manner.

Since the beginning of 1980 several special schools have been completed. The schools in Caboolture and Innisfail were built to replace old special classes which were no longer able to cater for the increased numbers of children requiring special education. The new school in Mackay replaced a building that had been in use since 1895.

Proposals for the current financial year include building of a new special school at Beenleigh to replace the old special classes and the beginning of a special school at the Mater Hospital. Special education units, built where there are a smaller number of children requiring help, have been approved for Goondiwindi, Roma, Thornlands, and Woodridge.

Guidance services are provided through the Division of Special Education.

For students in high schools there has been a marked growth in the provision of guidance services, particularly in country areas. An improvement will be made in career education programs such as career reference centres and vocational guidance. From the beginning of 1982, resident guidance services will be introduced or increased at Blackall, Charleville, Chinchilla, Toowoomba, Warwick, Gold Coast, Maryborough, Gladstone, Mackay and Ayr.

Planning and Services

During 1981-82 the various branches within the Planning and Services Division of my department will continue to provide a range of administrative and professional services to the schools' directorates, and to my department generally. In addition, a considerable proportion of my department's dealings with national education bodies, such as the Australian Council for Educational Research, the Australian Education Council, and the Commonwealth Schools Commission, will be co-ordinated by officers within the Planning and Services Division.

During the coming financial year, curriculum development projects in the area of health, science, mathematics, language, arts, social studies, and religious education will receive continued support from the Curriculum Branch, as will initiatives in early childhood education, special education, transition education, and multicultural education. The Curriculum Branch will continue with a major curriculum development project in the area of oral language, which is supported with funds made available from the Commonwealth's Curriculum Development Centre, and will also be initiating a major action research project on the equality of opportunity for girls and boys in education, again with the assistance of Commonwealth funds.

The Research Branch is working on a number of studies commenced in previous years, and it is anticipated that a number of these studies will be successfully concluded at the end of 1981. These include an evaluation of work experience programs in secondary and special schools, a major survey of the support services provided by special education and the development of assessment materials for use in school-based evaluation programs.

The grant in aid of school libraries, which I am happy to say has been restored to a more satisfactory level, will be administered through the Library and Resource Services Branch, in consultation with the schools' directorates. That branch is also involved in a major review of the role of teacher/librarians in State schools, in an investigation of system level library services for my department, and in the identification of computer applications within school libraries. My officers envisage concerns relating to copyright legislation will again present serious difficulties in this financial year. The impact of the recent amendments to the copyright legislation relating to print materials is still being assessed, and amendments to the legislation as it affects audio-visual materials are presently being considered by the relevant Commonwealth authorities.

The Production Services Branch places considerable emphasis on the production of audio-visual materials for use by children in small schools and remote locations. Further experimental work will be undertaken as part of the Priority Country Area Program, and the branch will be responsible for the establishment and operation of the Commonwealth-funded loan video scheme, under which television video facilities will be provided, on loan, to families with children enrolled with the Schools of the Air. This program is of particular interest to my department, as it presents an opportunity to gain experience with the delivery of educational television services to isolated children. Hopefully, this experience can be put to good use once the proposed Australian domestic satellite becomes operational after 1985.

In addition, the Production Services Branch will be involved in the production of a major series of audio-visual materials associated with the 1982 Commonwealth Games. These materials are designed to maximise the educational benefits to be gained from the staging of the Games in Brisbane in September next year, and will be complemented by

a comprehensive set of printed materials produced within the Information and Publications Branch. These printed materials will address a wide range of curriculum areas using the staging of the Commonwealth Games as a stimulus for teaching activities.

The Planning Branch provides specialised technical and professional services to support the forward planning activities of my department. In recent years, as Queensland's population has continued to grow, mainly as a result of internal migration from elsewhere in Australia, the demographic investigations carried out by the Planning Branch have assumed increasing importance. The need for the assessment of infrastructure requirements of new mining and industrial developments has placed particularly heavy demands on demographic services, and these demands appear likely to increase in the foreseeable future. In 1981-82, particular attention will be given to the consolidation of the planning and administration of my department's capital works program, and the evaluation of the effectiveness and utility of present school building designs. Every effort will be made to introduce further economies into the school building program, although I should point out that Queensland State school designs are presently almost certainly the most cost effective for Government school buildings anywhere in Australia. It is also envisaged that, during 1981-82, the Planning Branch will again be heavily involved in the preparation of submissions to the Commonwealth Grants Commission and the Commonwealth Schools Commission, and in participation in activities sponsored by the Australian Education Council. All of these activities affect, either directly or indirectly, the level of funding made available from Commonwealth sources to Queensland for education services, and the value of well-presented cases cannot be overestimated.

In 1981-82 plans for the provision of minicomputer facilities in all nine regional offices of my department will be carried further. Carriage of this project rests with the Management Services Branch, and will be undertaken in association with a major review of the accounting functions within the head office of my department, and further development of the teacher personnel system. The installation of minicomputer facilities in regional offices will represent a major step forward in the computerisation of my department's operations, and will lead to increased efficiency in accounting and personnel management. On present indications, the first installations will take place in the latter part of 1982. The Management Services Branch will also be undertaking a major review of the warehousing needs of my department, and mounting a major staff development and training program directed at both professional and administrative staff.

Priority Country Area Program

The Priority Country Area Program was established by the Commonwealth Schools Commission as a pilot program, in that the funds available were to be used to trial the delivery of new educational services to children in isolated rural areas. The use of the funds was to be restricted to a limited number of specifically designated priority country areas, and the funds were not to be seen as providing a general enhancement of educational services in country areas. Since the inception of the program in 1977, my department has scrupulously observed the intentions of the Schools Commission in its operation. There are three declared priority country areas in Queensland—in the south-west, north-west and central regions of the State, and in each a variety of pilot programs has been established and carefully evaluated.

However, the Commonwealth Government has now announced that, from 1 January 1982, the Priority Country Area Program will cease to be a pilot program, and will become a permanent country areas program in which all areas of the State may participate. Further, participation in the program will now be at the discretion of the State Minister for Education and will not require the approval of the Commonwealth Minister for Education as was previously the case. Unfortunately, only limited additional funds will be provided in the 1982 calendar year and beyond for this country areas program. In effect, this means that the levels of funding likely to be available will still be insufficient to provide improved services in all eligible country areas. In these circumstances, it would appear that the participation of further areas in the Priority Country Area Program can only be achieved by a rotation of areas through the program, or by rotating and/or limiting the duration of particular services offered through the program.

I must say that, in changing the status of this program without providing adequate additional resources, the Commonwealth has, knowingly or not, generated unrealistic expectations in country areas throughout Queensland, and people in those areas can be excused

for thinking that, from the beginning of 1982, there will be sufficient funds available for a general enhancement of education services throughout the rural areas of this State. Regrettably, that is not the case. The Commonwealth has dispensed with the pilot status of this program and expanded its eligibility provisions, but has not provided adequate funds for even a limited general enhancement of educational services in those areas. The implementation of the Commonwealth's new policy regarding the country areas program is presently under consideration, and I would hope that it will be possible to announce a firm policy for implementation in 1982 and beyond, as early as possible in the new year. However, given the importance to country areas of the decisions to be made regarding the operation of the redesignated country areas program, the implications of all alternative policies must be carefully investigated.

Multicultural Education Program

1981 is the third year of operation of the Multicultural Education Program, which was initiated in accordance with the recommendations of the Galbally report on a review of migrant services and programs. In 1981, while the fostering of the teaching of community languages remains an important aspect of the program, the basis of the program has been broadened, and funds have been provided to support general multicultural projects, the provision of small-scale grants, and the employment of liaison officers to improve communication between ethnic communities (and their part-time schools) and regular schools. In Queensland this program is administered on the advice of the Queensland Multicultural Co-ordinating Committee, which is fostering a range of initiatives in the areas of curriculum and materials development, resources selection, and teacher awareness. These initiatives will be extended in 1982, and by the end of this financial year, a number of projects sponsored by the committee should be coming to fruition.

Agricultural Education

Agricultural education courses are now offered at 28 State high schools, with that at Tully commencing last year. A class-room has been completed at Hervey Bay, and other buildings at Southport, Beenleigh and Beaudesert. Land has been procured at Yeppoon, Moura, Roma and Nambour.

Eleven field study centres have been provided throughout the State. Days at these are used as an integrated part of the environmental education provided by schools.

Agricultural project clubs in primary schools have increased from 250 to 520 so that half the schools in the State now have clubs. The clubs provide a range of activities which introduce the children to knowledge of agricultural practices, fertilisers trials, nature trails, nature surveys, resource usage, bird studies, environmental studies, and natural science.

Art

This subject, which attracted only 3 800 students in 1970, now reaches a high school enrolment of over 52 000 students.

New art buildings have been designed and built. These embody areas for the teaching of crafts such as ceramics, pottery, weaving, printmaking and textiles, as well as drawing, painting, sculpture and design.

This year an Arts Expo was presented in a number of centres as far north as Townsville and the stimulating multi-arts experience benefited children, including handicapped children, in this International Year of Disabled Persons.

Education and the Arts

The Government continues to act on the recommendations contained in the Education and the Arts report. In the past two years, twelve professional artists (including writers, musicians and weavers) have been involved in educational programs supported by my department and by the Australia Council, thus bringing these remarkable talents to the service of children and teachers in the schools.

Health and Physical Education

The staged introduction of existing daily physical education programs in primary schools has generated real enthusiasm. Increased co-operation, sociability and respect for others, together with gains in physical skills, have been shown in the participants without any loss in academic achievement. The new Curriculum Guide in Health Education has also been implemented successfully.

A continued growth has occurred in the number of secondary schools offering physical education as a tertiary entrance subject. Special schools have benefited by the introduction of guide-lines which assist teachers in programs for the disabled.

Extensive learn-to-swim programs enable thousands of young Queenslanders to become proficient in the water each year, and programs in outdoor education offered at the Maroon Outdoor Education Centre, Tallebudgera Camp School and other regional camps are in great demand.

Music

Provision for music education has been significantly improved. At July 1981 there were 116 music teachers in the largest primary schools and 134 music teachers staffing 102 secondary schools, 92 of whom offer music study for junior or senior certificates.

Instrumental music instructors teach approximately 12 000 students in 239 primary and 81 secondary schools in all nine regions of the State. Bands, orchestras, and smaller ensembles flourish in all districts and in individual schools.

Special Program Schools Scheme

This scheme in Queensland is funded through the Schools Commission as part of the Commonwealth Disadvantaged Schools Program. As a result of the recommendations of the report, "Schools in Australia", schools with special difficulties are provided with additional assistance in the form of equipment, teaching materials and staff. At present there are 203 schools in the scheme. They include primary and secondary schools in both urban areas and the more remote regions of the State.

The strength of the scheme lies in its reliance on proposals initiated by individual schools and their communities. These proposals are examined by an advisory committee consisting of community representatives and officers from my department. Evaluation reports indicate that this additional assistance is valued greatly by schools, and communities have been drawn more closely together by their involvement.

Technical and Further Education

In recent years, there has been considerable growth in the demand for TAFE services by the community. This demand has increased not only in level but also in scope and variety. The major areas of education and training to which TAFE effort is directed include—

- (a) An expansion in trade-training to prepare and provide a skilled work-force capable of servicing the resources projects under way in the State;
- (b) The further development of prevocational courses in the trades and pre-employment courses, such as urban horticulture and wholesale/retail practices, to ensure that young people of today have the knowledge to select their vocation in life and the skills necessary to adapt easily to the requirements of the work place;
- (c) The initiation of new courses to provide training and retraining necessary to cope with the rapid technological changes now occurring in our society;
- (d) The provision of access courses to improve opportunities for Aborigines in remote localities; and
- (e) A wide range of enrichment courses to enable members of our society to use leisure-time in a more productive and fulfilling way.

TAFE authorities have forecast a continuation of the trend towards more skills training being undertaken in institutions instead of industry. The demands of employers for staff with high levels of competence upon entry to employment and the inadequacies in present apprenticeship arrangements have contributed to this trend. Advances in technology and structural changes in industry will continue to have implications for skill requirements to which TAFE must respond.

Because of the importance of tourism for Queensland, considerable emphasis is being placed on courses designed for the catering and hospitality industries.

The Technical and Further Education Capital Program includes allocations of \$13.58m from the Commonwealth and \$5.24m from the State Loan Fund. Current projects which are under construction and anticipated to be completed during this financial year are—

Ipswich/Bundamba (\$4.6m); Gladstone—Complex 1 (\$5.1m); Gold Coast (\$8.6m); Coorparoo (\$0.65m).

Mount Gravatt—

A new complex costing a total of \$8.2m will include facilities for business studies, catering and fashion, arts and crafts, library resource centre, student dining room and administration.

Sunshine Coast (Nambour)—

Two buildings are currently under construction at a total cost of \$3.7m. The core building is scheduled for completion in December 1981, and will include facilities for business studies, library resources, theatre, catering and hospitality courses, classrooms, canteen and administration. The technology building is scheduled for completion in May 1982, and includes facilities for trade training and pre-vocational courses.

South Brisbane—

Planning is now completed for a seven-level building dedicated to the hospitality and tourism industry at an approximate cost of \$10m. Major alterations, renovations and additions have been made at Bundaberg, Mackay, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Townsville Pimlico campus, Ithaca and South Brisbane.

The highlights of the 1981-82 recurrent program include—

\$250,000 for a division computer system to handle an enrolment system of approximately 110 000 students per year, financial control and programming needs;

almost \$0.5m as the first stage of a program to upgrade equipment in the School of Graphic Arts at Kangaroo Point College of TAFE;

\$165,000 to subsidise student accommodation at the Kelvin Grove, Maryborough, and Griffith University halls of residence;

over \$3m to offset the costs of consumable materials used during the year by students at colleges;

\$40,000 to purchase, install and equip a prefabricated shearing shed at Ithaca; and over \$1m for transition education courses.

I am pleased to say that already there will be an increase of 135 in the number of teaching staff in TAFE colleges to ensure that adequate personnel are available for the training of essential future manpower requirements for industry.

Rural Training Schools

1982 enrolments totalling 491 residential students are predicted for the four rural training schools established at Longreach, Emerald, Lower Burdekin and Dalby. The Estimates provide the sum of \$4,578,000 for the purposes of the schools in 1981-82.

Board of Teacher Education

Members will be aware of the recent spate of reports concerning teacher education which have been produced by various State committees and by the National Inquiry into Teacher Education. Members might also recall that the Queensland Review of Teacher Education was completed in October 1978 by a committee under the chairmanship of Professor G. W. Bassett. The Queensland report was the only State report available to the national inquiry when it held its first meeting in December 1978. The national inquiry and several of the other State inquiries recommended the introduction of a minimum of four years of pre-service teacher education, but subsequent discussions between State and Commonwealth Ministers at the Australian Education Council have come down in favour of the pattern recommended by the Queensland committee. Under this pattern the four-year Bachelor of Education degree offered by colleges of advanced education is made up of three years of pre-service preparation leading to the award of the Diploma of Teaching with a further year of in-service study, usually taken part-time after an initial period of teaching, to complete the degree. While the completion of the degree is not compulsory, a substantial number of teachers each year enrol in the final year of the degree course or in courses at a similar or higher level. In 1980, for example, over 4 000 teachers were enrolled in in-service courses at bachelor degree, graduate diploma or higher degree levels. In addition, over 1 500 were enrolled in upgrading courses leading to the Diploma of Teaching. The Queensland Government has continually fought for adequate funding to the colleges and universities for formal in-service teacher education courses in the face of repeated Commonwealth cuts in education funding.

Since the presentation of the 1978 Review of Teacher Education in Queensland, the Board of Teacher Education has reviewed all pre-service courses of teacher education conducted by our colleges of advanced education and universities. The board has been

pleased with the way in which the colleges and universities have taken up the Bassett committee's recommendations concerning pre-service courses. Increased emphasis has been given in these courses to such important areas as the teaching of reading, individual and group teaching methods and teaching children with special needs.

The Bassett report, and the subsequent State and national reports, all point out that teacher education cannot be regarded as consisting only of pre-service training but should be seen as a continuing process of professional development that goes on through the whole of the teacher's career. The board has recently completed research about the induction of beginning teachers, and is currently studying the effectiveness of various forms of in-service activity in bringing about professional development at the school and class-room level.

Compulsory registration for teachers in primary, special and secondary schools was introduced in 1975. Compulsory registration for teachers in pre-schools and kindergartens began in 1981.

The Board of Teacher Education seeks to involve practising teachers wherever possible in its work. There are four practising teachers in the membership of the board and, of the total membership of 15, all but one have had teaching experience. The three committees directly involved with the professional registration of teachers contain majorities of practising teachers. The board has also arranged a series of meetings at which teachers and other interested persons can meet members of the board and discuss with them matters relating to teacher education or the professional registration of teachers. In addition, the board arranges for at least two or three of its members to visit each teacher education institution during each academic year to talk to graduating students about the system of registration and to hold discussions with members of staff. These contacts help the board to keep in touch with the views of teachers and of the teacher education institutions.

University and Advanced Education

From the 1 January 1974 the Commonwealth, in spite of opposition by this State, assumed the responsibility for the full funding of universities and colleges of advanced education. This was not a bonus, however, as equivalent reductions were effected to the level of general purpose grants provided by the Commonwealth.

Since that time the Commonwealth has progressively stabilised, in real terms, the annual allocations to universities and colleges. In fact, from the beginning of next year there will be a decline in the total amount provided. As the component contributed by the States, by way of general purpose grants foregone, has been held constant in real terms, the Commonwealth could be suspected of ensuring that the burden of financing university and advanced education is being shifted onto the States.

It will be recalled that one of the decisions of the Review of Commonwealth Functions of 30 April 1981 was that a number of colleges primarily engaged in teacher education must amalgamate with other colleges or be integrated into universities and produce real savings in operating costs. If States did not wish to proceed with such amalgamations they were given the option of taking over the full funding of the institutions concerned. Is this just the tip of the wedge with the Commonwealth trying initially to shift the burden of teacher education back onto the States? Is it reasonable to assume that it wants the total cost of university and advanced education to be borne by the States without financial adjustment?

In response to the Commonwealth's requirements, action has been completed to amalgamate three nominated colleges of advanced education in Brisbane together with a fourth which was omitted from the original Federal list. This will ensure, at least for the next three years, continued Commonwealth funding for their operations although at a steadily declining rate.

The Government has also reluctantly agreed to the forced amalgamation of Townsville College of Advanced Education with James Cook University of North Queensland as there is no way the State can find some \$4m a year to fund the operations of Townsville College of Advanced Education as a separate institution. Indeed, even if this were possible, such a move would most likely lead to sustained Commonwealth pressures on the State to take over further components of the funding of universities and colleges of advanced education.

Conclusion

As I said at the time the Budget was handed down, education received a much deserved shot in the arm with its allocation.

I do not go along with the prophets of doom who see disaster in every move which the Government or the Education Department makes, for I believe that the education system in Queensland is sound. We continue to see some people trying to make education a political football, but I am also pleased to say that there are many others who want to see the best education for their children, irrespective of who is at the helm.

I have mentioned the reports of the parliamentary Select Committee on Education in Queensland. Many things have been said by various people concerning those reports which have not been quite as straightforward as they should have been. In the first place that committee made recommendations, and that was all that they were—recommendations. Whether they were taken up by the Education Department or by the Government is a decision which has to be made, taking all things into consideration, and although some recommendations have been instituted, it is yet to be seen what will happen to the others.

I believe that the case which was put forward to the Treasurer this year for increased funding for education was recognised as fair and equitable, and this has also been recognised by all of those who are prepared to take an honest look at the Budget.

In my relatively short time as Minister for Education I have visited a number of schools throughout the State and spoken with many teachers and parents. I have found very few complaints about the education system, and those which I have encountered about conditions we have either been able to have rectified, or explain why they cannot be attended to right away.

I must acknowledge the part played in our education system by our teachers whom I have found, in the main, to be the dedicated teacher whom the parents believe we have in our schools. I must also acknowledge the parents and citizens associations which play such an important part in the running of our schools. I know that they sometimes feel that the Government could be doing more, but I have said before that if the Government provided everything for a school, parents and citizens associations would still find something to do. Whatever we do and say and whatever we provide, the students of Queensland must come first, and while I am Minister for Education I will always do my best to see that we provide for them the education they deserve.

I commend to the Committee the allocations made for educational purposes for the 1981-82 financial year.

The CHAIRMAN: 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.

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

Mr SHAW (Wynnum) (2.15 p.m.): The Minister expressed regret that some people make education a political football. It needs to be realised that education has a very great bearing on the future of our younger population and therefore on the future of the entire nation. Responsibility for the provision of education rests upon politicians. Because of that, it is inevitable that to some degree education will become a political issue.

It is unfair for the Minister to imply, as he did, that those people who raise the political aspects of education, and who claim that the Government or the Education Department is in error, are not acting in the best interests of education and do not have the interests of education at heart. It is only right that politicians accept responsibility for the faults just as they take credit for the improvements that occur in education.

For my part, I have tried to give credit to the officers of the department and the Government when I felt it was due to them. I hope that the Minister will forgive me if today I concentrate on aspects for which I consider the Government is not entitled to claim credit. It is understandable, of course, that the Minister and the Government would concentrate on improvements that deserve credit. It is understandable that they would want to paint a rosy picture of the education scene.

A casual observer would think that all was well, that progress was being made and that there was no cause for complaint. The parents, the students, the teachers and other persons who are closely associated with education would view the scene in a different

light altogether. They see problems. They see growing class sizes and growing school enrolments, without any action being taken by the Government to anticipate those increased enrolments. They see a shortage of specialist teachers and, in small and country schools, no specialist teachers at all. They see schools burning down and no policy of early replacement. They see a lack of money for maintenance of school buildings, and for the payment of the wages of ancillary staff.

I have received complaints from school principals that they experience difficulty in maintaining the everyday needs of their schools. They have difficulty in obtaining money for the basic items such as writing materials. Parents and citizens associations are called upon to find money to meet the cost of essential items such as fire-fighting equipment.

It is quite clear that schools are still provided with insufficient funds. I say "still" because a previous Minister for Education pointed out during his term of office that insufficient funds were allocated by the Treasury to his department and that the education system could not operate at an acceptable level. Although this year education funding has been increased slightly, the increase will not make up for the losses that have occurred since the days of that previous Minister.

Every day, members receive complaints from workers in TAFE colleges, teacher aides and office staff that they have to wait for as long as a fortnight or even a month for their salaries to be paid to them. That is simply not good enough. Surely an employer as large as the Government has both the obligation and wherewithal to ensure that its employees do not have to wait more than a fortnight to receive their wages and salaries. It is quite clear that there is good reason for a large number of people to be concerned and distressed by the drop in education standards in Queensland.

I am sure that the Minister would be disappointed if I did not refer to class sizes. I do not regard class sizes as the most important issue, but they are the corner-stone or foundation of a successful education system. The Minister said that in only 2 per cent of classes in Queensland are there more than 35 students. I can only suggest that virtually all the parents of children in those classes must have written to me, because I have received many complaints from parents throughout Queensland about larger classes.

Teachers and parents say to me, "Do not mention names because we are frightened of retribution."

Mr Gunn: That's rubbish.

Mr SHAW: It is not rubbish. The fear is there, and the Minister should recognise it.

Mr Gunn: You are not doing much to dispel it.

Mr SHAW: In some instances the fear exists for good reason. Teachers fear punitive transfers. If the Minister is positive that there is no reason for fear, he should be doing much more to put baseless fears to rest. He should certainly recognise that the fear exists and that much needs to be done to put it to rest.

I will cite one example of the many complaints that I have received. I was told that, at the beginning of this year, students in the three Year 7 classes at a Mt Gravatt school numbered 36, 36 and 37, and that in the three Year 6 classes they numbered 33, 32 and 31.

Although the Minister said that only 2 per cent of classes in the State have more than 35 students, it should be pointed out that he is not taking into consideration the number of composite classes or that the figure suggested by the committee of inquiry and many other experts in education is far lower than 35. The committee of inquiry recommended that in the early school years the figure should be 25. If that were taken as the base figure, between 80 per cent and 90 per cent of classes would be oversize. Figures given to me today by representatives of schools and regions who do not wish to be named—one submission came from Brisbane—indicate that almost 90 per cent of classes contain more than 25 pupils.

I am very concerned that the department is unable to give a clear indication of how many composite classes have been formed in Queensland to keep class numbers under 35. In many ways composite classes are worse than classes with more than 35 pupils. I admit that I am retreating from a position that I took earlier. I supported the

department's argument that composite classes could be formed without detriment to the education system. However, composite classes are being misused by the Education Department to overcome the constraints placed on it by inadequate funding. I am sure that privately, responsible officers in the Education Department would be the first to admit that class sizes are not what they ought to be.

It is true, as the Minister said, that the recommendations made by the Ahern committee of inquiry are only recommendations and are not binding on the Government. Hundreds of people around this State voluntarily gave up their time and put thousands of man-hours of work into an effort to improve, at their own expense, the standard of education in this State. Surely the Government owes them a responsibility. Surely it is not unreasonable to expect that the Government should respond to the arguments that those people advance, and list those things that it accepts and those that it rejects. Where the Government finds it necessary to reject them it should give the reasons why it has been necessary to reject them. If one takes a cynical approach, it may very well be that the reason why the Government has not said what it will accept or made its intentions clear is that it does not know where it is going or what its intentions are.

The fact is that Queensland has the worst student/teacher ratios in Australia—the statistics are there to prove it. If one looks at the Australian position compared with the position in other developed countries, one sees that Australia has some of the worst figures in the world. That does not place Queensland's student/teacher ratios in a very good light. So it is fair to argue that we should be doing a lot more than we are at the present time.

The Minister has said that the reduction in class sizes will continue. I hope he is referring to an anticipated reduction in class sizes this year, because the true picture is that in recent times there has been no improvement, and in fact the position has been getting considerably worse.

We have recently heard a lot of complaints from Government members about the involvement of the Federal Government in the affairs of State Government. When the Labor Government was in power in Canberra extraordinary moves were being made by this State Government to remove that Labor Government from office on the grounds that it was not giving enough consideration to the rights of the States, and this State wanted to be master of its own destiny. Don't those arguments apply today, when we see the Federal Government dictating to this Government on education policies?

It is fair to say that in many instances we should be thankful for that situation, because the position of small, disadvantaged and country schools would be considerably worse than it is but for the assistance that is coming directly from the Federal Government.

I wish to refer to the effect that the Federal Government's policies have had on State attitudes to work transition courses, for example. The Liberal-National Country Party Government in Canberra has manoeuvred not only this State Government but other State Governments into a position where finances have been diverted from other traditional, and probably much more effective courses, to be expended on work transition programs that lead to nowhere. I am very concerned about the fact that in turn parents and students are being encouraged to believe that those courses—I am referring particularly to the high school work transition courses—will be of great benefit to school-leavers. Employers have been encouraged to believe that students completing work transition courses will be somehow better fitted to hold down a job. Students are being encouraged to believe that if they undertake work transition courses they will have a better chance of getting a job. Those courses exist purely for those students for whom an academic career is just not possible at this stage and for whom a job just does not exist at this time. Those courses are like a dead-end street; they lead to nowhere. Students who opt for them are shutting a lot of doors that should be left open to them. Such courses are not recognised by academic institutions or many employers.

Such courses have a place in our education system, but I do not believe that that place is in our high schools. They should be conducted in the TAFEs. I believe that the pre-vocational courses do a good job, and I make it clear that I am not including them in my criticism. I am referring specifically to the make-believe, fairy-tale courses that are being introduced into many of our high schools, because they are the courses that

are receiving the funding at the present time. School principals know that to maintain their funding they need to introduce such courses. The department also knows that high schools introduce them because that is the area that is receiving the funding at the present time.

Parents are being faced with difficult decisions. Not enough properly trained guidance officers are available to assist parents and teachers who are trying to assist students in deciding which courses they should undertake. They are able to devote only 10 minutes, or perhaps a little less, to each student a year. Parents are confronted with a very confusing picture when they have to decide what courses their children should undertake the following year. They have to decide whether their children will undertake an academic career or, if they are going to look for a job after finishing high school, which courses will be the best for them to undertake. Very few members would be able to tell students which courses will be of the greatest assistance to them in obtaining a high tertiary entrance score, or what tertiary entrance score they will need to get admission to the courses that they want to undertake. Unfortunately, many teachers in high schools, through either a lack of time or a lack of understanding of what it is all about, cannot give proper guidance to students.

I have only a short time left, so I will have to skip over many of the matters that I wanted to mention. I think that the Minister would agree that there is a great problem with funding for education. This Budget and previous Budgets have provided insufficient funding for capital works. If Queensland experiences the projected growth in population we will return to the situation where teaching takes place on school verandas and probably under trees in the schoolgrounds. There are problems with accommodation in our schools at the present time, and that position will get worse.

The population growth figures, of which the Minister and other members of this Government are proud, are causing problems in schools. School principals have told me that as much as 50 per cent of the increase in enrolments can be attributed to the movement of people from other States. If the great boom is attracting people to this State, and if they are coming here because conditions are so good—

Mr Gunn: Good government.

Mr SHAW: If it is good government, surely provision should be made for the new students. Queensland students should not suffer as a result of the boom of which the Minister is so proud. If the Government has the money, why is it not doing something about the problems facing education?

Some frightening figures are being bandied round. I received a document from an anonymous source—it was in a plain envelope—and I am not quite sure how reliable it is.

Mr Prentice: And you are prepared to accept it?

Mr SHAW: I am, because it looks suspiciously to me as if the information has been taken from an official file. Perhaps the Minister can tell me if the figures are not correct. The Kingston High School has an enrolment of 1 438 in 1981. It is projected that it will have an enrolment of 2 050 in 1986. The Springwood High School presently has an enrolment of 1 336. It is projected that it will have an enrolment of 2 147 in a few years. It goes on and on. I do not have time to refer to all of the figures. If this growth, about which the Premier and other Ministers are always telling us, is the result of good government, then let us see some good government to overcome the problems facing education. The Government should tell us what it will do to ensure that the allocation of money for new high schools is not made on political grounds, as it is presently alleged.

(Time expired.)

Mr POWELL (Isis) (2.35 p.m.): The Queensland Government has a very good record in education and in education funding. It has a particularly good story to tell, and at long last that story is filtering through to the media and to the community.

In the past, teachers and administrators in the field of education have been very badly maligned by some people and it is disappointing that the positive side of education

has not been presented. Following the remarks of the previous speaker, it might be appropriate if I present some of the facts and figures about the increased school enrolments in Queensland, instead of dealing in generalities, as he did.

Between 1980 and 1981 enrolments in State schools in Queensland increased by almost 4 500 primary pupils and 2 500 secondary pupils. Even pre-school enrolments, which are particularly susceptible to fluctuations in birth patterns, increased by some 1 300 children. That is not the pattern in other States. For example, a recent forecast was that primary enrolments in New South Wales were expected to decline by some 75 000 between 1981 and 1987 and that Victoria's primary school enrolment would decline by 64 000 in the same period. In brief, Queensland appears to be gaining population at the expense of the other States, due largely to the attractive employment prospects in some parts of the State and the attractiveness of life-style in other parts.

The effects on the enrolments in schools must be readily apparent, even to members of the Opposition. One of the problems is that as people move to Queensland, local authorities, which are the first ones to know where the humps in population are occurring, do not tell the Education Department of their location. A law should require that when subdivisions are approved by local authorities, the Education Department be notified so that it can better plan for the future. As much as possible, I do that in my electorate as it is affected very much by the rapid increase in population.

Much has been said about class sizes. Honourable members will remember an attempt by the Opposition in this Chamber to have a great deal of the time of Parliament devoted to a debate on class sizes. It will also be remembered that the Government decided that that debate would not take place then. It ought to take place now, during debate on the Education Estimates. Quite properly, Opposition members should today be speaking about class sizes and, therefore, basing their arguments on facts, not on generalities. In general, class sizes in Queensland are reasonable. Some classes are larger than is desirable.

Earlier I spoke to the Chairman of Committees and gained his permission to have incorporated in "Hansard" a number of tables. I now present those tables and seek leave of the Committee to have them incorporated in "Hansard".

(Leave granted.)

Whereupon the honourable member laid on the table the following documents—

TABLE 2: COMPARISON OF PRIMARY CLASS SIZE 1976-81—ONE TEACHER CLASSES ONLY

Class Size	1976		1977		1978		1979		1980		1981	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
>40	16	·2	14	·2	3	·0	3	·0	1	·0	..	..
36-40	273	4·0	212	2·9	243	3·6	143	2·1	106	1·5	132	1·8
31-35	2 187	31·9	2 292	31·9	2 264	33·8	2 272	33·1	2 375	33·6	2 511	35·0
26-30	2 760	40·3	2 808	39·1	2 629	39·2	2 823	41·1	2 805	39·7	2 845	39·7
21-25	1 045	15·2	1 215	16·9	1 031	15·4	1 115	16·2	1 208	17·1	1 162	16·2
16-20	439	6·4	477	6·6	409	6·1	403	5·9	435	6·2	412	5·7
11-15	133	1·9	169	2·4	112	1·7	101	1·5	119	1·7	95	1·3
10 or	..	..	..	..	11	·2	6	·1	16	·2	10	·1
fewer	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	·0	..	..	..	..
Total ..	6 853	100·0	7 187	100·0	6 702	100·0	6 867	100·0	7 065	100·0	7 167	100·0
Mean Class Size	28·3		28·1		28·4		28·2		28·1		28·4	

Excludes—One Teacher Schools

—Special Schools and Classes

—Infant Classes with EEC Pupils

—Composite Classes with Secondary Pupils

Includes—Composite Classes

TABLE 3: COMPARISON OF SECONDARY CLASS SIZE 1976-1981—ONE TEACHER CLASSES ONLY

Class Size	1976		1977		1978		1979		1980		1981	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
50	..	..	1	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
46-40	2	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
41-45	3	1	..	..	3	1	..	..	2	1	1	0
36-40	137	3.4	96	2.3	50	1.2	26	0.6	24	0.6	23	0.6
31-35	886	21.7	719	17.1	694	17.2	591	14.5	577	14.6	633	15.5
26-30	1 209	29.7	1 328	31.5	1 398	34.7	1 338	32.9	1 362	34.5	1 510	37.0
21-25	999	24.5	1 162	27.6	1 075	26.7	1 167	28.7	1 125	28.5	1 072	26.3
16-20	606	14.9	644	15.3	583	14.5	639	15.7	570	14.4	575	14.1
11-15	235	5.8	261	6.2	177	4.4	222	5.5	213	5.4	206	5.1
6-10	..	..	..	..	41	1.0	73	1.8	71	1.8	57	1.4
1-5	..	..	..	..	5	0.1	9	0.2	6	0.2	4	0.1
Total	4 077	100.0	4 211	100.0	4 026	100.0	4 065	100.0	3 950	100.0	4 081	100.0
Mean Class Size	25.9		25.2		25.3		24.6		24.8		25.1	

Excludes Composite Classes

Includes High Schools and Secondary Departments

Mr POWELL: Those tables give a very clean indication of the present position in Queensland. They show that in 1981 no classes had more than 40 pupils, as ought to be the case in primary schools. In the same year, 1.8 per cent of classes had between 36 and 40 pupils. I hope members look at these tables that have been incorporated in "Hansard". Only 0.6 per cent of secondary classes contain more than 35 pupils—a very small percentage indeed. I am the first to agree that classes should not be over that size. I would like to see them all reduced.

The position should be examined very carefully. There is another table giving the deployment of teachers that I wish to have incorporated in "Hansard". It shows 22 categories under which teachers are classified for deployment purposes. I seek leave to have that table incorporated.

(Leave granted.)

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

DISTRIBUTION OF FULL-TIME TEACHERS IN STATE SCHOOLS, JULY 1981

Type of Teacher	Pre-School			Primary			Special			Secondary		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Principal	..	1	1	1 040	62	1 102	44	12	56	139	2	141
Deputy Principal	..	..	..	108	25	133	3	1	4	132	16	148
Senior Mistress	..	..	..	..	29	29	..	1	1	..	124	124
Subject Master/Mistress	..	..	..	..	92	92	..	..	..	660	220	880
Infant Mistress	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Teacher in Charge	13	358	371	..	..	..	30	23	53	..	..	..
Assistant to the Principal	..	..	..	9	3	12	..	..	..	10	5	15
General	18	383	401	2 601	6 141	8 742	117	382	499	792	1 192	1 984
Maths/Science	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 132	340	1 472
Commercial	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	34	478	512
Home Economics	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	33	33	1	526	527
Music	..	..	..	21	86	107	1	..	1	36	99	135
Instrumental Music	..	..	..	48	25	75	..	..	..	31	6	37
Art	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	86	222	308
Physical Education	..	..	..	117	84	201	6	8	14	209	188	397
Agriculture	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	38	..	38
Manual Arts	..	..	..	..	..	..	43	..	43	728	..	728
Pre-School (Special)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	9	..	..	..
Remedial/Resource	..	..	..	..	..	..	66	224	290	19	34	53
Migrant	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	45	55	..	..	..
Teacher Librarian	..	..	..	108	249	357	2	7	9	56	100	156
Advisory	3	28	31	18	19	37	10	44	54	11	2	13
Grand Total	34	770	804	4 070	6 815	10 885	332	789	1 121	4 114	3 554	7 668

NOTE: (a) Not included in the above table are 250 teachers seconded to Guidance and Special Education Branch and branches within the Division of Planning and Services.

(b) Physical education teachers have been allocated to divisional numbers according to the type of school in which they spend the major part of their time.

(c) Assistants to the principal are appointed to schools with attached secondary departments.

(d) Special figures include teachers who are in contact with primary pupils for the major part of their time.

Mr POWELL: The table shows the distribution of full-time teachers in State schools in July 1981 and shows where the teachers are distributed throughout the State. That is an important table for the public to read.

Staffing scales have been criticised fairly often. There are some problems with the staffing scale in Class 3 primary schools, for example. However, allowance is made for the humps that occur in schools to be catered for by adequate staffing from regional areas.

The deployment of teachers has been criticised, but let us look at the cost of education. This year, more than \$700m will be spent on education in Queensland. As at 1 July 1981, the average salary of a teacher was \$695.64 per fortnight, or \$18,149 per annum. If one multiplies that by the total number of teachers in the State, one sees that a massive amount of money is involved. However, that is not the whole story. Up to 30 June 1981, Queensland spent a total of \$23m on teacher aides, or an average of \$7,245.85 per teacher aide. The costs increase. The average cost of a janitor/groundsman was \$11,579.39, and of a cleaner \$7,622, and the total cost of that ancillary staff was \$8.3m for janitor/groundsman and \$29.1m for cleaners. Almost 90 per cent of the \$702m provided for salaries is completely committed, so there is very little room for the Education Department to manoeuvre.

The Opposition spokesman on education—he has left the Chamber, which shows his interest in education—criticised the Government for spending a small amount per pupil on education. The use of interstate comparisons of input statistics as a platform for criticism completely ignores decades of research into education. In overseas countries, an enormous amount of research effort has been put into investigations that might lead to the identification of resource inputs that have the greatest effect on learning. Surely that ought to be the main criterion—"the greatest effect on learning". However, no research to date has been able to isolate any single resource or group of resources that significantly influences learning. That is not to say that certain resources do not have a significant effect on educational outcomes, but it does mean that so far they have not been clearly identified.

Two matters that have been investigated repeatedly in this context are expenditure per student and class size. Intuitively, one might expect that students could be given better education if more resources were made available in schools. Few would deny that smaller classes, better equipment and favourable surroundings should be made available to students where it is economically possible to do so. However, that is not to say that the cost-per-student statistics are a good measure of the quality of education provided, and I emphasise "quality of education provided". The contrary is the case.

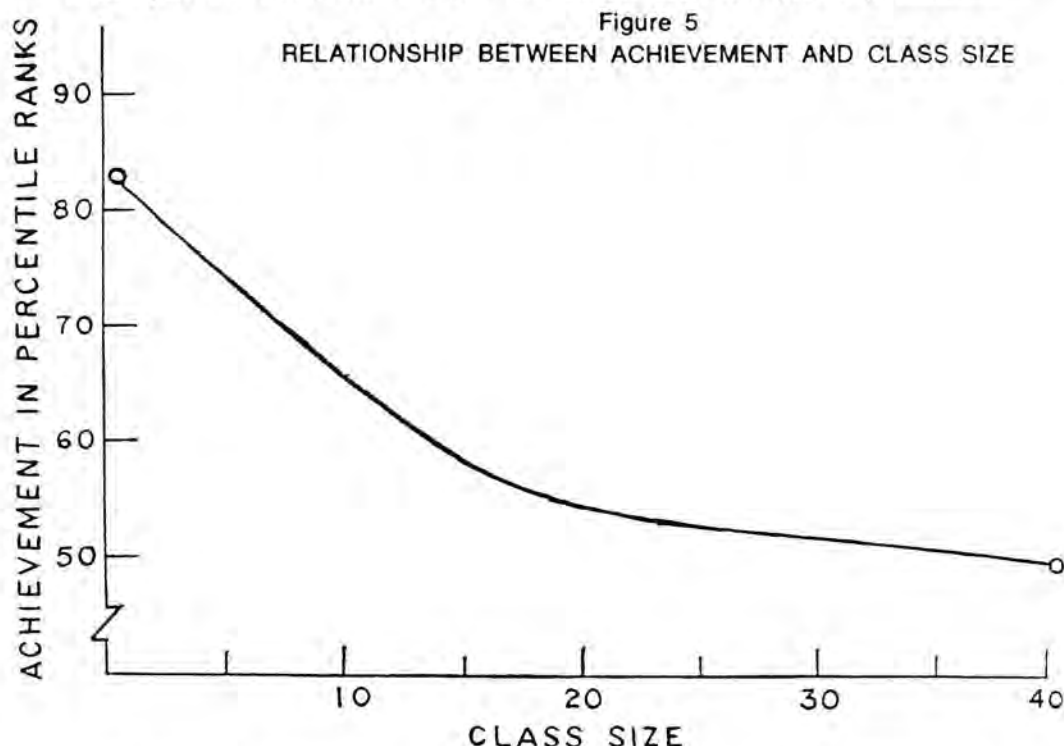
One of the universally consistent findings of research is that the cost-per-student figures are not significantly related to the achievement of students. Accordingly, the critics who imply, simply on the basis of cost-per-student figures, that Queensland education is below the standard of education in other States are ignoring the best research evidence that is available at present time.

Community pressures to reduce class sizes has continued unabated for decades. It is nothing new. Members of the Opposition have just found out about it. One would expect that a teacher with fewer children in his care could produce better results. Although that may be so, research into this vexed question does not confirm that expectation. In fact, the research is generally inconclusive. Some studies show gains under certain conditions; others show no significant difference.

Recently one report on class sizes caught the attention of parent and teacher organisations and is being used to promote the view that smaller classes are more productive. That research work was undertaken by Professors Smith and Glass at the University of Colorado in the United States of America. Using a research technique referred to as "meta-analysis", they have demonstrated that small classes can promote student achievement. I seek leave to have incorporated in "Hansard" a graph relating to that matter.

(Leave granted.)

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



Relationship between achievement and class-size. (Data integrated across approximately 100 comparisons from studies exercising good experimental control.)

Mr POWELL: That research is not without its problems and is not as conclusive as its advocates might believe. In the first place, the validity of the new research technique has been questioned by many academics. One cannot be sure that the results are all they might seem to be. Moreover, it has been suggested by other academics that small classes are typically found in schools—this is an important point—that lie within the better socioeconomic communities. It must be remembered that that research was done in the United States of America, which has a system completely different from the system in Queensland. It must also be remembered that it has a school board system under which the richer the area, the greater the amount of money spent on education in that area. Therefore, the research undertaken by Professors Smith and Glass is probably invalid because the smaller classes occur in the United States where there are better socioeconomic conditions. That is not so under the State education system in Queensland. It then follows that the better achievement of students in smaller classes could have something to do with home background as well as class size.

However, whether or not the results of the studies of Smith and Glass are acceptable from a research point of view, they are hardly satisfactory from a practical standpoint or from Queensland's point of view. They suggest that the ideal class size is between 10 and 20. That will be indicated by the graph that has been incorporated in "Hansard". Classes in Queensland would have to be halved to conform with their findings. That would virtually double the State's present operating costs of approximately \$650m a year and require an enormous school-building program to accommodate the extra classes that would have to be formed. Financially, the effect on the State would be crippling.

A further examination of the Smith and Glass study is important. If their research findings are correct, school results will not improve very much initially as class sizes are progressively lowered, because significant gains and achievements are not obtained until class sizes fall below 18 students. That means that the cost and benefits of reducing class sizes from their present levels must be carefully examined. Any move to reduce class sizes will be expensive because it takes large numbers of teachers to make even moderate

gains in class size reduction, and teachers' salaries are the largest item of expenditure in the budget of any education authority. However, according to the results of the Smith and Glass study, those expensive changes may mean only slight gains in student achievement. Moreover, we have no knowledge of what effects they might have on the other objectives of education.

In my opinion, there are three groups of people who are vitally important in the education field. They are the pupils, the parents and the teachers. Of course, without pupils there would be no such thing as education. In the opinion of most researchers and academics, the chief educators of the child are the parents. It is obvious that teachers are important. However, if parents do not recognise their responsibilities to their student children, no teacher, no matter how good he or she is, can make up for those parents' neglect of their responsibilities. It is totally unreasonable to expect teachers to be able to overcome difficulties imposed upon children by their family situation. The sooner the community recognises that fact, the better. As I travel round my electorate and other electorates, I notice a change in community attitudes. Parents are recognising their responsibilities and their importance in the education process. I am heartened to see that.

As I attend school speech nights in my electorate and neighbouring electorates, I am delighted to find that school principals also recognise the importance of parental responsibility. In fact, at one school the principal stated that in his view the school ought to be a refinement of society. I concur whole-heartedly. The best aspects of society, not the worst, ought to be promoted in schools. Because I hold that view, I am disgusted by the type of English programs and books that are used in English courses in some schools. Fortunately, such programs and books are in the minority. The vast majority of teachers are dedicated professionals who go about their job in a completely professional manner.

I deplore the way in which some schools and some parents encourage children not to accept discipline. I deplore the action of those parents who incite their children to stay away from school merely because they think that certain buildings at the school are not good enough. That happened in a suburb of Brisbane. I condemn those people who incited children to stay away from school. When those children attain the age of 15 or 16 years and they do not do as they are told, the parents may cry to the community, "The school did not do its job." These parents will be the very ones who will complain.

It is about time that parents recognised their responsibility to their children. As I said before, I am pleased to see that in many parts of the State parents are beginning to recognise their responsibility. Teachers must be supported on disciplinary matters. Not for one second should insubordination and rudeness from children in schools in Queensland be condoned. The Minister should not condone it, departmental officials should not condone it and, lastly but perhaps more importantly, parents should not condone it. Those parents who do condone that type of behaviour in schools by their children are to be condemned.

It is high time that parents and teachers got together on the subject of discipline in schools. It is vitally important to the success of our society that we have correct self-discipline within our schools. If such a climate does not prevail in our schools, society is in for a very rough time in the years that lie ahead. Those parents and teachers who incite children to be rude to other teachers are to be condemned roundly. They are bringing about a decline in our society.

In the few moments remaining, I want to congratulate the departmental officers, the teachers and the administrative staff who work very hard. They spend a great deal of their own time in working for the students. I am heartened indeed as I see many teachers who are prepared to work part-time out of school hours for the sake of the children. I am heartened when I see principals and teachers working within the community and listening to what people say. I am upset when I find teachers who are so arrogant that they will not talk to parents or to other people in the community. Fortunately, those teachers constitute a small minority. I hope that the professionalism of the teaching force will overcome their deficiencies.

I congratulate the Minister on the way in which he has made himself familiar with his portfolio since taking it over, and on how he has undertaken the work in hand. He is to be congratulated on working tirelessly for education in Queensland.

Mrs KYBURZ (Salisbury) (2.56 p.m.): Education is one of the exciting ministerial portfolios in Queensland and, I should imagine, in all Australian States. It is becoming more exciting because of the changes now taking place in society. I am pleased to note that the metamorphosis in society is general rather than of a segmented or class type. Every person, from the age of one upwards, should enjoy the cultural changes that are taking place in Australia.

Additional educational opportunities will assist all Australians. We all gain from the knowledge of others. Every member who enters this debate should have at least one criticism to level at the education system, because criticism is healthy. If we all stood up in this Chamber and said that we were very pleased with this, that and the other thing and did not criticise anything, what a dull world it would be. Apart from that, the role of private members is to criticise and to raise issues that need to be discussed.

An important point for discussion—and the previous speaker covered it very well—is class sizes. It has been discussed in a very simple way so that everyone can understand it. The answers given are usually so facile that parents, children and others in the community can repeat ad nauseam the propaganda put out by the union. Questions about class size have been raised to take parents' minds off the quality of education being offered. The quality of education is more important than the number of children in a class.

Everyone who has criticised the size of classes in Queensland has ignored the rapid augmentation of ancillary staff over the past 15 years. Apart from ancillary staff in schools, library teachers, specialist teachers, teacher aides, pre-school teachers and many others have assisted with the education of children. Many parents who criticise the quality of education see only the narrow part of the education system that affects their children. Everyone is basically selfish, and when people come whingeing to me about something at a school, I wonder whether they realise what the teachers have to put up with and whether they understand the overall role of the school as an educational institution. I am sure that they do not. They see only the one thing that affects their children, which is very sad.

Schools in general, because of their well-balanced curricula, are becoming far more interesting. In addition to the core subjects that were taught 30 or 40 years ago, a wide range of cultural subjects and sport is being taught. One tends to forget some of the very important people now attached to schools. Certainly 30 years ago a visiting music teacher was not available to the majority of pupils. Advisory teachers were not available to stimulate the intellect of teachers, and that is precisely what they are meant to do.

Teacher librarians were just not available then because libraries were not nearly as widespread within the school system as they now are. I think those sorts of people are played down in our education system, and it is not generally acknowledged how very important they are.

Every year when I read the annual report of the Education Department I see something that I did not know about. I obviously find it an informative document in that respect. If people involved in the education sphere do not know about something, then it is obvious that a lot of people not involved in education would not know about it.

On the subject of special education I am extremely interested in the remarks under the heading "Migrant Education". That part of the report states—

"During the year further work was undertaken on teaching materials and assessment scales for adult language programs."

That is a very important part of the work carried out by the Migrant Education Section, but I do think that part of an extension service of the Migrant Education Section should be a person who could advise high schools on the development of multicultural education, and I do not just mean teaching English as a second language to migrant children. I mean an interplay, a correlation, between children who speak another language and children whose first tongue is English. I know that when one is learning another language it is extremely important to hear the music of another country, perhaps to see its dances, and to meet

the adults; in fact, to feel the culture of another country. I believe that multicultural education could be far more than we understand it to be in the Queensland education system. There are now moves afoot, particularly in the high school system, to set up multicultural centres, and they are to be applauded. I certainly feel that if there is anything at all that the Migrant Education Section can do, and I say this knowing that there are very well qualified people in the section who know what is going on all round Australia, it is to advise how that interplay could take place within those centres. That would be advantageous to the entire community.

Under the heading of "Other Services" I was particularly interested to study the progress of the Committee on Residential Care Education Projects. However, one does not learn very much about the sorts of projects in which that committee is involved. I would like to know whether there are any avenues for community help, particularly from people who wish to involve themselves in residential care education projects. Are there any avenues through which members of the public—I do not mean do-gooders but people who have genuine ability—can move into the residential care education system, particularly orphanages, to help the children in some small way? Perhaps women could teach various crafts or implement another language service. I know that in residential care the lack of intellectual stimulus can be a great problem. I feel that there are other avenues of which advantage must be taken, and I would like to know if that committee is open to suggestions of that sort.

I was particularly interested in the section of the report dealing with music. I notice that by the end of 1980 about 12 000 students in 239 primary and 81 secondary schools were involved in the instrumental tuition program, and I can only praise the fact that children in primary schools can learn to play musical instruments, something that we did not have the opportunity to do when we were at school. Quite frankly, I admire all the people who are involved in school bands; to me it is a great achievement for any child to learn to play a musical instrument.

The number of requests for that sort of program far exceeds the number of teachers available to provide it. There are not enough teachers to go round because many of them are also involved in private practice. There should be far more sharing of these specialist teachers among schools. Why can't a music teacher teach at different schools on different days of the week? Some sharing occurs at present; teachers spend two or three days at one school and the same period at another school. Even surface teaching of music can stimulate an interest in children. This is a very laudable project, and it is one that the department should be congratulated for introducing.

Another important program that has been introduced on the southside of Brisbane is the Educational Visitor Program. It has not been discussed in this Chamber. This program is also very dear to my heart. Anyone who has been involved in education knows that, unless a caring attitude towards school and attainment at school is shown in the home, nothing that the school does can overcome the problems facing some children. The Educational Visitor Program is very important. I imagine that, after this pilot project has been evaluated, the program will become more widespread.

The program aims at strengthening the vital link between the class-room and the home. A home visitor is appointed to a core school. I have with me an article written by a teacher who is a home visitor attached to the Harris Fields State Pre-School Centre; in fact, she is in charge of the Harris Fields, Mabel Park and Kingston State Pre-School Centres. Her main role is to visit the homes of children who are potentially troublesome. I have not been able to ascertain how many people are involved in the team. I would think that they deal with social problems.

This home visitor mentions that poor health and hygiene are two of the problems that she encounters, and that many of the children's problems stem from the personal problems of the parents. If a teacher asks a child who is troubled at school what is wrong, he will open up and say, "Mummy has been bashing daddy." The child will tell the teacher everything that has been happening at home. That child is socially or psychologically deprived. Any advice that could be given to the parents would be advantageous to the future education of the child.

The article points out that many children have difficulty in articulating; I think that has been proved time and time again. Over the last 25 years, the study of linguistics

has been refined to such a degree that everyone involved in it knows that not only verbal communication skills but also retention skills are important in the teaching of any language. In fact, the acquisition of a language can depend largely upon the environment in which a child grows up. Many parents still do not realise the importance of talking or reading to a child from a very early age. Many children who have language difficulties have been propped up in front of a television set and ignored, and that is sad.

In the final paragraph of this article, the teacher makes it quite clear that she had little success if the problems in the child's home were impossible to overcome. Obviously no teacher can move in and say to a child, "The whole world is going to change for you. You will have to do this, that and the other." That just cannot be. That program is extremely important, and I hope that it will be continued and expanded throughout the State.

I have raised with officers of the department that teachers must receive its full backing in their problems with parents over discipline in the school system. Because discipline is breaking down, particularly in some suburbs, that is extremely important. Discipline in schools is breaking down because of lack of discipline in the home. There is no doubt that in certain areas teaching is becoming more difficult. People who enter the teaching profession with the very best of intentions and with serious regard for the development of pupils should not have to be concerned about the behaviour of pupils. That should not be their responsibility. The department has the responsibility to back teachers on whatever they choose as the most adequate means of discipline.

I certainly do not agree with current moves by parents who are most vociferous in their demands for a total breakdown in discipline. Some of them want no discipline whatsoever in schools. A good talking to is only the beginning; it is not the be-all and end-all of discipline.

The final matter I wish to mention is the breakdown of costs per pupil with particular emphasis on a comparison between Queensland and the other States in pre-school, primary, special and secondary education. A look at a table of the recurrent costs per pupil on a State-by-State basis is most interesting. In 1975-76 the recurrent cost per pupil in pre-schools was \$646. For 1979-80 the figure was \$887, not a very great increase. In 1975-76 the primary school figure was \$807 and for 1979-80 it was \$1,189—once again, not a very large increase. The biggest advance in Queensland has occurred in the area that sometimes attracts the most criticism, that of special education. In that field in 1975-76 the recurrent cost per pupil was \$2,863. The figure for 1979-80—it is probably even higher now—was \$5,559. That is an enormous amount of money. I will not tolerate, nor do I listen to, criticism that Queensland does not spend enough money on special education. Those figures clearly show that every effort is made in the special education sector. That is the largest augmentation in funding. An augmentation of almost \$3,000 per pupil cannot be said to be a failure by the Government, especially when one considers that the other increases are of the order of only a few hundred dollars. Obviously people make criticisms based on their personal opinions.

In 1975-76 in the secondary sphere, the figure was \$1,241; in 1979-80 the figure was \$1,892, an increase of some \$600 over that period. I thank the department for those excellently presented statistics of recurrent expenditure because, with such a wide field to cover, they are very difficult to calculate.

I am interested to see that the salaries of some remedial resource teachers have been included in the primary school figure, which means that on a per capita basis that figure would be lower in some areas. The Government is doing everything that it possibly can in the special education sector, which is moving ahead in leaps and bounds. Obviously in other areas more money needs to be spent. I refer particularly to brighter children. Far more could be done to stimulate those children who are high achievers. I would suggest the attachment to every school of an opportunity teacher, who should be an upper intellect primary teacher. I think that we will see that within the next 10 to 15 years.

(Time expired.)

Mr WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (3.15 p.m.): When one enters a debate on education it is very easy to find fault, because education is a subject that affects every person regardless

of his age, intellectual ability and involvement in the community. In some way almost everybody is associated with or involved in education. It is very easy to find fault and say, "Something is not being done here. More could be done there." Every Minister for Education must realise that he will always receive that type of comment.

I have looked very carefully at what the Education Department did in the 12 months to the end of last December, as shown in the annual report. It is probably the only department that reports on a calendar-year basis rather than for the period from 1 July to 30 June. One must congratulate those who are involved in the education system at a class-room or administrative level as well as at the ministerial level, because their task is not an easy one. It is a high-cost industry. Sometimes it is very difficult to assess the results in the short term or even in the medium term. It is such an important industry—and I keep stressing that word "industry"—because there have to be final results. It is an area of production. There are those people who must make a major input. That is their involvement.

However, there is one area—and I will try to be totally constructive when I make these points—that I believe is being sold out. I am not quite sure why, and that is why I stand here today to make these points. I shall deal with the extension program or what we used to call the adult education program. When it was first included in the technical and further education sector of the department, I saw that as being rational and certainly reasonable. It was obvious that, if we were going to involve ourselves in further education, we should not restrict it to those in some institutionalised form of education in a college or in some type of extension program from a high school. I realised that we ought to be looking at the needs of adults generally within the community, and that we ought to ensure that people could use adult education or extension programs to, as it were, make up for what they had missed out on. Having taught in adult education on an honorary basis, I saw the advantages. So it irks me—in fact, it angers me—that at this time in 1981, when there is a tremendous need for people to learn greater skills and to be taught how to use their leisure-time to greater advantage, there is no great increase in funding for the extension programs throughout the State.

Mr Moore: Are you trying to behave like Bishop Fulton Sheen?

Mr WRIGHT: I am not trying to behave like anyone. I am trying to make what I believe to be reasonable comments about a very important issue, and one that concerns me greatly.

From what I see happening—and from what I am told by officers within the department in three different areas of this State—the Government is clamping down slowly but surely on the services being rendered to those whom we might say are in the isolated cultural areas of this State—in the more isolated communities. There has been no increase in funding. There has been no major thrust in the services being rendered by way of increased staff. Instead there has been a cut-back, to the point where directions are being given to officers that they are not to be involved in these programs unless they really have to be. In other words, if someone has to be sent to Clermont to carry out a cake-icing program, that is all right; but the administrator is not to go there himself. There is an order to cut back on overtime and to cut back on other expenditure. Not only are there cut-backs; there are also increases in costs. In 1978 the cost per hour for courses was only 50c. Four years later, in 1982, the cost will be \$1 per hour. That is an increase of 100 per cent. We are not encouraging people; we are not drawing people into this type of service.

The State's contribution to extension program services is approximately \$500,000—\$250,000 is raised by way of fees so the contribution is only \$250,000 per year—whilst it can spend millions of dollars on improvements to a racecourse or provide a grant of \$200,000 to a provincial greyhound-racing club. Where are the Government's priorities?

Mr Tenni: Be honest. You know it was borrowed by the racing industry from the SGIO and that it must be paid back by the punters.

Mr WRIGHT: I am not talking about borrowing; I am talking about the allocation of money to education and where it is spent.

Adult education or extension programs help people in all walks of life to learn new skills and gain new interests. Money is not available for that purpose but if \$200,000 is required for the establishment of a greyhound club or if a race club wants \$9m to improve racecourses in the metropolitan area, there is no problem in finding that money. I start to wonder where the priorities lie. Consideration should be given to those persons who are isolated from educational and cultural facilities. The only chance many persons have to improve their skill and knowledge is through the extension programs provided by TAFE. However, there has been a reduction in the financial allocation to that area of education resulting in a limitation having to be placed on its publicity campaigns.

Funding is cut back to the point where there is only a skeleton staff. The extension program services are operating on the proverbial shoestring. The people who benefit from those services are being treated with contempt. The services rendered have been reduced, and increased charges are being imposed on the people who participate in the activities. This is in contrast with the millions of dollars spent in other areas.

The blame should not be placed on the department because the decision to increase the fees by 100 per cent over four years was made by Cabinet. Cabinet has also been involved in pressure being applied to keep a check on overtime and the activities of persons who work in that field. I do not know whether it is being done because some time ago a certain officer ran foul of the Premier in a law case, or whether it is being done because that particular officer involved himself in community activities of an environmental nature. I know that since that time anyone who has worked in adult education has been regarded as a very poor and third cousin of the education system. It is time that was stopped. Greater consideration should be given to the needs of the people who can benefit from the services rendered through the extension programs.

A quick calculation indicates that we are spending a miserable 7c per head per year in this field. That amount would not even buy an ice-cream, but it is the sort of expenditure that is being made. Is it the Government's intention to phase out education services of this type. How far will the restriction of funds go? For how long will the restrictions be imposed? Irrespective of the politics that may have been behind decisions in the past, a new enlightened approach should be adopted by departmental officers at the decision-making level and especially the Minister at Cabinet level. We should be encouraging the activities of week-end workshops rather than cutting them back. We ought to be expanding the type of activities in which extension programs are involved rather than restricting them by preventing officers from being part of those programs, both administratively and in the teaching field.

Last Friday I contacted a departmental officer and asked him to give me samples of publicity material on the types of courses in which his officers have been involved in the last six months.

I want to record in "Hansard" some of the courses that are available in the extension programs. They include: cake-decorating, bread-making, cake-icing, pottery, crochet, leather-work, woodwork, typing, basic horse care, an introduction to Japanese, fabric-printing, basic contract bridge, floral art, gemmology, Italian cookery, advanced Japanese and basic dress-making. One list contains 37 courses, another contains 35.

Other courses that are available are dinner-party cookery, guitar at intermediate level, patchwork-quilting, screen-printing and remedial reading. Certainly that last subject is a very important one. A large number of people have difficulty in communicating and in reading.

Other courses are spinning and weaving, wooden toy-making, jazz ballet, wallpapering, welding, bricklaying, know you car, and even small business management.

A myriad of courses are available. Over the years a large number of people from many parts of the State have involved themselves in those activities. Despite that, the whole program is under threat because the Government is saying that, unless a greater number of persons become involved in the courses, they will not be continued. However, at the same time, the Government says that the fees will be increased, which will deter people from becoming involved. The Government cannot have it both ways.

I believe in the concept of free education; I also believe in the philosophy that the user should pay or contribute. So I believe that a balance needs to be struck between the two. In this instance, the people who are involved do not have alternatives. They do not have

a choice of six or seven cultural activities in their area. They are not given an opportunity to learn these skills. In many instances, they do not have access to libraries. They depend on the courses that are offered to them, so they reach out with both hands to grasp them and to become involved. In spite of all that, those courses are under threat.

I ask that, regardless of the politics involved, a stop be put now to the gobbling up of the extension programs in what was adult education by technical and further education. I ask that those extension programs be funded properly to ensure that the needs of the community are met and that services are rendered to the community. This, of course, will require a review and certainly a personal involvement by the Minister. So I ask him to start finding out what the people want. I ask him to note the importance of what has been achieved and to ensure that the good work will continue.

The second aspect of education that concerns me is the alcohol and drug problem in schools. With some interest I read a recent report in the official journal of the Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Associations concerning surveys conducted in Tasmania and New South Wales of smoking by high-school pupils.

It is recorded that in 1979 a survey was carried out by the University of Tasmania on the smoking behaviour of high-school students. A total of 14 high schools were surveyed, involving 646 boys and 565 girls between the ages of 12 and 16 years.

The results showed that more girls than boys smoked over an age range of 14 to 16 years; by 16 years, 80 per cent had experimented with smoking; at 16 years, 35 per cent of the girls were smokers, compared with 22 per cent of the boys. In other words, one girl in three was a confirmed smoker by the age of 16 years.

Comparisons made between 1971 and 1977 surveys showed that the prevalence of smoking among boys had decreased since 1971 but that there was no decrease over that period among the girls.

In New South Wales, a survey conducted in 1980 showed that one-third of 16-year-olds smoked at least one cigarette on most school-days. That is more than double the 15 per cent recorded in a 1971 survey.

Regrettably, figures are not available for Queensland. All we know is that next year the Queensland Government intends to embark upon an anti-smoking campaign in State schools.

I suggest that the community needs to come to grips with the smoking problem and the drug/alcohol problem in schools. Recently a study was carried out in my area by a keen police officer who found that one-third of high-school students in one class had been smoking cigarettes and had also smoked marijuana at some stage. I see a relationship between the use of marijuana and illegal drugs on the one hand and smoking cigarettes on the other. I also see a relationship with alcohol usage and abuse.

Unless the Government realises what is going on we will have far more serious problems than we have now. As I pointed out, in Tasmania, one-third of all girls are confirmed smokers, and by the age of 16, 80 per cent of Tasmanian children are smoking. In New South Wales, one in three students are smoking at least one cigarette a day.

With due respect to the department, this problem will not be overcome by producing a 20-minute film and choosing eight pilot schools to experiment in how to combat smoking in schools. A direct attack must be made on smoking and alcohol, with an indirect attack being made through sports and health education.

Something must be done to stop young people from getting the idea that it is great to be a smoker and great to be a drinker. It is time that we clamped down on the breweries and stopped their putting the idea in peoples' minds through the media that sport and drink go hand in hand, that the champion is a drinker and smoker. Surely the Education Department, more than any other administrative body, has a responsibility to do something about it.

I ask the State of Queensland, in 1982, to wage an all-out campaign, not just on illegal drugs, which are an on-going problem, but on smoking, particularly in primary schools, because smoking affects children of all ages.

A teacher in my area who conducted a study found that 20 of 33 children in Year 7 smoked regularly. It is discouraging that over 50 per cent of the children are, as they put it, regular smokers. Many of those children had tried alcoholic beverages. Some of them disgustingly explained how their parents encouraged it, especially in front of guests and friends.

From my own observations, and discussion with teachers, I am concerned that a great majority of students do not participate in sport. In the bigger schools children are selected on ability. Those who reach a certain proficiency in sport represent the schools. Many of the others spend their time walking around the playground, sometimes causing trouble. They say that there is nothing else to do and that they are not encouraged to do anything. We must rethink our attitude to sport in schools.

The time has come to combine the resources available to Queensland in the National Fitness Council, the Department of Sport and the Department of Education and embark on a project whereby we use the school facilities both before and after normal hours. To do that, a supervisory program, under trained personnel, would be required. The resources are available in the National Fitness Council. If the Education Department really wanted to use its schoolgrounds and put to good use the millions of dollars spent over the years on tennis courts, ovals, cricket pitches, etc., for more than a couple of hours a day, that could best be done by involving the National Fitness Council. It cannot be done overnight or willy-nilly. I know of the destruction that can be done in schools when people are allowed to run riot with facilities at the week-end, but I have also seen very responsible people using facilities knowing that if they damage them they will lose the opportunity to use them.

We should try to overcome the problem whereby many students do not get an opportunity to learn the basic ball-handling skills and the basic batting skills. Too many students do not get a chance to participate in the everyday sports that seem to be part of the Australian way of life. They do not get a chance to represent their schools, because they have never been given an opportunity to prove themselves. Moreover, we are wasting the facilities that the community has paid for, particularly swimming-pools and the others I have mentioned. That is wrong; it is bad stewardship. In fact, it is shocking financial stewardship of the resources and State's finances, but it can be overcome if we take the initiative and are prepared to work together. Here we have an ideal opportunity of working together through the National Fitness Council, the Department of Sport and the Education Department, but it will only come about if those involved in the decision-making process are prepared to look at alternatives.

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (3.35 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I join in the debate on the Estimates of the Department of Education. As the honourable member for Rockhampton said, education is one of the most important and sensitive issues that comes before this Assembly, and a lot of people get rather emotional about it. Parents are always wanting to see their local member about the school, how their children are getting on and the problems they have, although at times they want to congratulate the member when they learn that the education system in this State is very sound.

Mr Davis: Pity you didn't utilise it.

Mr FITZGERALD: Although we would all like to see the best possible education system we really have to assess the situation and ask: what would be the cost to the community? What value will we get for the community's money? Those are matters we must consider in this debate. We are not debating whether education is desirable. I suggest that those Opposition members who have been trying to interject should note the last few comments I have made.

I could be corrected on this because it will be recorded in "Hansard", but I think the Opposition spokesman (Mr Shaw) said that the issue of class sizes was not the most important issue with which we have to deal, although that is what the propaganda we have heard over recent years has tried to suggest. I know that that argument has been effectively answered by speakers from this side today. It is a very important issue, but I agree with the honourable member for Wynnum that it is not the most important.

Education is a continuing process. Obviously most parents were involved in it and again become involved in it when their children attend school. Education is one of the basic necessities of life. The attitudes of parents are passed on to their children. Teachers can be asked to produce non-smoking, sports-minded academic achievers, but basically we must all accept that the producing of a child who is well educated must surely, in the first place, rest entirely with the parents. They must adopt a positive attitude to learning and education, whether they themselves have been well educated or not. The help they give to their children—even if they cannot help them academically—and their attitude towards education is vital. A positive attitude is the most fundamental help a child can receive right through from pre-school to primary school, high school and on to a TAFE course or tertiary or other higher education. A positive attitude will always remain with the child.

I do not believe that it is the Education Department's responsibility to try to impose on a community attitudes that the community does not wish to accept. I do not think it is right that the Education Department should attempt to prevent children taking up smoking if they want to start; it must be a community response. I do not smoke, and I do not like seeing my children smoke, but I have a right as a parent to educate my children in what I consider to be the correct attitudes to life, and I do not want the Education Department attempting to impose on my children attitudes with which I do not agree.

There are a number of points I wish to make in this debate. The first relates to the lessons one learns as a parent on the first day one takes a child to pre-school. First of all, the parent should introduce the child to the teacher. The child will settle into that school only if the parent has a positive relationship with the teacher. I served for a couple of years as president of a community pre-school committee, and my children attended a State pre-school, so I have some understanding of the problems facing teachers.

A child must be happy at school. He must feel that his parent has made the teacher responsible for him while he is at school. The child will gradually gain confidence in the teacher when he realises that the teacher is taking the place of the parent at school. The child must continue to adopt that attitude even at high school. That is why the parent has to show an interest in the child's education. The parent has to approach the teacher and ask how the child is progressing. It does not matter whether the parents cannot help the child academically; at least, they can take an interest in the child. The teacher can tell the parents the child's problem areas.

Quite a number of high schools hold parent evenings, and some schools are opened so that parents can sit in on a class. I attended the last such function at the local high school and I was most impressed. However, I was terribly disappointed at the very small number of parents who attended to learn what is happening in the modern classroom.

A teacher must know the environment in which a child lives. The pre-school teacher in my area visits children's homes a couple of times a year. After each visit the teacher remarks on the improvement in the relationship between himself, the parent and the child. Teachers and parents are interested in one thing—providing the best possible standard of education.

The Rangeville State School in Toowoomba is one of the largest primary schools in Queensland. It is experiencing a number of problems. At present its enrolment is about 1155. People who have estimated the number of people who will move into that area in the future expect that the enrolment will increase to about 1300. I understand that the policy of the Department of Education is that no more than 24 permanent teaching spaces will be provided in any school. It does not want to spend money on building class-rooms that will be used for only a short period. It believes that the money available should be spent in providing class-rooms in other developing areas.

The situation in the Rangeville area is rather unique. The school is experiencing a sideways increase in enrolments—that is, an increase in all classes—and it appears that it will continue for some time. The school already has three demountable class-rooms; that is six teaching spaces. Because of the increase in enrolments, another two demountable class-rooms, or four teaching spaces, are to be provided, so that the school will have 10 teaching spaces in demountable class-rooms. I can give a guarantee to both the Minister for Works and Housing and the Minister for Education that the enrolments

at the school will continue to increase. In the not-too-distant future, those Ministers will have to consider the erection of more demountable buildings at the Rangeville State School.

I ask the Minister to consider the problems that arise with the erection of demountable buildings. The p. and c. association at Rangeville has been very active. It has provided ovals and presently has plans for the construction of another oval. That association is rather upset because a demountable building is to be erected beside a cricket wicket that it provided. As school numbers increase, more demountable buildings occupy more of the playing area at the school. On the one hand, the school enrolment increases; on the other hand, the playing area at the school decreases. That is a great disappointment to an active p. and c. association.

The p. and c. association at Rangeville has suggested a solution to the problem. Ten teaching spaces in demountable accommodation are sufficient for any school. That allows for a significant future downturn in enrolment. Blocks B and D at the Rangeville school have already been earmarked for replacement. I ask that those blocks be regarded as demountable buildings so that in the future a double-storey permanent building may be constructed instead of another demountable. If the pupil numbers in the Rangeville area decline in the distant future, it will be possible to remove the demountables and demolish blocks B and D. That would be very wise planning. As a car-park is needed at the Rangeville school, I would not like to see further demountable accommodation constructed on the existing car-park.

The very sensible suggestions that I have put forward come from the Rangeville p. and c. association. I have been to the site and studied the proposals, and I believe that they are very sound planning for the future.

There is probably no need for a new primary school on the south-eastern side of Toowoomba. The present school is large, and it is not good policy to build another school beside an existing school. Toowoomba is a fairly tightly knit community with fairly high-density housing. Children will not be required to travel long distances to schools.

The 1980 annual report of the Minister for Education reveals that 278 full-time students attended the Toowoomba TAFE college. Another report revealed that Queensland has 21 TAFE colleges, but that figure may have increased. The number of full-time students at the Toowoomba TAFE college is not the highest in Queensland but it is still quite high. However, I say with some pride that when the number of part-time students is taken into account and the total is calculated, the Toowoomba TAFE college is the largest in Queensland, with a total enrolment of 10 112. It is rather interesting to note that there are twice as many females as males.

Over the last couple of years the Commonwealth and State Governments have spent a fair amount of money on TAFE colleges. Because many apprentices now have to attend a TAFE college as part of their training, that expenditure was necessary. Many students wishing to attend the Toowoomba TAFE college have to attend colleges in Brisbane or at Bundamba. In the last couple of years new colleges have been built in Queensland. In fact, a very fine college has been partly completed in Ipswich and construction is continuing.

As I said, the Toowoomba TAFE college has the highest enrolment in the State. At present it is using make-shift premises in the old Empire picture theatre.

Mr Davis: A lovely picture theatre.

Mr FITZGERALD: Yes. It was rather a large picture theatre. It is a very fine building. I suggest that the department consider building a new TAFE college on the outskirts of Toowoomba so that the large Empire Theatre and the surrounding buildings could be put to some other use. The Empire Theatre had a seating capacity for 2 000 people. It has a very solid sloping floor. It had been used as a picture theatre for years. I am sure that with the expenditure of some money it could be put to better use than a TAFE college. It is suitable for ballet and stage shows. There is parking across the road from it. As the building is not being utilised to its fullest extent by TAFE—it is using the offices round the side, the stage and the shops in the front—I would like to see the Education Department find a new site so that the present building could be used for something else.

It could be a great cultural centre for Toowoomba, which does not have a centre big enough to attract large shows. The floor could be levelled. One of the gentlemen who previously was a part-owner of the building said it would make a glorious ballroom and he had plans drawn up for that purpose. For the sake of the people of Toowoomba and TAFE, a new college should be built on the outskirts of the city and the Empire Theatre allowed to become one of the great cultural centres. Toowoomba would have a building to be proud of. It is right in the centre of the city.

I now pay tribute to the men and women who work on the various p. and c. committees throughout the electorate of Lockyer. As I have visited all the schools it has been my pleasure to meet our band of dedicated teachers. It would be remiss of me if I did not say that in almost every instance the teachers in charge of the schools are very dedicated. Particularly in the smaller centres the teacher becomes a central figure-head. He is looked up to and respected. Unless he is willing to perform and is dedicated, he will not hold that respect. There are those who say that johnny-come-latelies are not accepted in small localities. However, when teachers come to small localities they are respected. Most of them hold that respect and, when they are transferred, most people are very sad to see them leave.

I pay tribute to the willing band of men and women who work on the tuck-shops. The funds they raise, added to the subsidies, provide the extra amenities that are so essential to the operation of our schools. Once more, there is co-operation between the parent, the teacher and the student. The student gains in the long run, and is aware of the benefits he receives from that co-operation.

Another matter I wish to mention—I have spoken on this before, but I think it is very important—is that female teachers (I prefer to call them “women” or “ladies”)—should have the same superannuation benefits as males. The present scheme might have been all right in the Victorian era when married women were governed by their husbands. Today, in the teaching profession there are married couples, unmarried men and women and single parents, both male and female.

In teaching ability there is no difference between an unmarried woman and an unmarried man. Why should the woman be denied the right to contribute to the same scheme and receive the same benefits? Women do not pay into the same scheme as men, but they should have that right. I do not suggest that it should be compulsory for all women to join the scheme; they should have an option. I was annoyed when I was told by a woman who has been teaching for many years that she had been denied equal rights in this regard.

Mr SCASSOLA (Mt Gravatt) (3.55 p.m.): I have listened with considerable interest to what has been said in this Chamber this afternoon. The enormous growth that is occurring in this State inevitably places strain on the education system. Some of those strains occur in the area of accommodation. The rapid increase in population in certain areas, particularly in the dormitory suburbs in urban areas, is reflected in the acute need for additional schools. I refer specifically to those areas that impinge upon or are contained in my electorate. The suburbs of Sunnybank Hills, MacGregor and Eight Mile Plains are growing very quickly. The effect of that growth on accommodation is very real indeed.

The Sunnybank High School now has an enrolment in excess of 1 300. Enrolments for 1981 exceeded the predicted figure by more than 100. In 1982 the school is expected to have an enrolment of more than 1 400. The effect of that enormous growth has been an accommodation crisis. The school draws its students from Sunnybank and other areas, such as Eight Mile Plains, Sunnybank Hills and as far away as Algeston. A bus service bypasses one school to take students to Sunnybank. Any additional accommodation provided at Sunnybank can be temporary only, because there is no more land on which any substantial buildings can be erected. In short, the school is fast nearing saturation point.

It is very clear that the growth of suburbs to the south and east of Sunnybank points the way to the urgent need of a new school to relieve the pressure at Sunnybank. I urge the Minister for Education and the Minister for Works to consider, as a matter of urgency, the construction of a new school, perhaps in the Sunnybank Hills area.

A not dissimilar situation exists at MacGregor. Of course, that has been a fast-growing area. The school population there is approximately 1 450. As it is one of the larger high schools in the State, it has suffered the effects of imbalances in staffing arrangements.

The difficulty can be illustrated by referring to the staffing scales. A school with an enrolment of 725 is entitled to a staff complement of 48 teachers or, in broad terms, a ratio of one staff member to 17 students. A school with 1 000 students has an entitlement of 63 or, in broad terms, a ratio of one staff member to 17 students. A school with an enrolment of 1 450 is entitled to a staff complement of 85, or a ratio of one staff member to 23 students. What has happened over the past two years at MacGregor is that, whereas in 1979 it had a staff complement of 91, its complement has been reduced to 85, even though the school population has remained constant within five or 10 students either way.

The word "staff" encompasses a wide range of people, administrative and otherwise. Therefore not all the staff complement find their way into the class-room. I am encouraged by the intimation from the Minister that these matters are under consideration. I certainly hope that the imbalances that have been shown up at MacGregor will be rectified quickly. They are related, of course, to the subject of class sizes.

Much was said about that subject in the Ahern committee's recommendations. Firstly, the Ahern committee recommended that detailed statistics showing the number of classes in the various size ranges, broken down according to the year of schooling and between State and private schools, should be included in the Education Department's annual report to Parliament. I took the trouble to read the latest report, but I could not find any information of that nature. If it was in the report, it certainly was not readily observable. Information such as that is of importance to members of Parliament and other people concerned with education.

In relation to class sizes the Ahern committee said—

"We therefore recommend that class sizes of 25 in Years 1, 2 and 3; 30 in Years 4 to 10—"

and so on. It then went on to say—

"However, we recommend that the reduction of class sizes to the target level of 25 in Years 1, 2 and 3 should be the first priority. We believe that this recommendation should be implemented as a matter of urgency, even if, initially, it must be done at the expense of rather larger classes in the later years. It should also be noted that progressive reduction in class sizes is only one of a number of desirable improvements in education to be initiated as and when resources permit.

It is important then that our recommendation is not taken to imply that we necessarily regard reduction in class sizes as the overriding priority."

As I read that recommendation, I believe that the committee was saying that class size is an important element in the overall scheme of things, but that it is not necessarily the overriding and most important element. The committee was saying, in effect, that there ought to be a gradual and continual movement towards the target sizes indicated in the report. I concur with the committee's view that in large classes teachers are unable to give individual attention at the frequency and to the depth that are desirable. So the size of class does have a bearing on the quality of instruction given to children.

I pause there to refer to the Minister's speech. I was pleased to hear him say that the Government has a plan to gradually improve the position and to move towards the target mentioned in the Ahern report. That is certainly encouraging to all people concerned with education.

Some people have suddenly jumped on the class size bandwagon and claimed that class size is the one and only priority. A few years ago many of those people were espousing a different cause in the belief that other matters had greater priority. Those people—and I include members of the Opposition—had a problem in establishing priorities. They were advocating, for example, the appointment of teacher aides.

I agree that teacher-aides are important, but a few years ago it was argued that their appointment should be given the highest priority. In 1974, the Federal Labor Government pushed the idea. Having implemented a scheme, it let the States pick up the financing of it. As has been pointed out, there were no teacher aides in 1974; there are now 6 000. They cost the State some \$24m, which is a sizeable sum. Looking at it in terms of employing teachers, my rudimentary calculations indicate that an additional 1 200 teachers could be employed for \$24m.

The gradual improvement in class sizes is important, and one of the more significant priorities. I turn now to special education. I read with considerable interest the 1980 Education Department report to Parliament. It points out that 1980 saw the appointment of some 13 Special Education Resource Committees and a range of specific purpose committees, which made solid progress in various areas of immediate concern. That statement prompts me to ask, "What was the nature of the progress achieved?", and, "Did students in special schools and classes benefit as a result?" The report contains a number of other important statements; but, unfortunately, time will not permit me to go into them in detail.

Despite the fact that a Council of Special Education was appointed by the former Minister and it presented a report some two years ago containing a number of recommendations, the annual report does not refer to the work, the recommendations or the report of that committee. That and other matters are of importance to this Parliament.

The annual report certainly does not inform Parliament that handicapped children in Queensland have no right to education. A normal child—I will use that term for want of a better one—in Queensland has a choice between education provided by the Department of Education and education provided by other bodies. The blatant discrimination and denial of basic human rights to which handicapped children are subjected should be of concern to every thinking Queensland in 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons. That is not simply a matter of opinion; it was a matter of comment and recommendation by the Ahern committee.

It was a matter of substantial discussion and recommendation by the Advisory Council on Special Education, by the United Nations and by the Bright committee in South Australia, which recently brought down its second report. So it is a matter of considerable moment, and I believe it is regrettable and unacceptable that in 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons, we still have a situation in this State where children are denied the basic right to an education.

As I have said, children, other than the handicapped, and in particular the mentally handicapped, have a right to an education and a right to choose the sort of education of which they can avail themselves. A handicapped child has no such right, and he has no such right despite the fact that his parents, like the parents of other children, are taxpayers and contributors to the community wealth. It has been suggested that to guarantee handicapped children an education appropriate to their needs provided by the State would necessarily involve the demise of other systems. I find that logic to be curious in the extreme. If parents choose not to send their children to a State school or provide them with a State education, that is their choice. But I do say this: if a parent sees fit to send a child to an education institution other than a State institution that parent is entitled to accountability by the provider of the education both in programmatic and financial terms, and I do not believe that that is the case in this State at this time. In other words, I do not believe it unreasonable to expect, for example, the recipients of some \$4.7m of taxpayers' money to be asked to account for that expenditure to the Treasury or to account for the programs which are provided.

It is said that whilst the philosophy that every child is entitled to an education is a correct one, the State has not the resources to implement it. I do not believe that it is a question of resources; it is a question of obligation, duty and whether people have any basic rights or not. My answer is that that sort of argument is an affront to the dignity and self-respect of handicapped persons. Such an argument places a very low value on human potential and, indeed, on human development. It represents discrimination at its worst, because it says, in effect, that rights can accrue only to the able-bodied and to those of "normal intelligence", whatever that might mean.

Despite the "We'll do it when we have the resources" argument, I believe that this State does have the resources to give the right of an education to children, and to ensure that handicapped children are in the same position as every other child in this State. I will put it in quite blunt terms: if this State can afford to expend scores of millions of dollars on a new cultural centre, if it can afford \$750,000 for an additional aircraft for the Police Force, if it can afford \$350,000 for a helicopter, and if it can afford \$1m in one financial year for the Queensland Film Corporation, then I suggest that it can afford to give the right of an education to handicapped children.

Mr FOURAS (South Brisbane) (4.14 p.m.): We live in a migrant country made up of people, young and old, who have come here to build a better life and a better society for themselves. But if we are to accept that we live in a multicultural society, there are responsibilities on both sides. I believe that migrants ought to fulfil their role in the mainstream of Australian life, but by the same token Anglo-Saxon people ought to accept the cultural differences of those migrants and allow them to speak their own language. So I believe it is important that we institute the teaching of community language in our schools.

In its report for the 1982-84 triennium the Commonwealth Schools Commission recommended that funds be provided for a multicultural education program to be allocated specifically to two components: the teaching of community languages and general multicultural programs. That means, of course, that funds ought to be split equally between the two.

Every other State has been putting a lot of those resources into teaching community languages. Queensland is yet to come to the party. In 1982, Queensland will receive a total grant of \$571,000 for the Multi-cultural Education Program. It is unfortunate that the Schools Commission's recommendation has not been adopted. It appears to me that it has been left too wide and that this Government will not use any of that \$571,000 in providing community language programs.

It is important that people should realise that language study has a crucial role to play in education in a multicultural society. Having experienced a culture different from his own, the language learner is more likely to accept other cultures. Language study represents an essential part of education in a society such as ours. The Australian culture is still developing. For it to develop in a diverse or positive manner, we must appreciate and encourage, not reject or discourage, the customs, cultures, languages and philosophies of other lands. If we are to have education in a multicultural society, it is important to promote a healthy cultural diversity. We must go out and do it now, and not be the last bastion of monolingualism. We must start using some of the funds provided under the Galbally report in teaching community languages.

For those honourable members who do not understand what I mean by "community languages", I point out that they are those languages that are spoken by a significant number of people within an easily defined region. Other languages should be taught at school. All languages are terribly important, but I am speaking about the need to teach the community languages. Such a community language program would benefit the ethnic minorities in this State. It would ensure that all children are given the opportunity to retain their linguistic heritage. It would support their culture, of which language is an integral part.

Language is the purveyor of culture. It carries culture from one generation to another. We cannot have a truly multicultural society unless we accept the right of that society to be multilingual and to express its own culture in its own language. Without multilingualism, there is very little else in a multicultural society. Without it, all that would remain is a few exotic dances, recipes and cheap factory fodder. It is important that people on the other side of the Chamber bring Queensland into the 1980s and do what has happened for at least a decade in every other State in Australia except Western Australia, where children are being taught community languages.

It is important to accept that the teaching of languages, including community languages, should start at a very early age. The first day at primary school is the time to start teaching languages. It seems that there is a belief that the learning of another language interferes with the development of the mother language. That is a fallacy. Survey results suggest the opposite; they suggest that learning another language often leads to a greater sensitivity about the mother language.

It is of tremendous advantage to teach languages in primary school. I studied French in secondary school, but that is a dead language to me. I learnt all the regular verbs and I obtained reasonably good marks, but I know nothing about the language now. It was not taught to me at a time when I would have adapted to it. Young children experience fewer problems in mastering a foreign language. They are more tolerant to language pattern drills and repetition. They can learn it much easier than anybody else. They are less self-conscious than older children. They are much more able to engage in experimentation and put their tongues round difficult words. Queensland is in danger of becoming the last bastion of monolingualism. All over Europe children are taught a second language from their first day in primary school. Many languages are being taught in southern States.

For languages to be taught in primary schools, something will have to be done about the provision of teachers. Unfortunately at the present time the teachers' training colleges do not provide a sufficient supply of competent teachers, but I believe they exist. The CAEs that presently prepare teachers to teach languages at the secondary level ought to be able to provide courses for teachers to teach them at the primary level. That is vital.

Already within the school system are many teachers who have native languages or who have learnt languages other than English. Those teachers could be located and, with in-service training and methodology on the proper techniques for the teaching of a second language, could be used to teach a second language in primary schools. The Government could recruit people in this country with academic qualifications in other languages so that they could teach them in primary schools. If they have the qualifications, all they need is the program to upgrade those qualifications to enable them to teach primary schoolchildren. Our training colleges should be geared for that.

The provision of local material is important for such a scheme. It is not good enough to obtain the required material on language teaching from overseas. The audio-visual aids, games and books should not be obtained from overseas. New South Wales and South Australia have tens of thousands of primary schoolchildren learning a second language in a properly structured way. Those States have marvellous, well-produced materials that could be used in Queensland. Queensland should investigate what those States are doing. In his reply I would like the Minister to tell me how he intends to use that \$571,000 for multicultural education programs. How much of that money will be given to community languages? I asked the Minister a question on this subject but he did not give me a proper answer. He said there would be guide-lines. I believe that they will be simply an extension of the present guide-lines and will contain nothing new.

I feel very strongly about this important issue of the teaching of a second language at primary schools. In West End, 37 nationalities attend the local schools. I do not believe that, as the honourable member for Cooroora said, 37 different languages could be taught. However, the major languages such as Greek, Vietnamese and Lebanese could be taught. Because that is a tremendous advantage to children, that ought to be done.

One of the things that a community language program would do is to help to force a home/school link. It would allow communication between migrant parents and schools, which is very important. In that process the mother tongue would be consolidated and that would strengthen communication between parents and children. Migrant parents who wish their children to learn their native language always notice that their children have a lack of motivation to attend the ethnic schools. The Federal Government now provides \$30 per child to ethnic schools, which operate out of normal school hours to teach children a second language. Every migrant in Australia wants to be part of this great country, wants to contribute and wants to play a major role, but also believes quite firmly that it is important that the family retains its cultural heritage. Language is very important to that. The ethnic schools have been provided but the children, because they do not see the value in learning a second language have very poor motivation to attend. However, if the teaching of a second language was instituted at the primary level, that would help those children.

If such learning took place in the company of a child's class-mates in the day school it would enhance his pride in his language and heritage. Such programs are definitely conducive to good linguistic development. When one has to master two different languages, with their individual grammatical construction, one becomes much more lucid in one's native language. Furthermore, instruction in schools of community languages other than English is particularly useful for the child who has been exposed previously only to a language other than English.

Many children attending schools in my electorate turned up on the first day without a word of English in their vocabulary. That is unfortunate. The school itself faces tremendous problems. It is unfortunate that adults somehow believe that that child will retain his language—for instance, in my background, Greek—if only that language is spoken in the home. I believe that that is not so. If the cultural tie is not present, the child could discard the language just as easily. The parents are at fault; but, by the same token, some parents do not have another language. Therefore, their children cannot speak any other language.

It is important to overcome that by having community languages. It is important that such language teaching be used as a measure of breaking down discrimination.

Prejudice and discrimination can best be broken down in the schoolground and the and the school-room. It would be very advantageous if children together in a class-room tried to learn various languages and the cultural heritage that accompanies them. I urge the Minister to channel some of the \$571,000 that he will receive in 1981-82 to a pilot program, say, in one of the schools in my electorate. I assure him that I would be a most supportive member. He would show to the migrant communities in this State that he believes what the mainstream of multicultural education is about throughout the length and breadth of this country.

It is unfortunate that it is always Queensland that lags behind the other States. As I said before, as early as the late 1960s tens of thousands of schoolchildren in South Australia were being given structured community languages at primary school level. I do not see why, when funds are available and when the philosophy of the Schools Commission is that they be split 50-50 between general multicultural programs and community languages, this Government says, "We are not going to do it." I would like to know why. I know that there are difficulties. I know that there are problems. However, I would be confident that the Government was fair dinkum if the Minister said to me in his reply, "We will try Greek and Vietnamese at West End. We will try Italian at New Farm. We will use those as pilot schemes and evaluate them." At present a lot of our resources are in the form of people in these languages units—people looking at the concept of multicultural education. I believe that that money has been largely wasted.

Mr Miller, I showed the Temporary Chairman who preceded you in the Chair a table that I wish to have incorporated in "Hansard". I had his permission to do so, so I now seek leave to have incorporated in "Hansard" a table that shows Commonwealth payments to the States for schools from 1976-77 to 1981-82.

(Leave granted.)

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

	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82 (Estimate)
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Queensland						
Government schools ..	51.6	54.2	52.0	50.0	54.9	65.2
Non-Government schools	28.8	34.9	39.8	45.2	55.2	74.1
Total (a)	84.1	94.2	96.3	99.5	114.6	146.0
Other States						
Government schools ..	301.4	332.5	331.1	327.9	351.3	370.7
Non-Government schools	162.8	188.5	220.5	248.1	307.3	411.6
Total (a)	485.4	544.9	574.1	597.1	682.7	815.9
All States						
Government schools ..	353.0	386.7	383.1	377.9	406.2	435.9
Non-Government schools	191.6	223.4	260.3	293.3	362.5	485.7
Total (a)	569.5	639.1	670.4	696.6	797.3	961.9

(a) Includes joint programs.

Mr FOURAS: I point out the dangerous trend in education funding in this country. As can be seen from the table, the Commonwealth Government in 1976-77 gave \$51.66m for Government schools in Queensland and \$28.8m for non-Government schools, whereas in 1981-82 it is estimated that the amount to Government schools will rise to only \$65.2m whereas the amount for non-Government schools will jump to \$74.1m.

The potential exists for State aid to become a horrific issue in the community. It is a divisive issue, an issue with which no member of this Chamber would wish to be confronted. It should not surface its ugly head.

I accuse the Fraser Government of discriminating against State schools and poorer non-Government schools. There has been misdirection of funds against the interests of poorer Catholic schools and State schools. Youth is one of the community's greatest

resources. Education of the youth of the community should be the first priority of the Government. As a person who belongs to a party with an egalitarian philosophy—that is, it supports the concept of equality of opportunity—I urge the Government to provide equality of opportunity to every child in the nation. Funds should be provided for education to give everyone an equal chance. The Government should be setting standards and trying to improve them. Government schools, particularly those in poor areas, should be provided with facilities that will enable them to provide students with a first-class education similar to that received by students in non-Government schools.

The provision of grants on a per capita basis is a misdirection of funds. In 1976-77, non-Government schools in all States received \$191.6m. In 1981-82 the figure increased to \$485.7m. In 1976-77 Government schools received \$353m, increasing to \$435.9m in 1981-82. For the first time, the Commonwealth Government has allocated more funds to non-Government schools than it has allocated to Government schools. An increasing number of parents are sending their children to non-Government schools because of the better opportunities and facilities that are provided there.

The Treasurer made the following spurious statement in his Financial Statement:—

“The Government is aware that a resource gap exists between Government schools on the one hand and the non-Government school sector on the other.”

He was saying that some non-Government schools suffer a disadvantage. I agree that they do. The majority of non-Government schools do not require the level of support that they are receiving. Some parents can afford to pay \$4,000 per year to send their children to very expensive schools. That amount is a drop in the ocean for them.

In his Financial Statement, the Treasurer also made this statement:—

“The Budget provides for a further substantial increase in State assistance.

From the third term 1981, per capita payments will increase by 16 per cent from \$225 to \$261 per annum for primary students and 15.7 per cent from \$363 to \$420 per annum for secondary students.

The increases are well in excess of that necessary to meet cost increases and provide for a significant real increase in resources to this area.”

The Government believes that it is saving money by forcing children to attend non-Government schools. That is a valid argument.

(Time expired.)

Mr SIMPSON (Coorooora) (4.34 p.m.): I have pleasure in supporting the Estimates of the Minister for Education. The allocation for Education has been increased for 1981-82. Education is important because it is the basis of community advancement. However, it must be kept in perspective. The family unit must be supported as it provides a basis for the education system.

The honourable member for South Brisbane commented on this in relation to migrants. It is important that a good rapport be established and maintained between a school and parents who, because of a language barrier, would not normally support that school. I would hope that schools in areas containing large numbers of migrants would embark upon programs to involve parents in the support of those schools. After all, the students realise the importance of maintaining that rapport. They also realise that parents who complain that schools are no good or that classes are too big are in fact undermining the system and are robbing their children of the opportunity to obtain the best education that is available. If children do not adopt a wholesome attitude towards education, they will not be receptive to it and will not achieve good results.

I am delighted with the increased allocation to education. It is in line with the ever-improving prosperity of the State. Queensland should continue to emphasise the fact that it offers the highest standard of education in Australia.

The Ahern committee made various assessments of education. By and large, they highlighted the fact that the Queensland education system compares more than favourably with those in other States. The report is interesting in that some people could claim justifiably that expenditure per capita on students in Queensland is less than that in other States. Logical people would argue, of course, that high expenditure on education does not necessarily mean that the best results will be obtained.

That leads me to suggest that, besides spending more on education, we should continually assess the results, particularly in relation to the performance of students. It is important that we continue to make headway. We should assess how efficiently money that is allocated to education is used. A constant watch must be kept on the whole education system, including the education of teachers. If we are not turning out better teachers, we are not playing our role of providing the best education to our children.

Attitudes are paramount not only in the home and in the school but also in the teaching profession. The attitudes of teachers are assessed continually. Not all those persons who enter the teaching profession make the grade. Although they have the right attitude, they lack the ability to capture the attention of students and to maintain law and order in the class-room. They are unable to obtain the maximum results from their training.

If we are to achieve the best results in education, we must consider many factors. We are set on the correct course, but we need to examine what we are doing. There is always room for improvement, and we need teachers who are prepared to learn.

We have a wonderful pre-school system that engenders in children the right attitude to learn. Unfortunately the pre-school needs in my electorate are not being met. At least 100 children between Tewantin and Coolum are on the waiting-list. Several new teaching units are needed urgently. One is to be built next year at Sunshine Beach. It will open in 1983, but it will not relieve the problem at Coolum.

Bearing in mind the growth factor and other known parameters that have been referred to by honourable members, including the honourable member for Isis, there should be more rapport between local authorities and the Department of Education. Local authorities should advise the department of new developments, whether they are home units, and whether the people who will be living in them are likely to have children so that the department may be able to estimate how many children are likely to live in an area.

Such information is vital in my area. Recently, the Minister received a deputation about a new high school at Coolum. The building figures at Noosa indicated that a high school would be required on the northern end of the Sunshine Coast rather than at Marcoola, Mudjimba or Pacific Paradise at the southern end, where there are a lot of working people with many children in family units. At Noosa there are many retired people who will not have children. By providing such information, local authorities could be a great help to the department in determining where new schools should be established. Of course, if the local member is doing his job properly, he can advise the Minister of the needs of an area.

As far as possible children should attend the school that is closest to their homes. Although better service may be given where there are special school facilities, finally the better service must be weighed against whether the children have to spend an hour or more in a bus twice a day just to attend school. Children in the West spend twice that time daily in getting to and from school, but remote areas will always be disadvantaged by way of travelling time, and lack of support facilities such as libraries. The people on the Sunshine Coast are privileged to have so many opportunities available.

The different facilities available at primary and secondary level must be taken into account. The Minister should try to ensure that there is not such a big variation.

The extra facilities provided by p. and c. committees are very important. When a p. and c. committee has a major fund-raising goal on its hands the challenge brings the whole school together. It creates better rapport between parents, students and the school staff. When everything is laid on attendances at p. and c. meetings fall off, and the interest of parents and students in the school wanes. It is a vicious circle. I have heard people criticise the work of p. and c. associations and suggest that they should be more interested in curricula, syllabuses, arranging guest speakers and that sort of thing. I think that the greatest benefit is from the challenge which excites the imagination of parents and students. It gets them behind the school in a most beneficial way, even though to some people it might be seen as pure fund-raising.

I will always be grateful to the State Government that, despite opposition from the Federal Government, it went ahead and built a TAFE college on the Sunshine Coast. Some courses have commenced, and hopefully within a year or two quite a number of trade courses will be available. This is meant to be a constructive criticism but I think that the design of such buildings is far too expensive. I believe that we have managed to be practical and cost-effective in designing and constructing pre-schools

and primary and high schools, but when we come to TAFE colleges we build great concrete structures merely in part to provide space for spray-painting or whatever that could be done in far less costly surroundings. That sort of expenditure is preventing us making more TAFE colleges available. The Minister might tell us that it is a Federal Government requirement.

Adult education was mentioned earlier in the debate. I see a great need to interest and educate those people who have increased leisure-time, but I would hate to see that done at the expense of basic education needs. Perhaps the program could be made self-financing with students paying for courses. There are always those who cannot afford to pay, and of course some consideration has to be given to them, but I would not like to see adult education prejudice the provision of other essential facilities.

The Minister would be interested to know that while overseas I noticed that a number of countries use their class-rooms on a two-shifts-a-day basis. They obviously utilise their school buildings twice as effectively as we do. I am not suggesting that we should do the same, although our buildings are used for adult education at night, anyway. Some principals make their schools available for community activities. I saw the two-shifts-a-day principle being adopted in schools in some parts of the United States. It should be realised that in the United States a different funding system applies. The money comes from the local school board. Those boards are very critical of teachers who do not perform. Indeed, they sack them and employ others. That system is reflected in good quality education in wealthy communities and a lower standard of education in the poorer areas.

I also observed the silly bus system under which the poor kids are transported from the inner city to the outer suburbs. I have a sister who lives in Boston, and when she told me that it was suggested that her children would be transported from an outer suburb to the inner suburbs, boy, did they have a fight on their hands! A compromise has been reached, and the kids can travel to the inner suburbs if they want to. All in all, the Americans have created some great headaches for themselves. Having looked at education in Great Britain, South America and the United States, I believe that in terms of education in this State and in Australia we are pretty well off. Far more educational opportunity is provided in Queensland than anywhere else in Australia.

I conclude by commending the Minister on the forthright way in which he is going about his job and getting additional funds for education. That will be reflected in the increased prosperity of this State. I am a strong supporter of education.

Mr McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (4.50 p.m.): I support the Estimates of the Minister for Education. He has done a very good job, as have all Ministers. Under his administration the Education Department will go on to bigger and better things. A moment ago the member for Coorooora said that the Minister has been successful in obtaining additional funds for education. He has, because of the able way in which he has put his case to Cabinet.

Mr Frawley: The Minister does not waste question-time by making lengthy statements.

Mr McKECHNIE: That is true.

The Minister has a problem in dealing with the Queensland Teachers Union. Lyle Schunter is a decent bloke and I have a lot of time for him, but I must admit that I throw away all of the correspondence that I receive from the other executive officers of the Queensland Teachers Union.

Mr Shaw: You don't. You have it on your desk.

Mr McKECHNIE: No. I have with me a letter signed by Lyle Schunter. I have spoken to teachers in my electorate, particularly at Stanthorpe, and they are well aware of my attitude. Most Government members feel that the Queensland Teachers Union has lost credibility. I am not one of those Government members who knock the teaching profession. I do not know what the teachers in Brisbane are like, but most teachers in my electorate are very decent, hard-working people. As a matter of fact, I am pleased that I will be attending the principal's Christmas party in a few weeks' time. That indicates the sort of relationship that I have with teachers in my electorate.

For education to be successful, it must be relevant to the times in which we live. Other members have referred to some of the irrelevant subjects that children have to study. It is a good idea that children study some irrelevant subjects, because they should do

something that they do not like. Unfortunately, life is not a bed of roses. Someone once said that life was not meant to be easy. That person has been laughed at for saying that, but it still is true. The path of life is not easy. If schools are so interesting that students do only what they like, they will not become very good citizens. A balance should be struck between the subjects that students like and do not like to study.

Core subjects should definitely be taught in schools. In addition, schools should take advantage of the natural skills that are to be found in a community. For instance, the Stanthorpe and Goondiwindi High Schools conduct transition courses. I was rather proud to hear one of the regional inspectors say at the recent Goondiwindi High School speech night that those schools provide two of the best transition courses in Queensland. I take a great interest in ensuring that education is geared to teach the skills that children need to get jobs. Teachers can create jobs.

Mr Shaw: Rubbish!

Mr McKECHNIE: The Opposition spokesman on education said, "Rubbish!" Trevor Dyer, the principal at Stanthorpe who is to be transferred, has done a jolly good job in creating employment for children in Stanthorpe.

Mr Kruger: Tell us how he did that.

Mr McKECHNIE: The students go out into the work-force for work experience.

Mr Kruger: That happens everywhere, of course.

Mr McKECHNIE: Yes, but in this case the principal follows it up. He has been successful in encouraging employers who had no intention of increasing their work-force to give jobs to those students. However, when they saw the success of the transition course at the Stanthorpe State High School and the quality of the young people who undertook that course, they were convinced that their businesses could be enhanced and expanded by employing that type of student.

Mr Shaw: He has educated the employers, not created jobs.

Mr McKECHNIE: Fair enough. I simply say that teachers can create jobs if they help to educate employers. How dumb can the Opposition be? Not only should children be educated; if they are to have jobs, the employers must be educated as well.

Recently I received a letter from a lady who complained that a businessman in my electorate had given a job to a married woman rather than to an unemployed school-leaver. My secretary rang that businessman who said that the woman, a former employee with a good record, had come along at a time when he was thinking about employing extra staff. Because she had a good record, he was happy to employ her. That is something that the young unemployed, in particular, have to be made to realise. It is no good their simply applying for every job that comes up; they have to become conversant with all the Federal Government schemes that help the long-term unemployed. They must know them off by heart. If they have been out of a job for several months, they must have enough initiative to go to an employer and say, "Look, I have noticed your staff is busy," or, "I have noticed that you work long hours."

Mr Moore: The employer would say, "Mind your own business and let me run my own business, you Nosy Parker."

Mr McKECHNIE: Not all employers would say that.

An unemployed young person should be able to say to an employer, "If you give me a job, the Government will subsidise my employment for so many months." That is the sort of initiative that should be taken.

At many high schools, I have said that many women who work in a family business with their husbands would dearly love somebody to knock on the door and offer to do the ironing. I have said to young girls who have left school and have some difficulty in getting a job that they should find out where all the employers live and knock on the doors and ask to be allowed to do a couple of hours' ironing. If the employers find that young people like to do ironing and that they can apply themselves to that humble form of employment, they will be the pea for any job that becomes available in a shop. However, not too many young people are prepared to do that.

School courses should have some relevance to what is happening in the work-force, so it is necessary that the TAFE facilities be expanded. I am pleased to see Mr Hinchy here, because he has been to my electorate and knows that greater expertise is required to overcome some of the problems associated particularly with the horticultural industry. As soon as is humanly possible a rural training college or a TAFE college specialising in rural matters must be provided in the Stanthorpe area.

I know that the Minister is very much aware of the needs of that area but, naturally, in his recommendations to Cabinet, he has to consider the State as a whole. I am sure he would acknowledge that the case for Stanthorpe has been put forward very ably by me, and will ensure that it receives due consideration.

I was rather surprised to hear the comments by the member for South Brisbane about independent schools. I wrote one of them down, so I am able to quote him accurately. He said, "A majority of non-Government schools don't need the support they are getting." How out of touch with reality can he be? Let me take the case of a primary producer saddled with a large overdraft who has to send his children away to boarding-school. He needs every bit of help he can get.

Mr Hooper: All we hear are the cares of the poor old primary producer. It is always the primary producer. Let's hear it for the landed gentry.

Mr McKECHNIE: I would sooner back the primary producer than some of the Left-wing unions that the member for Archerfield backs.

Mr Hooper: You've used that one before.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Archerfield will have an opportunity to speak later.

Mr McKECHNIE: It is not only the primary producer; many people living in country towns need assistance in the schooling of their children. When there are no facilities for Years 11 and 12 in a town, parents must send their children to boarding-school to enable them to complete their secondary education. Queensland leads other Australian States in that respect. A great deal of money goes towards paying fees at independent schools. I would hazard a guess—and I think it would be correct—that the majority of private schools are not rich. A number of convents throughout the State are urgently in need of all the Government support that they can get.

Mr Shaw: They are not getting it; that is what the member for South Brisbane said.

Mr McKECHNIE: The member for South Brisbane said that the majority of independent schools do not need it. He said that only a few schools, such as convents, needed it.

Mr Frawley: He's a member of that crowd in Victoria called DOGS—Defence of Government Schools—who hate all private schools.

Mr McKECHNIE: That would not surprise me. The fact is that it pays the Government to give additional funds to non-Government schools. The Government assists somebody to do a job that it would otherwise have to do itself.

We should all be proud of the State education system, and I support it. My own children have gone through the State education system, and one is still in it. There is nothing wrong with it. If somebody wants to send his children to a private school, there is nothing wrong with the Government's giving some assistance to that school. However, assistance should be given on an equal basis. Never mind all the nonsense about schools that do not need it; some do and some do not. They all need it. The cost of education in private schools is getting completely out of hand.

One hears from the Opposition stories about the lack of spending on education in Queensland. Just recently I was speaking to the principal of one of the schools in my electorate.

Mr Kruger: How many schools have you got?

Mr McKECHNIE: 30-odd.

I understand that the Principals Association sent some members of its executive overseas and to other States to study education. The principal to whom I spoke told me that they came back firmly convinced that the only place where the standard of education compared

with that in Queensland was, strangely enough, the Northern Territory. No other place in the world that they visited had a standard of education comparable with that in Queensland.

Money alone does not buy education. Dedication and the way in which money is spent are important. The expenditure of the Works Department must also be considered. When the Teachers Union talks about reduced class sizes, it makes it appear to parents that it is merely a matter of providing a few more teachers. However, the Minister and his department know full well that it will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to build more class-rooms if the union's campaign to reduce class sizes is successful. Of course, we all want smaller class sizes. I am one who will advocate it, when it can be afforded. The Budget has made some real gains in the provision of more teachers.

Mr Frawley: If we could get a few hours a week out of them before the school bus leaves, we would be better off.

Mr McKECHNIE: The teachers might be like that in the honourable member's electorate. I am proud of the teachers in my electorate.

Mr Moore: You won't get their vote, anyway.

Mr McKECHNIE: The member for Windsor claims that they all vote Labor. I would be surprised if I did not get more than 50 per cent of the votes of the teachers in my electorate. I support plenty of people who vote Labor. A member of Parliament has a duty to represent everyone. Education should be beyond politics. The teachers union brings politics into education. It is telling untruths and misleading the ordinary teacher. The strike that took place last year was a typical case of the union using scare tactics.

Mr Moore: When you were going to school they never went on strike, and now they go on strike every week.

Mr McKECHNIE: Yes. The teachers union misled decent teachers into taking certain action out of fear. There is no doubt in my mind that the majority of teachers in my electorate would have voted against that strike. The majority of them were not game to continue teaching because of the scare tactics adopted by the teachers union. The Director-General of Education, Mr Gilmour, is in the lobby. If he were allowed to speak in this Chamber he could confirm that I contacted him about a case in which a teacher felt that he was being stood over. We gave that teacher an assurance that he would be protected if he wanted to teach at the school that day. He fronted up at the school. Most teachers were frightened because of the scare tactics adopted by the union. I have told teachers in my electorate that my door is always open to them. If they have a problem and want it brought up in the party room or if they want me to speak to the Minister about it, I will raise it. However, I will not take seriously the bulk of the paid employees of the teachers union—the Rocketts and people like him. They are only interested in playing politics with schoolchildren. They want to make a name for themselves.

Mr Prest: I disagree with you there.

Mr McKECHNIE: The honourable member for Port Curtis may disagree with me. I would not like to be in Lyle Schuntner's boots. I do not know him very well. The letters that he has written to me have been civil and worth reading. The other employees of the teachers union are more interested in causing strife than in promoting education in this State.

The president of the local bus owners association visited me recently. He expressed concern about the legal liability of bus operators when stopping their buses at the side of the road to allow children to embark and disembark. I rang Eric Cherry, the Assistant Commissioner for Traffic, and he informed me that a legal responsibility is placed upon bus operators to pull up a certain distance from the centre of the road. The bus operators in my electorate brought this matter to my attention. I have double-checked their information and found it to be accurate. From memory, if a single line is painted along the centre of a bitumen road, the driver's side of the vehicle must be parked 3 metres from it. It is not possible to do that on some country roads because buses will be bogged in wet weather. Something must be done about that problem.

Earlier this week the Minister informed me that the more responsible shire councils in this State have taken action to overcome the problem. That is something that other councils should take on board. Most pick-up points are adjacent to the entrances to properties. It is not too much to expect the council or the property owners to spread a few loads of gravel where it is necessary for the bus to leave the bitumen. It will make it safer for all children.

Mr Warburton: Surely you could have attended to that.

Mr McKECHNIE: I am not going out with a shovel to fill in everybody's driveway. It is the council's responsibility to do something about the problem. If the council will not accept its responsibility, the parents should enter into discussions with the school bus operators in an attempt to find a solution to this very serious problem.

Again I stress to the Education Department officials from the Director-General down that the buses are required by law to stop beyond a certain distance from the centre of the road. If they park within that distance and an accident occurs, legal problems could arise. The matter should be thoroughly investigated.

Mr HOOPER (Archerfield) (5.11 p.m.): The first matter I wish to discuss is the very shabby treatment that was meted out to the pupils, teachers and parents of the Richlands State High School. Most honourable members will recall that on 25 March 1980 block E at the school was destroyed by fire. To date no remedial action has been taken. The fire caused severe dislocation at the high school. The pupils are seriously disadvantaged and are being taught under conditions that are far from ideal.

Immediately after the fire occurred I commenced representations to the Minister for Education and the Minister for Works and Housing. I might add that the incident is now one of Watergate proportions.

The situation became so frustrating for parents and pupils that the p. and c. association called a public meeting on 31 August last. The parents were pretty hot under the collar—so much so, in fact that as a protest and to draw attention to their plight they decided they would withdraw their children from the school for a day.

That step was an extreme one. The parents did not take it lightly. They were unanimous in their view that they had to do something. No longer could they sit round listening to the pious platitudes of the Government.

The strike was a great success. Only a handful of children turned up at the school on that day. To be precise—of approximately 1 000 students, only nine turned up.

Mr Frawley: No strike is a success.

Mr HOOPER: This one was a success and it will achieve results.

Last September the Minister for Works and Housing wrote to me. I do not intend to bore the Committee by reading the entire letter. However, the last three paragraphs are pertinent.

Mr Frawley: Which Minister?

Mr HOOPER: The Minister for Works and Housing.

Mr FRAWLEY: I rise to a point of order. The Committee is debating the Estimates of the Minister for Education, not those of the Minister for Works and Housing. The letter should not be read.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Archerfield is referring at the moment to a letter written by the Minister for Works and Housing. I have listened to his comments very closely. He is talking about attendance at a school, which is under the control of the Minister for Education.

Mr HOOPER: Thank you, Mr Miller. The inane interjection by the honourable member for Caboolture clearly indicates the reason why he is not seeking pre-selection for the 1983 election. It is quite obvious that the honourable member for Auburn (Mr Harper) has the honourable member's measure and has reported adversely on him to Sir Robert Sparkes. The honourable member for Caboolture will be history after the end of this Parliament.

As I was saying, I intend to read the last three paragraphs in the letter, which is dated 10 September. Those three paragraphs are as follows:—

"Turning to more specific matters, Architects of my Department of Works have prepared a scheme for rebuilding of the fire damaged block as a new Arts and Crafts Block encompassing Painting/Drawing Area, Resource Seminar Room, Store Room, Arts/Crafts Area, Construction and Clay Annexe and Subject Office.

This project has been included on the 1981/1982 Draft Capital Works Program. The implementation of this work, which represents a considerable financial commitment by my Department, hinges upon funds available for the purpose. As matters now stand, it is not known if funds available for the financial year will be sufficient to allow this project to proceed.

The matter will, however, be kept under review and further consideration given in the light of future fund availability."

That letter is a classic Public Service snow job. It is obvious that some letters written to members of Parliament by Ministers' advisers—I realise that two of them are sitting in the lobby—leave a lot to be desired in that they tell members absolutely nothing. Ministers' advisers should be cognisant of their responsibility and in letters to members of Parliament, whether in the Government or in the Opposition, should set out the facts clearly. This Minister is remiss. He is Minister for Education—even though, because of the low profile that he maintains, most people would not be aware of it. He has an obligation to prod his wayward colleague, the Minister for Works and Housing, to do something about replacing the school. Any responsible Minister for Education would have leaned on his colleague much earlier than this.

Mr Davis: He is frightened of him.

Mr HOOPER: That is quite obvious.

The Minister for Works and Housing is the Leader of the House and has the Premier's ear. If the Minister for Education spoke out of turn he would report him to the Premier.

Mr Prest: The children had to go on strike to get action.

Mr HOOPER: They did so because of the callous indifference of this decadent, Tory Government.

The parents of the children at the Richlands High School are driven to distraction when they see the favoured treatment that other schools receive. The Graceville State School, in the Liberal State seat of Sherwood, is having its teaching space expanded for next year at a cost of \$152,000.

Mr Prest: The member for Sherwood could be the leader of the Liberal Party by then.

Mr HOOPER: I advise the honourable member for Sherwood not to hold his breath while he is waiting for that.

Similarly, the Caloundra State School, which suffered a fire after the Richlands school in June last year, is to be rebuilt at a cost of \$193,000. I say good luck to the Caloundra school. I have no doubt that the principal of that school and the parents and citizens are delighted. When I compare the favoured treatment of the school in the electorate of the Minister for Primary Industries, with that meted out to the pupils and parents at Richlands, I can understand their anger and frustration.

As I said, the Richlands school is not a small school. It is a Class I high school with an enrolment of 902 and a projected enrolment for 1982 of 1 004. It is the old, old story of Government incompetence and neglect. Children in Government-held electorates get favoured treatment.

Mr Frawley: No, they do not.

Mr HOOPER: Of course they do.

That is typical of the hypocritical attitude of the double-standard, Bjelke-Petersen Government which, reputedly, is a democratic Government that follows the Westminster system. That should mean justice for all, with everyone treated equally. What a laugh that is in this State. For my money, actions speak louder than words. The students of the Richlands school and their parents deserve a far better deal from the Government than they are getting.

If the present Minister for Education was doing his job properly he would do his utmost to see that block E at the Richlands High School is rebuilt as soon as possible.

Mr Lee: When your school was burnt down when I was the Minister I fixed it up right away.

Mr HOOPER: I must say that when I approached the former Minister he was very civil, and at least he tried. He did not have a great deal between the ears but when I asked him to do something, at least he tried.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to withdraw that unparliamentary remark.

Mr HOOPER: I do so, but there is a little gap between the ears.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr HOOPER: I withdraw it.

Honourable members will recall that on 4 April 1978 this Parliament voted to establish a select committee to inquire into education. When the report of that committee was finally presented in 1980 it became known as the Ahern report. We have yet to have a full-scale debate on the Ahern committee report. Obviously the Government has pigeon-holed it.

Mr Kruger interjected.

Mr HOOPER: As the honourable member for Murrumba said, it certainly was a waste of effort.

Recently, it was suggested to me that the 823 organisations and groups and the 1 124 individuals who took the trouble to make submissions wasted their time and effort. If the Government had no intention of noting the committee's report, it was a sheer waste of money to set up the committee. The committee was used as a launching pad to propel the committee chairman (Mr Mike Ahern) into the ministry.

Mr Frawley: That's not true.

Mr HOOPER: It is true, and the honourable member told me that privately in the lobby. Because he is sitting in the Chamber he should not get to his feet and deny that he said it.

The money spent on travelling, printing and so on associated with the committee could have rebuilt both the Richlands High School and the Rocklea State School several times over.

I notice that the honourable member for Isis is not in the Chamber, but for once he was correct when, in a letter to the Queensland Teachers Journal, he suggested that the whole exercise was just a political ploy to publicise the matter without having anything to do with it.

Apart from the more obvious parts of the report, the committee recommended the establishment of a standing committee for education and the arts. That suggestion has not seen the light of day.

In his letter to the Queensland Teachers Journal, Mr Powell claimed that members do not have the expertise to debate matters such as class sizes. The Government cannot have it both ways. On the one hand the honourable member for Isis suggests that we cannot debate the report because we lack the expertise and, on the other hand, the Government will not set up the standing committee that will give members the necessary expertise. This is a classic catch-22 situation, and the Minister should do something about it. As proof of his bona fides, the Minister, in his summation, should indicate when this report will be debated.

Mr Kruger: Do you think the Minister is really capable of the job?

Mr HOOPER: He is about as capable as any other Minister in the Bjelke-Petersen Cabinet. As I have pointed out in this Assembly on many occasions, one of the prerequisites for entry to the Bjelke-Petersen Cabinet is certainly not ability. If the honourable member for Ithaca were sitting in the Chamber he would agree that if ability was the criterion he would certainly be one of the Liberal Party members of the Cabinet.

I now want to make some comments on another area of concern, and that is housing rentals. On 23 July 1980, the Treasurer assured teachers that there would be no increase in their housing rentals in 1980. He was half true to his word, as he normally is. Only 21 days after the 28 November election, the State Service Union was informed that housing rentals would increase on 1 March 1981. Moreover, for the next three years increases would be based on national wage increases. This caused a lot of discontent among country principals and teachers generally who reside in houses on schoolgrounds and who, in effect, save the Government money by acting as quasi-caretakers. They serve in isolated areas of the State and save the Government money and they are entitled to some consideration by the Education Department, and particularly the Minister.

The Government is supposedly committed to looking after the needs of country people, but the whole issue of an incentive transfer scheme and locality allowance amplifies its neglect of teachers and, indeed, the standard of education received by country people.

Earlier this year the honourable member for Flinders (Mr Bob Katter) made a statement on the cost of goods in his electorate. He later criticised the fact that many of the teachers in his electorate were in their second year of teaching. What he failed to realise was that the two problems are interrelated. What employee of any organisation is prepared to serve anywhere and suffer the kind of economic loss that some teachers suffer when they accept transfers throughout the State? I think honourable members, particularly those who represent country electorates, would agree that second-year teachers tend to be single, mobile and least likely to resign. They are more prone to transfers to areas such as the Flinders electorate. It is bad enough having to go into the Flinders electorate, but to have to put up with the antics of the honourable member (Mr Bob Katter) is a fate worse than death. If the honourable member were fair dinkum and wanted to do something constructive for his electorate, he would press the Government to introduce a fair locality allowance or incentive transfer to make that area financially attractive.

More specifically, the question of locality allowance needs to be set against the background of the mining boom, for they reveal the lopsided priorities of this Government. In the mining town of Moranbah, represented so vocally by the honourable member for Peak Downs, Mr Lester (the fellow who walks backwards) rental payable by single teachers was \$5.80 per week and is now \$19.75. The locality allowance for single male and female officers is \$6.50. This compares very unfavourably with \$26.90 for bank officers. In Dysart a single teacher receives \$13 whereas a bank officer receives \$39. It is quite obvious that the teachers are the poor relations of the Public Service.

Mr Moore: The lowest one gets paid \$15 an hour. They only work 1 000 hours a year.

Mr HOOPER: If the honourable member for Windsor was paid his worth by the hour, he would starve.

This Government actively discourages married teachers with families from servicing remote areas by offering no assistance at all in the form of child allowances. The honourable member for Peak Downs is strangely silent. Perhaps he is as disinterested as the Government in the social ills caused by the mining boom.

Another aspect of the Minister's Estimates that I wish to mention is the reclassification of schools. I am of the opinion that the present method of reclassifying schools causes a lot of problems for teachers. I think honourable members would agree that the day of the large family is over. We are now in the era of zero population growth. The average family will have two or three children at the most. I think that the Government is living in the past. I also think that some of the officers in the Education Department have a duty to advise the Minister that enrolments are declining.

A long-term problem for teacher employment is the projected decline in enrolments, particularly in some of the older areas of Brisbane and in the western areas where there is a population drift to the coast. That has an immediate impact upon assistant administrators, infant mistresses, deputy principals and even Class 1 principals. As enrolments decline, people are being forced out of these areas and, under the Public Service Act, they are required to find another position somewhere else in the State.

A teacher can serve for a number of years in country areas, suffer the economic hardship already mentioned and gain promotion to a Class 1 school, only to find after a while that the school loses its classification. The Government should give immediate

thought to reclassifying school enrolments and entitlements for assistant administrators. Clearly, if the present trend continues, the more able people will be discouraged from undertaking a course of promotion.

As this is the International Year of Disabled Persons, I would suggest to the Minister and his advisers that, in an area such as Inala, at least one school should be upgraded for the use of disabled children. It would need to be fitted with ramps for easy access to upper floors. Special toilet facilities would have to be provided. Wider doors would perhaps need to be provided and, generally, provision would have to be made for wheel-chairs and for children on crutches.

Also, special problems arise in schools in an area such as Inala that has a high proportion of single-parent families. They are usually problems of a disciplinary nature and, in many cases, can be traced back to the lack of male influence in the home. I feel that male teachers need to be specially trained to handle this situation. Also, they should be left at a school for at least three years so that they can assist disadvantaged children to learn to relate to the community.

The schools in Inala are well in front in the field of innovations. The high schools and primary schools are attempting to achieve co-ordination and transition between the two levels of education. Visits by primary school children to high schools have achieved this. Visits to primary schools by high school teachers have also been a great help to both primary school and high school students.

The Inala High School is to be praised for the attention it gives to the economic situation of some of its pupils' families. Its book-hiring scheme is of great help to low-income earners. Its remedial moderated program aimed at low achievers is excellent. It has also introduced school-job transition programs, with children getting first-hand work knowledge. I believe that similar programs could be introduced in many other schools throughout the State.

I would like to see the Government give p. and c. associations in the outer suburbs, which are not as wealthy as some of their counterparts closer to the city, a subsidy on a dollar-for-dollar basis on the money that they raise. It is very hard for p. and c. associations to raise funds in areas that have a high percentage of single-parent families. For instance, the Serviceton South State School in my electorate has been taken off the list of disadvantaged schools. Because of the decline in enrolments, that school will be demoted from a Class 1 to a Class 2 school from the beginning of 1982. Yet that school still suffers all the problems of economic hardship. I would ask the Minister to consider setting up a special fund to bridge the gap and ensure that all children attending school in Queensland, irrespective of the electorate in which they reside, will not be disadvantaged.

Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (5.30 p.m.): I pay tribute to the Minister for Education for the way in which he conducts his portfolio. I thank him for the assistance I have received from him since my election to this Assembly.

I am pleased that the Minister saw fit to provide funds for the construction of the long overdue science block at the Atherton State High School. It will meet the needs of Atherton very well. Recently a welding school has been provided at the Atherton State High School so that practical skills can be taught to help school leavers move into the work-force.

I publicly thank the Minister for the speed with which the rebuilding program at the Tolga State School was undertaken. I also thank him for allocating funds for landscaping for the new Atherton State School.

Some Opposition members have said that the schools in Government electorates are well looked after. I wish the Queensland Teachers Union could be convinced of that. From the way the union is agitating, one would think that Government members are not getting enough. I will not be intimidated by threats from the Queensland Teachers Union. I was recently forwarded a circular letter by that union; such tactics are totally irresponsible.

An Opposition Member: Was that without your permission?

Mr MENZEL: Yes, it was.

The union can print what it likes, and that circular shows the irresponsibility of some people. I have the full co-operation of the Minister in doing all I can for the children in my electorate.

I will work to have reasonable class sizes. However, the ability of the teacher to teach correctly is also part of the answer to good education. As well as a reduction in class sizes, the onus is on the teaching profession to demonstrate its capacity to teach.

I draw to the Minister's attention the basis of the allocation of funds for the upkeep of schoolgrounds, particularly lawns. That allocation is based on the size of schools. I come from a super-wet area, if I might use that term, in which lawns grow particularly fast. Because of that, they need to be mown much more frequently. In turn, that means the payment of more wages to keep the lawn in a reasonable condition. A larger school in a western area with drier conditions would not need half or even a quarter of the mowing and therefore would require less funds. The teachers in my electorate have found that the allocation is not sufficient for the upkeep of the lawns. They have also said that, to their knowledge, there is sometimes a surplus of funds in western areas. The department should reconsider the basis of the allocation of funds. A small country school might have very large grounds, but a larger city school might have a smaller area to look after. The Education Department is not looking at these things as closely as it should.

I understand that teachers in various schools in my electorate have written to the department about the cost of mowing, but to date they have had no response. I would ask the Minister to investigate the matter because in my electorate it is important that grass be cut regularly. Snakes cause problems. At the Kairi school, which I visited this year, one of the class-rooms is on ground level. Several snakes have entered that class-room. If the grass is not kept closely cut, it is more difficult to see the snakes, and they will not intrude on an area where the grass is cut regularly. Where there is long grass snakes will always be found.

Another matter about which I feel strongly—I have received many complaints about it—relates to teacher aides. It is commendable to have teacher aides; but who should be employed as a teacher aide? Over the years, even before I was elected to Parliament, I heard many complaints about married women being appointed as teacher aides when, in the opinion of many people in the community, their husbands were well off financially and the women did not need the job. I understand that the p. and c. committees and the principals have a great deal to do with the appointment. However, I do not believe that the wives of bank managers or the friends of the principal or the p. and c. who may be well off should get the job. Many single girls who have just left school are looking for jobs. I feel very strongly about the matter. In the short time since I was elected, I have received a number of complaints about wives who could afford to stay home being appointed as teacher aides. Single girls without a job may have lacked experience, but everybody has to have a chance in life. Everybody has to have a first job and gain experience. I am sick and tired of people saying, "They are inexperienced. We won't give them a go."

Similar support can be given to young girls coming out of teachers' training college. Personally, I do not believe that they are getting a fair go. Perhaps I should not say that they are discriminated against, but I do not believe that married women—or, for that matter, married men—should have a monopoly on teaching at a particular school. Every teacher should have to accept transfer as a matter of course after three or four years. That may be hard, but it would be the fairest way of giving everyone a go. I know of girls who have not had the opportunity of teaching in their home town since they left training college. They find it very difficult to get back because teachers are living in the town permanently and not prepared to move on. In that vocation, everyone should be treated equally. At this stage I do not believe that they are.

Mr Davis: Rubbish!

Mr MENZEL: The member for Brisbane Central probably knows all about it. No doubt he is an expert on that matter. If he is prepared to agree with discrimination against single girls—

Mr Davis: I don't agree with discrimination on the grounds of race, creed or colour, and you know it.

Mr MENZEL: That is very good. I am pleased to hear it.

If there is anything wrong with class sizes, it is the fault of the teaching staff. It is up to the teachers to try to overcome problems. Enough money is never allocated for any Government department. Overall, the Education Department does an excellent job with the amount of money that it is allocated. The department could probably spend twice as much money and still have deficiencies. Generally speaking, the department does a good job in reducing class sizes to the lowest level possible. A bit of co-operation all round is needed. Instead of publishing the names of members of Parliament in its journal, the Teachers Union should try to do something constructive.

Mrs NELSON (Aspley) (5.40 p.m.): I rise to speak to the Estimates of the Minister for Education. I thank the Minister and his officers for the assistance they have rendered to me in the last 12 months. Significant changes in policy in a number of areas were needed. The department has adopted a very flexible approach.

A need exists for a more radical review of Queensland's education policy. One of my present concerns is that we seem to be encountering problems that were experienced in Queensland in the early '50s. In the early '50s there was a lack of recognition of the post-war baby boom. As a result, Queensland had very inadequate education facilities. The planning for its facilities was also inadequate. As a result of that inadequacy and other political pressures in the State, the Labor Government was defeated in 1957. The National-Liberal Coalition Government has been in office to this day. The Government is in grave danger of falling into the trap into which the Labor Party fell in the early '50s.

Queensland is experiencing a massive population explosion. Most of that population explosion is occurring in the south-east corner in the area bounded by Toowoomba, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast, and in the Far North of the State in the Cairns/Townsville region. The Minister for Education and his officers should thoroughly examine their forward planning for the next decade in terms of pre-school, primary school and high school education, as well as technical and further education.

Because of the population increase, a review needs to be made of our forward planning. I believe that there will also be another baby boom in the State within the next decade. It has been my belief that the drop in births was a temporary one associated with a great period of affluence. There is a myth in our society that populations decline in times of economic distress and that they increase in times of affluence. In fact, the reverse is the case. Queensland has had zero population growth for some years. There is evidence to indicate that the position will be reversed.

There has been a change in public perception of the quality of education. There is a tendency for people to think that smaller classes are better. The Government cannot ignore that perception in the public mind. Members of this Assembly are elected to represent the views of the people of this State. It is our duty and obligation as far as possible to fulfil the wishes of the people. There is a clear public perception that smaller classes are more effective and that children are better taught in smaller classes. I am not saying whether I agree or disagree with that opinion. I am presenting the opinion that is held in my electorate.

Because of those three factors—the population increase, the potential for another baby boom and the changing attitudes of the public—we need a dramatic change in the forward planning and thinking of the department.

I turn now to the work experience program. I support the introduction of that program into Queensland high schools. It has proved very satisfactory in my electorate. I ask the department and its officers to examine some of the problems that have arisen because of the voluntary nature of its operation. In my electorate the school guidance officer is responsible for establishing and placing work experience students in employment. In Aspley High School 395 students were given work experience this year. The exercise took several hundred hours' work by the guidance officer, which was totally beyond his capacity. Volunteers from the p. and c. and the ladies auxillary spent most of the June/July vacation working in the school as voluntary workers contacting employers to try to obtain positions for the students. They worked about an eight-hour day for the whole of one week and then when school resumed, vacated the school and carried on their good work from their private homes, using their own telephones. It was not until another fortnight had elapsed that all the students were suitably placed.

Large schools that are trying to place more than 200 students in work experience should be provided with some financial assistance, such as an allowance for telephone calls. The work involved in placing more than 200 students is totally beyond the capacity of a single guidance officer. It is not right that parents who assist by working over the entire holiday and thereafter in placing the children should have to pay massive phone bills as the result of doing that voluntary work. The parents in my area are very happy to continue doing that work, but they are in need of financial assistance to help them meet their telephone costs. Perhaps they could even be provided with assistants on a temporary basis.

Next year the Aspley High School will be trying to place 495 students in work experience. Unless the matter is resolved before then, the program will fail because the three or four individuals who coped with the work involved this year certainly will not be able to do so next year. It will be beyond their capacity.

I turn now to special education. When I entered Parliament I made it quite clear that because I am the mother of a disabled child I hold subjective views on the subject. Many members are parents of disabled children. They attempt as much as possible to be objective about this matter.

A wide body of evidence has been produced around the world to show that children who suffer from disabilities, whether they be minor or severe, are better served if they are able to have an education program that is suited to their needs rather than no access at all to education. The current cost of maintaining a child in an institution is approximately \$80 or \$100 a day.

If as has been claimed it costs the community \$3,000 per year per child in special schools—I am not certain that that figure is totally accurate—it is far more economical to meet that type of short-term cost than to bear something like three times that figure by way of the long-term cost of care of a disabled child away from its home.

Every child in our society should have access to the type of education that is best suited to its needs. Such education should be provided as close as possible to the child's home. No longer does the community accept the notion that it is good enough for a disabled child to have to travel 10 or 15 miles a day, either at the Government's or its family's expense, to receive an education.

I know that certain disabilities call for education in specialised schools. I have in mind the School for the Deaf and the School for the Visually Impaired. I applaud the Government's approach to special education. However, a perusal of the figures for the number of students in special schools and the number of disabled children in the State will show that the voluntary organisations and the special State units are simply not able to cope with the numbers of disabled children who need special education.

In this year of 1981 the community is entitled to see the introduction of a Bill based on the British legislation that was introduced this year by the British Conservative Party. The British Bill is designed specifically for the purpose of providing special education for children with special learning difficulties. It defines such children, it defines their disabilities and it sets out which level of government has the responsibility to educate them. It is a worthwhile document and I commend it to the departmental officers. I urge them to examine it.

The last occasion on which the Queensland legislation covering this aspect of education was reviewed was many years ago. I am aware that new legislation will be brought forward. I state here and now that I will not support a Bill that contains only one paragraph concerning disabled children. If necessary I will vote against my Government. In 1981 it is not good enough to devote merely one paragraph to children with special needs.

I reiterate that Queensland drastically needs a review of forward planning in education in line with the increased population and in light of a potential baby boom. More importantly, it is needed in the light of the changes in public perception.

I applaud the work that the department has done. I thank the Minister for his efforts in my electorate and I thank his officers for their courtesy. I am very grateful to them. I look forward to working with the Minister and his officers in the next 12 months.

Dr LOCKWOOD (Toowoomba North) (5.51 p.m.): I understand that the department has before it plans to purchase land adjacent to the high school reserve at Wilsonton. To purchase this land the Government has had to go through a cumbersome procedure involving consultation between the Department of Lands, the Department of Works and

the Department of Education. I understand that my recommendation to purchase additional land is well in hand. I hope that in the near future the Department of Education, in conjunction with the Department of Works, will be able to make an announcement about this land.

I should like the department to make a realistic examination of children so that those who need remediation may be positively identified. Much has been said about making every teacher a remedial teacher, and I support the ongoing education of teachers to bring that about. Despite the fact that the expertise of teachers in providing remediation is increasing, many children in the State need special help. If we could positively identify those children at a very early stage we could do much to help them. Many early intervention programs are being undertaken in the State. Various interest groups try to identify such children from birth. Much work has been done to identify children with hearing impairments so that their parents can be advised about their education and the children can take advantage of some of the facilities provided by the State to ensure that they are not retarded when they commence school.

Despite everything that is done, some children start school without being able to take full advantage of the education that is provided. A Statewide examination of children in Years 1, 2 and 3, not to give children a rank or rating, but simply to identify those in need of extra help, would go a long way towards solving some of the problems that can crop up later in a child's education.

It is sad but true that, despite the educational resources in primary schools, some children still reach high school without being able to read. Some of them are semi-literate, or nearly illiterate, but somehow or other they get through their primary education. One of the tragedies is that their report cards say, "Johnny is doing very well in the light of his ability." Nothing is spelt out on the report card about his being unable to read or write, or his falling far below the average. That has happened to children in my electorate. When they reach the high school, it has the horrendous problem of taking them back to year 1 and trying to institute an early learning program. Despite early intervention and remedial programs, a child at the Year 8 level must be taken back to Year 1 for reading lessons.

The prized possession of a teacher in my electorate is a set of the old Prep 1, 2, 3 and 4 readers containing pictures of fairies and that type of thing. I remember them from when I was in those classes. English is not one of his subjects and he uses those books of his own volition to help children who cannot read. If those children were identified in a Statewide examination of Years 1, 2 and 3 a great deal could be done to assist them and the teachers who will be teaching them later in their education. I do not say that those children should be left down if they fail; far from it. They should be given remediation rather than being held to a level at which they can perform in a particular subject.

One of the things that attracted teachers to that very contentious education program called MACOS—Man: A Course of Study—was the provision of structured material for curriculum programming. It was a boon to teachers because it placed before them all the facilities they needed for the course. The Curriculum Development Centre should consider providing texts as a core for every subject provided, particularly through the State education system. Books could outline the core needs and communicate to teachers just the amount of preparation they should have to do at home. Books that could be provided to young children would cover spelling, notes to reading, tables, and so on, leading them into simple little sums. They could be provided for all subjects throughout the child's education.

The provision of this type of service would take a great deal of strain off our good teachers. It is true that our good teachers are doing a tremendous amount of work. I am not one of those who believe that teachers work from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. A great deal of evidence suggests that very good teachers put in nearly as many hours in the preparation of subjects they teach as they do in the class-room. One of the things this Parliament could well do is pay tribute to the teachers who do that work of their own free will. There is no compulsion on them to do it; they do it of their own accord.

If those texts and work-books and all the services that go with them were provided, it would take a great deal of the load off those teachers. It would also take a great deal of the load off the parents and citizens association of the school to which I have referred. That association provides a great deal of paper for the duplicating or photocopying of an immense number of articles. This keeps current information in front of the children. If

such information were prepared in a central location I am sure it could be done at a fraction of the cost of photocopying or duplicating, especially when labour is taken into consideration.

There is another problem looming that is not yet fully appreciated. I understand that Commonwealth Government inspectors are at present going round to our schools demanding to see all the material that is photocopied to determine whether Commonwealth copyright laws have been infringed. I do not think the State Education Department has yet realised the full impact of the problem that is about to be thrust upon it.

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

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (7.15 p.m.): The Estimates of the Department of Education are one of the most important Estimates that we will debate. The department is a very important one, and it is a very big employer. This financial year it will employ 25 207 persons. A large allocation of funds is required to pay the wages of those persons and the miscellaneous expenses. An additional 888 people will be employed in the department this year. It appears that an additional 312 teachers will be employed for secondary education, an additional 202 for primary education, an additional 84 for special education, an additional 46 for pre-school education, and an additional 57 for child migrant education.

The Minister said that, because of increased enrolments, an extra 621 teachers will be employed this year. This afternoon the member for Isis said that an additional 4 500 children will be enrolled in primary schools, an additional 2 500 in secondary schools and an additional 1 500 in pre-schools. Every cent of the increased allocation for the department this year will be needed to pay the wages bill of those additional 888 employees and the miscellaneous expenses and to cover inflation.

Over the past year the Queensland Teachers Union has mounted a strong campaign to get better conditions for teachers and also to try to reduce class sizes, which would benefit the students. If there had not been an increase in enrolments this year, the additional teachers would have enabled class sizes to be reduced. The Minister said that it will be some time yet before class sizes are reduced to the level that is desired not only by the Queensland Teachers Union but also by the Government.

Mr Gunn: Recommended.

Mr PREST: Yes, the class sizes that were recommended in the Ahern report.

I hope the increased spending on education continues and that the number of teachers employed will also continue to increase. Because of the way that the population of Queensland is growing, I am quite certain that that will be necessary.

A number of previous speakers have mentioned that the number of specialist teachers has been increased by 84. Those teachers are especially needed in country areas where previously children have suffered because of a lack of specialist teaching. I am sure that lack on the Central Coast has caused a greater problem there than in some of the isolated parts of Queensland. With the increased allocation to specialist teaching, the teachers will be spread throughout the State so that children with problems in country areas will receive benefit from that type of teaching.

Some of the previous speakers, especially on the Government side, have mentioned handicapped children. Children with permanent disabilities are entitled to the same standard of education as any other child in the State. At the present time a survey is being conducted by Mr O'Connor from the Kelvin Grove school. I hope that survey attracts a great deal of response. That is not the first survey to be attempted. I am very surprised that in some areas parents of handicapped children are reluctant to speak about their children's disabilities. Because of the lack of response to a survey, further facilities are not provided and then the parents want to know why something has not been done in that area.

The subnormal school at Gladstone, which has now changed its name, tried to conduct a specialist unit by bringing in a specialist teacher every fortnight, but unfortunately the average attendance was only two. Now the parents are asking why Gladstone does not have such a unit. They want to know where their money is going. Naturally we could not justify the operation of that unit when the average attendance was so small.

Prior to the last election a unit dealing with hearing impairments was supposed to be built at Glenmore, Rockhampton. The people of the area want to know when it will be built.

Mr Gunn: It will be built.

Mr PREST: Anything that the Government can do for handicapped children is welcome.

Mr Gunn: We have a good principal of the special school at Gladstone.

Mr PREST: I was coming to that. Mr Dixon is a very fine teacher. He has a very fine staff that is very kind to the children at that school. I visited the school with the Minister and was pleased to see the attitude of the children, and how happy they were at the way they were being attended to. One special unit there caters for seven very disadvantaged children.

Mr Moore: How many teachers at the school of seven?

Mr PREST: There are 80 children going to the school. As the Minister says, the teachers are very dedicated and do a wonderful job with children.

When I entered Parliament, Gladstone had a major problem with education. I said that I would endeavour to make it a priority to have education facilities in Gladstone upgraded. After our efforts and persistency, I must thank the department. We could not have asked for more than is in the melting pot for Gladstone. We will have a new technical college, another extension to the Toolooa High School, the primary school at Kin Kora and I think six pre-schools being built this year.

Mr Gunn: You are an honest man.

Mr PREST: I appreciate what is being done. A great amount of work is taking place down at Boyne Island. We are very appreciative of what is going on.

It is an area that will continue to expand. We will not rest on our laurels and say that what we have achieved in the past couple of years is to our satisfaction and that is where it will stop. Expansion is still continuing. Boyne Island school has grown from 85 children last year to over 300 now. When the smelter starts in May 1982 there will be hundreds more children at that school.

It is not only the children who have been disadvantaged; teachers have been compelled to work under conditions of a standard that would not be accepted anywhere else. However, some of those factors have been rectified. With the progress and expansion that is taking place in the area, I ask the two Ministers present to continue with the work they are doing and to continue to provide the facilities that will be required.

I have already been asked by the parents and citizens association of the Boyne Island school about the planning for the primary school at Tannum Sands and the secondary school that is to be established in that area in mid-1985. With the expected increase in population, they suggest that the high school will be necessary before that date. I ask the Minister to keep an eye on the situation—I am quite certain that he will—and to see that the stage is not reached, as it was at the Gladstone State High School a little while ago, that the enrolment reaches 1 400.

We appreciate the accommodation being built for teachers. However, when it is considered that there is a technical college being built, a new primary school, a new high school and pre-schools, there will be a tremendous increase in the number of teachers in the area. Accommodation has been a major problem in the city and will continue to be. If another 50 or 60 teachers come to the area, we will need a great deal more accommodation. I ask the Minister and his colleague the Minister for Works and Housing to keep an eye on that.

Returning to the Boyne Island school—although it has over 300 children, there is no canteen or tuck-shop. Today I received a letter sent by the Minister for Education yesterday which says—

“The need for a tuck shop building will be given every consideration in the near future when my department’s 1982/83 Draft Capital Works Program is being compiled. The inclusion of such a facility for your school in future planning will be dependent on anticipated fund availability when compared with the number and urgency of requests from other centres for essential facilities such as classroom space and toilet facilities.”

The school has 300 students now and will have 500. We are asking too much of the parents to try to cater for a school of that size without a proper canteen or any other facilities. I ask the Minister to give serious consideration to making funds available for a tuck-shop to service that school.

This morning the member for Carnarvon said that, although he has a high opinion of Lyle Schuntner, there are some persons in the teachers union whom he does not hold in high regard. I have great respect for unionists and teachers. I pay tribute to Jack Christiansen, under whom I had the privilege of serving as president at Gladstone Central State School. He is the headmaster of The Gap school. The teachers journal reported that later on this month he will be given a send-off at the Melbourne Hotel. Any child who has passed through a school where Jack was his teacher has been fortunate, because Jack would have made a great contribution to the life and future of that child. I sincerely hope to attend that function. I wish Jack and Betty a long and happy retirement. Recently Jack has not enjoyed very good health. I hope that when he retires his health improves and he and his wife enjoy many years of happiness together. I pay a tribute to all other teachers. At times they work under trying conditions. Primary school teachers lay the foundation for the future education of children.

Mr Moore: They should.

Mr PREST: That is right. I believe that, in the main, they do. They lay the foundation for the future of the child. The work done in primary schools makes the task easier for principals and secondary school teachers.

Parents and citizens associations do an excellent job. They are always willing to provide valuable assistance to schools. They need to raise money for many projects.

Mr Frawley: Your party wants to chop out the p. and c. associations.

Mr PREST: I do not know what p. and c. associations mean to the honourable member. The Toolooa High School has no playground, although a section has been cleared. Next year 400 children could be attending that school. An oval should be constructed without reliance on the p. and c. association.

A new primary school is to be built at Kin Kora. I am sure that it will be a beautiful school. Playgrounds will be provided through subsidies from the Government and assistance from the p. and c. When a p. and c. association is established at that school, it will have to work very hard to contribute approximately \$10,000 towards the earthworks, foundations and grassing of an oval. Providing that amount of money would be a great handicap for a p. and c. in its infancy. Everything should be done to assist the primary and high schools with their ovals. The p. and c. association would appreciate any assistance that could be given to it. A major contribution should be made by the Government.

I have attended all the high school speech nights in my electorate. We are very fortunate to have the services of very dedicated people. The regional director is doing an excellent job. What is being done in my electorate is not the be-all and end-all. The projects in the area must be continued. If the Minister takes notice of the matters I have mentioned, he will be doing a great service to the area.

Mr FRAWLEY (Caboolture) (7.35 p.m.): After the dreadful speech by the member for Port Curtis, the Committee will find it a pleasant change to hear a sensible contribution.

The teaching profession contains many good teachers who are dedicated to the interests of the pupils. However, some members of the Queensland Teachers Union—or, rather, some paid employees of the union—have been playing politics on class sizes and staffing.

Very recently, one of the candidates for the presidency of the Queensland Teachers Union, Bob White, tipped the bucket on those union officials. In a statement to the Press, he said that the State Government was not to blame for oversized classes, that the president of the teachers union, Mr Lyle Schuntner, was to blame. Mr White went on to say that the union was raising that matter only for the purpose of drumming up support for its politicking. We all know that a whole group of candidates are contesting the union presidency.

Mr Davis: That is why we need more money for education.

Mr FRAWLEY: I admit that more money was needed for education in the honourable member's day. Some special education was needed when the honourable member attended school. Anyone can see that the Queensland Teachers Union is only engaging in politicking.

This year's allocation to education of \$702.5m represents 22.3 per cent of the total Budget. Next comes the allocation to transport, which represents 16 per cent of the Budget. Health is third, with 13.8 per cent of the Budget.

This allocation to education provides for an additional 621 teachers for State schools, which is in stark contrast to last year's additional 122 teachers. A total of 95 additional teachers will be provided for remedial, guidance, advisory and specialist duties, and an additional 135 teachers will be provided for technical and further education. The number of teacher aides will remain at 6 000.

Payments to school-bus operators will increase. In fact, this year it will cost the Government \$24.2m just to provide school transport. It was a member of this Government who introduced those payments in 1967, and he is to be congratulated on that.

Funding for kindergartens will total \$5.5m, which represents an increase of \$1m on the previous year's allocation. The Government will pay 80 per cent of the approved salary costs of kindergartens.

A general purpose grant of \$8.60 per pupil will be paid for secondary school students. The sum of \$4.81 will be paid for each primary school pupil. The payments are made to school principals for deposit in the school funds. State assistance to private schools will be \$261 for primary students and \$240 for secondary students.

The education allocations in the years from 1950 to 1957, which were the last years of the Australian Labor Party's reign in Queensland, ranged from 10 per cent of the total Budget to 13.3 per cent. In contrast, this Government's allocations to education have always represented approximately 20 per cent of the total Budget. So I do not know what the Queensland Teachers Union is complaining about.

Class sizes have never been smaller than they are now. The pupil-to-teacher ratio has never been more favourable. Teachers have never before had so much assistance from support staff. Teachers are much better off now than they ever were. In spite of that, a crisis has occurred in our education system. The quality of education is not as high as it was. Most of the teachers who whinge about class sizes are those from the bottom of the barrel.

Mr Moore: They beat the kids.

Mr FRAWLEY: Of course they do. They know they cannot be sacked. Any married woman who possesses teaching qualifications and is denied employment by the State Government should be given a teaching position if her qualifications are better than those possessed by some of the deadheads in the teaching profession.

I have some very good friends among the teaching profession. I have known the principal of the Caboolture High School for many years, since he was a boy of 15 years of age. He is a fine teacher. Another friend of mine is Neil Casperson, a teacher who has just been transferred at his own request from Woodford State School to Kedron State School. Some upsetting things occurred at Woodford. I do not intend to outline what happened, nor do I want to take sides. He is a fine, dedicated teacher and a man for whom I have the utmost respect.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr FRAWLEY: Unlike the member for Brisbane Central, I spend a fair bit of time visiting schools. The only time the honourable member visits schools is during the week before election day, when he tries to cadge a few votes from parents. My electorate contains approximately 20 schools and I visit all of them regularly. I attend sports days, p. and c. meetings and other functions. That is why I enjoy a fine rapport with the teachers. They tell me things.

Last week one teacher told me that he knows of teachers who can teach a class of 40 pupils and others who cannot teach a class of 14 pupils. That is quite correct. I agree that class sizes should be limited to 30, with a gradual reduction to 25. I agree with sections of the Ahern report on education.

Mr Moore: It's stupid; we should burn it.

Mr FRAWLEY: Let me finish; I said that I agree with sections of the report. The Government should work for a reduction in class sizes, but it should make sure that there are no more than 30 pupils in a class.

Mr Moore: If they can't teach 30 kids, they should be sacked.

Mr FRAWLEY: I agree with that.

Teachers always say that the ideal class size is one less than the Government says. Agreement will never be reached on that.

There are too many poorly trained academic failures in the teaching profession. They are only a small minority of teachers, but they are causing the trouble.

Mr Hooper: Do you realise that Mr Harper is sitting in the Chamber listening to you?

Mr FRAWLEY: I want to put the position straight. The honourable member for Archerfield always says that the honourable member for Auburn is the agent for National Party headquarters and that he is trying to get rid of me.

Mr Hooper: Are you saying that he is not?

Mr FRAWLEY: He is not. He has asked me if I will reconsider my decision and stand again at the next election. I do not intend standing again. I am no Dame Melba. When I say that I will get out, I will get out. I will not stand again.

At the risk of being called a racist by two well-known hypocrites, that is, the old possum-eater from Canberra and Brisbane's bleeding heart of talk-back radio, I will now say something about education grants for Aborigines. It is time that somebody made the facts plain. Do honourable members know that the mother or guardian of an Aboriginal student living at home is paid \$484 a year for Years 11 and 12 and \$338 a year for Years 8, 9 and 10?

When an Aboriginal student boards in a private home, the parents are paid those amounts plus a further \$24.20, and \$33 a week is paid to a hostel in which an Aboriginal student is living. If the pupil is at a boarding school, \$1,760 is paid by the Government to the school. I am not opposed to those payments. I just want to make clear what is happening.

A book and clothing allowance of \$360 a year is paid for Aboriginal students in Years 11 and 12 and \$300 for Years 8, 9 and 10, plus personal pocket money of \$3 a week for Years 11 and 12, or \$1.50 a week in Years 8, 9 and 10. If students in Years 11 and 12 are living away from home they get \$4 a week, or \$2.50 a week if they are in Years 8, 9 and 10. White children receive nothing.

A Government Member: That is discrimination.

Mr FRAWLEY: It is discrimination; it is racism in reverse.

I know that I will be called a racist for making this speech but I don't care a hoot. If I am a racist, why the devil do I compete with Aborigines in the veterans athletics?

Mr Kruger: Do you still compete in athletics?

Mr FRAWLEY: Of course I do. I could beat the honourable member over any distance from 100 metres to 1 500 metres, or any other distance he cares to nominate. The only place he would beat me is in the bar.

At Government schools, sports, library and examination fees are paid for Aborigines, and at non-Government schools, all their fees are paid. If they are living away from home, they get four return trips home each year. The Government pays for extra coaching outside school, as well as music, dancing and art lessons.

After leaving secondary school, Aboriginal students receive a living allowance of \$62.98 a week if they are over 18, plus \$5.25 a week if they are unmarried. Those who are under 18 years of age are paid a living allowance of \$51.98 a week. A wife is paid \$42.70 a week dependent's allowance and is paid for each child \$10 a week. All text-books and equipment are paid for. The establishment allowance is a maximum of \$150, plus \$40 for a wife and \$30 for each child. A clothing allowance of \$60 is paid and they are given three, return fares home each year. They are treated better than I am. A married man with one child receives \$115.68 a week, plus free tuition, books and equipment.

There is nothing wrong with any of that, but in the light of what the whingers say about Aborigines not being looked after, I thought honourable members should know what is done for Aborigines. Queensland looks after them better than any other State does. I am fed up with Al Grassby; he is a racist when he carries on as he does about the way we treat our Aborigines. Aborigines get a pretty fair deal in education and health in this State. I have been to some Aboriginal settlements and I can speak about them from experience.

Mr Hooper: How many Aborigines reach tertiary standard?

Mr Moore: How many members of the ALP reach tertiary standard?

Mr FRAWLEY: The honourable member for Rockhampton and the honourable member for South Brisbane and about three others. The honourable member for Brisbane Central did not even get past kindergarten. Some of them are not bad people, anyway.

Mr Davis: You had your education in Bullen's Circus.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

Mr FRAWLEY: I do not worry about tomtits like him.

An earlier speaker mentioned that the Caloundra State School suffered a serious fire recently.

Mr Hooper: That was me.

Mr FRAWLEY: It might interest the honourable member for Archerfield to know that 234 pupils from Golden Beach in my electorate attend the Caloundra State School. I have asked the Minister for Education, the Minister for Works and Housing and a number of other people to build a school at Golden Beach because these 234 children have to travel to Caloundra by bus every day. In all about 1 100 children attend the school, and it is overcrowded. It would be in the interests of all those children if a school were built at Golden Beach. I have seen the land the department has for a school in Gregory Street, Golden Beach. A car-park has already been built as a joint project by the Works Department and the Landsborough Shire Council. It adjoins the football field owned by the Caloundra football club and the school will be allowed to use the football field. The facilities are there, and that school would have better playing fields than a lot of other schools. I spoke to the Minister when he opened the Morayfield High School, a very fine school in my electorate, which cost about \$1.4m.

Mr Kruger: It has a good principal, too.

Mr FRAWLEY: Yes, he is a very good man. Unfortunately he has just been transferred to Brisbane. He was involved in the opening of the Dakabin High School which is in the electorate of the honourable member for Murrumba.

As I said, there are many good teachers in my electorate, but there are a few dills.

Mr Hooper: And you are one of them.

Mr FRAWLEY: I am not one of them.

The Government owns land adjacent to the Caboolture East State School for the construction of a college of technical and further education.

Mr Kruger: It won't come before the Redcliffe one.

Mr FRAWLEY: I am not disputing that at all. I concede that Redcliffe needs and has needed a college of technical and further education for years. Such a college should be built in a city of 40 000 people, and it will be. Perhaps I am biased because my brother is the mayor of Redcliffe and I lived there for 20 years.

Mr Hooper: Comparing you with your brother is like comparing a brumby with Gunsynd.

Mr FRAWLEY: I agree with the honourable member; my brother is as good as Gunsynd.

As I said, the Morayfield High School is a great school, but it lacks one essential, and that is a playing field. I have said many times that when a school is built it should have proper playing ovals. The absence of an oval at a primary school might not be so bad, but by the time children attend high school they have become used to playing sport. At the present time the children from the Morayfield High School have to play all their games away. I hope that the Minister for Works and Housing will act on my plea to have this work done. The ground has been cleared preparatory to the establishment of a sports oval next year, and I hope that that work is carried out by the department because I do not see why it should fall on the shoulders of the p. and c.

Mr Kruger: We had the same trouble at Dakabin when Mr Dempsey was there.

Mr FRAWLEY: I know that. If I had still been representing Murrumba I would have had it fixed in a shorter time than it took the honourable member. It was because of poor representation that it took so long.

Parents and citizens associations play a very important role. As I said by way of interjection, the ALP does not want such associations. Without a p. and c., a school lacks many amenities. A p. and c. is a necessity in any school. Some associations are used for political purposes, but most members of such associations, regardless of their politics, do a good job. I have had trouble with only two schools in my electorate. At one of them the deputy chairman of the Caboolture Shire Council, who stood against me twice, was playing politics so much that one night the school principal stood up and said, "For God's sake, I am fed up with this p. and c. Do the job you are here for and cut out the politics."

Mr Kruger: They tell me you push it pretty hard.

Mr FRAWLEY: I have never played politics in a school in my life. I do not have to. I refuse to go to the Caboolture High School and talk politics on behalf of the National Party. I have been asked to do it on more than one occasion, but I have refused. I do not believe that members of Parliament should go to any school and talk politics. When they go to schools they should talk anything but politics. Most of the time, children do not want to hear about politics.

The member for South Brisbane criticised private schools. I am surprised that he did that because private schools play an important role in education. In fact, a former Minister for Education (Sir Alan Fletcher) said to me one day, "If all the private schools in Queensland closed down, it would cost us about \$40m to accommodate those children in State schools." It would cost a lot more than that now. The Government is providing only a small amount of money for private schools. It provides \$261 for each primary school student and \$420 for each secondary school student. We cannot keep children at Government schools for those figures. I certainly hope that we do not see in Queensland what happened in Victoria, where a group of people formed an association called DOGS—Defence of Government Schools—and criticised the amount of money allocated to private schools. That was shocking. Children in my electorate attend schools of different denominations, such as St Paul's Anglican school at Bald Hills, the Lutheran, De La Salle and Soubirous schools at Redcliffe, the Christian Outreach school at Narangba, and a convent in Caboolture. Children in my electorate attend six different denominational schools, and all those schools do a pretty good job.

Education in this State is not as bad as it is portrayed to be by some of the paid employees of the Queensland Teachers Union. The standard of education in this State has never been higher. I attended high school in 1938 and 1939. I attended technical college with the honourable member for Windsor. In fact, we were in the same class.

At that time there was no free bus to school; I walked, and I walked more than 3 miles on many occasions. Nothing sickens me more than mothers ringing me up asking, "Can you get the bus service extended another mile up the road to pick up my son because I have to walk with him?" I say to them, "No. It does you good to walk and take him to the bus each morning and pick him up each afternoon."

Mr Kruger: Is that why you are so fit today?

Mr FRAWLEY: A person would not have to be too smart to see who is the fitter—the honourable member for Murrumba or me.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (7.53 p.m.): In speaking in the debate on the Education Estimates, I take the opportunity to congratulate the Minister on his handling of what is a most complex and difficult area of Government administration. Indeed, the portfolio carries immense responsibilities, and many honourable members from both sides of the Chamber have acknowledged that. What it does will very much affect future generations.

Last month the Australian Education Council met at Surfers Paradise, and I had the opportunity of attending the wind-up dinner that followed the week's deliberations. Honourable members may be aware that the Australian Education Council consists of Ministers and senior departmental officers of all States and the Commonwealth, with observers from New Zealand. In his speech, the Queensland Education Minister referred to the 16.9 per cent increase in his department's allocation this year. It was noticeable from the reactions of other State Education Ministers that they were more than envious of this substantial achievement for education in Queensland. Indeed, we need to look no further than the Budgets that were recently introduced in the other States to see how high a priority education has been given in Queensland's Budget.

In New South Wales the increase in the Education Vote was only 9.3 per cent, with only a 5 per cent increase in capital works. In Victoria the increase was only 8.5 per cent. The figures in both those States are well below the inflation rate. In Queensland the 16.9 per cent increase translates into a \$101.6m boost, bringing the total allocation to \$702.5m.

As the member for Port Curtis stated earlier, the Education Department is a substantial employer. The July 1981 census shows that it has 22 112 teachers and some 2 377 public servant employees. Indeed, the Education Department is a vast corporation in itself.

Many members have referred to the growing population of the State. Perhaps nowhere is that more obvious than on the Gold Coast. As an indication, at the present time in the middle of my electorate work has started on a satellite city to cater for a population of 60 000. That will begin to come into existence within the next couple of years. I have spoken about this to the Minister on several occasions and he has certainly demonstrated to me that he appreciates the problems that will arise and has displayed the necessary perception to meet those challenges.

I am reliably informed that in 1982 Gold Coast high schools will have 7 000 students. This year some 1 500 students will leave Gold Coast schools. Indeed, the enrolment figures tell the story. In 1978 the Merrimac State School had an enrolment of 78 students. It now has 403. In 1979 the Miami State School came into existence with 269 students enrolled. It now has 556. In 1979 the Merrimac High School came into existence with an enrolment of 168 students. It now has 805. That displays that in education the Government is keeping up with the spiralling growth rate. That does not happen by accident. I express the hope that the department will be able to continue to do that.

I believe it is appropriate to acquaint the Committee with a problem that has been of considerable concern to me over the past months, one that I hope will soon be overcome. It concerns congestion around some new schools. A combined effort by the Education Department, the Main Roads Department, the Albert Shire and the Gold Coast City Councils now is necessary to open up alternate access to the Miami State School. Owing to housing developments taking place further inland, staff, students and parents found Oceanic Drive, off which the school is located, being transformed from a quiet street into one that is now busy but which will eventually be an arterial road feeding into a new

estate. The various local authorities and Government departments involved have reached agreement on a plan which hopefully will ease a horrendous traffic and safety problem caused by severe congestion at the school's front entrance.

I place on record my appreciation of the manner in which the principal of that school and his staff dealt with the problem. I believe there is a message in the problems experienced at Miami. I urge the department to have a good look at the history of the matter and to take all possible steps to ensure that such possibilities of traffic congestion cannot occur with the location of new schools, so that danger to schoolchildren is kept to a minimum.

I acknowledge that frequently action is taken by other bodies, such as local authorities, which the Education Department is in no position to anticipate. The main problem at Miami certainly could not have been foreseen when the school's location was selected. However, there is a clear obligation on local authorities to consult with the Education Department on such problems.

I wish to comment briefly on technical and further education and in particular on the new Gold Coast TAFE College presently nearing completion.

The value of TAFE is enormous and the investment of some \$8.6m in the new Gold Coast complex will play a vital role in the education field for generations to come. But the new college will just be the beginning. We have a responsibility to continue this drive forward and to step up the present building program if we are going to keep anywhere near the enormous demand which is being generated by courses at the Gold Coast TAFE College. It would appear obvious that there is a very real need for the establishment of a school of hospitality, catering and tourism on the Gold Coast. I would remind the Committee that the Education Department, through the TAFE college, presently owns property in the middle of Surfers Paradise. This presents a valuable, unique opportunity to examine the possibility of creating such a facility in the heart of Australia's major tourist centre. It is important that the momentum that has been built up in regard to TAFE—and, in particular, to tourist-related courses—be maintained in terms of both capital expenditure and staffing.

Earlier this month I had the opportunity to attend the graduation dinner which was held at Miami. The success of tourism-related courses and their relevance to the community are concrete evidence of the value of TAFE. If I was still involved in the tourist industry I would be very proud to have employees of the calibre and standard of the graduates of that course. They are receiving widespread community and industry support. I believe that special mention must be made of the progressive companies within the tourist industry that have backed such courses through trophies and, most importantly, through employment opportunities.

The class-size debate has had a certain amount of canvassing today and I do not particularly wish to enter into it fully. However, I would dwell on a couple of matters. It is interesting that in the third interim report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education, 4.13 says in part—

"It should also be noted that progressive reduction in class sizes is only one of a number of desirable improvements in education to be initiated as and when resources permit, and, although it is an important one, our recommendation is not to be taken to imply that we necessarily regard reduction in class sizes as the overriding priority."

There has been a fairly substantial awareness in my area that this Government and its members have a genuine commitment to education, and this has been positively demonstrated by massive capital works expenditure. Some \$1m is currently being spent in the electorate of Surfers Paradise. Work is under way or about to be implemented at every school in the electorate. There is also an awareness that, compared with other States, we are doing well in terms of commitment and action.

I know that the department has under consideration the eventual provision of a special education unit at Miami. I urge that special consideration be given to providing that facility at an early time. The need is very real. In a submission to the Education Department earlier this year by the Gold Coast Family Support Group for Handicapped Children we were reminded that "children whose physical disability precludes them from integrating into a mainstream classroom under the present education system" do need special attention. "This would include children who have no intellectual handicap and children

who have some degree of intellectual handicap." There is a need on the Gold Coast for the provision of that facility. The Education Department remarked at the time in a letter of reply from Mr Burge on 30 September 1981—

"The Division of Special Education has firm plans to build a facility for such children as soon as funds are available.

Miami State School has been suggested as a possible location . . . Any building would have to go on the side of the demountables . . . as the school has only limited access (and) there could be problems associated with 'pick up—drop off' . . ."

The present plans, which I hope will be implemented in the near future by the local authorities and the Education Department, may overcome that problem.

I am very pleased with the education Vote, and the courtesy, expertise and assistance that have been extended to me by the Minister, his departmental officers, the principals and staff of the schools in the electorate of Surfers Paradise. At all times there has been close liaison and an ability to relate and deal with many of the difficult and complex problems that arise. I pay tribute to those people, to the many dedicated and professional members of the Education Department, teachers and principals, and also the many dedicated parents and concerned citizens who play such an important role in school life.

Mr SMITH (Townsville West) (8.5 p.m.): Considerable discussion has taken place within schools and the community on the reduction of class sizes to conform with the recommendations of the Ahern committee. Undoubtedly those recommendations represent very desirable goals. In particular, there would not be any disagreement with the proposal that children in Years 1 to 3 need a lower pupil/teacher ratio than children in Years 4 to 10. The most identifiable problem appears in schools where the teacher entitlement is established on the overall number of pupils in attendance. What frequently happens is that the number of pupils in classes, particularly in primary schools in Years 4 to 7, may be slightly above the recommended level. However, the real excess over the recommendation level occurs in Years 1 to 3. Because of the entitlement of that school to teachers based only on pupil numbers, the end result is excess class sizes occurring in the most damaging area, Years 1 to 3.

The Education Department ought to be more selective in that area. Very clear-cut requirements should be established for the junior Years 1 to 3 as against the higher Years 4 to 7 of primary school and, of course, Year 10 in secondary schools. In other words, a school's teacher entitlement should be worked out on a mutually exclusive basis with respect to Years 1 to 3 compared with Years 4 to 7. The point must be made that it is remarkable how early in primary school life teachers are able to determine which children will not make the grade. Certainly Years 2 and 3 ought not to be a time in a child's school life to find out from an educational point of view that he or she is not going to make it.

My purpose in opening on the note of teacher/student ratios was not to berate the Education Minister on that issue. I would be the first to recognise that the Education Department can incur expenditure only up to a level allowed by Treasury. The level of education spending ought to be higher, and in more enlightened communities it is higher. Certainly it is true that the education expenditure on a per capita basis in Queensland is lower than anywhere else in the Commonwealth. It is not my intention to pursue that matter tonight.

I turn now to some of the practical difficulties confronting schools on a day-to-day basis which to date have not received the attention that the problems deserve. Teacher/student ratio entitlements are not adequately taken into account. No requirement presently exists to relieve teachers who are absent from work for a variety of reasons, nor is provision made to replace them. Obviously that has a disastrous effect on teacher/student ratios in certain instances.

Early in the year in the Townsville area there were nine local relieving primary schoolteachers. However, at present, because of the wastage through long service leave and other factors, there is a pool of only three teachers available to serve approximately 11 primary schools.

Another matter of great concern in this area of non-replacement of teachers is clerical assistance. I do not think that that matter has been mentioned tonight. Almost 10 years

have passed since clerical assistants were introduced into schools. In many instances people have been employed for a period which entitles them to long service leave. Many of them have applied for or are considering applying for that leave.

The situation is that under the Public Service Regulations no provision is made to replace people in that category. It is quite unrealistic to expect large schools to operate efficiently without that type of assistance, to which they have become accustomed and on which they rely. Anomalies appear in that replacement staff are provided immediately for school cleaners, whereas groundsmen and caretakers, who perform a very necessary task, have to be absent for at least a month before any consideration is given to the provision of relief. That anomaly must be corrected.

It is also surprising that relief is provided for principals and deputy principals but that in the event of the absence of a class teacher—the person at the work-face—schools are expected to meet the additional demand from their own resources. That is unrealistic. I do not believe that when those provisions were laid down for the Public Service it was the intention that they apply to personnel who are responsible for hundreds of schoolchildren. There is an urgent need to reassess those provisions of the Public Service Regulations.

A similar problem arises in relation to the replacement of librarians. Usually a school has only one librarian. The problem arises also in relation to specialists such as remedial teachers. The non-replacement of those personnel with competent and specialist staff has a devastating effect on schools.

Anomalies arise also in relation to aide-time, particularly concerning the size of schools. Take, for example, a Class 3 school with an enrolment of 190 students. At that school there is an aide-time of something like 60 to 80 hours. If the school had an enrolment of between 201 and 300, the principal becomes a non-teaching member of the staff, but the aide-time is then reduced by approximately half. Of course, no clerical or library assistance is provided. My point is that the present divisions are far too sharp.

When a school attains an enrolment of 301, or is a Class 2 school, it is entitled to have a clerk-typist appointed. The problem is that this fact will not be officially recognised until July of any year, when the official census is taken, and no appointment is made to the school until the following year. That means, in effect, that the school operates for a full year with an enrolment that entitles it to clerical assistance but it in fact receives no such assistance. That anomaly should also be corrected.

The aide-time entitlement rises significantly between Class 2 and Class 1 schools. It seems appropriate that the level of support in this regard should be adjusted at much smaller enrolment intervals than the present rise between entitlements.

Larger schools can also be disadvantaged by the structuring of entitlements. For example, there is essentially no difference between the entitlement of a school with 301 pupils and that of a school with 600 pupils. Take a school with 601 pupils, the level at which it becomes a Class 1 school, and a school that has a thousand or more pupils. The school with an enrolment of 1 000 pupils is entitled to exactly the same level of supporting staff as the school with an enrolment of 601 pupils. I draw the Minister's attention to that anomaly.

These principles would not apply to any other industry, and they ought not to apply to the education industry. They put larger schools, which already suffer a number of disadvantages, at an even greater disadvantage.

I now turn to the problem confronted by secondary schools, and again I refer to ancillary staff, not the professional teaching staff. In recent years, tremendous demands have been placed on the administrative sections of high schools by school-based assessment programs. First of all came the Radford scheme; now some schools are moving into ROSBA. I am not aware of any attempt by the Education Department to provide more clerical assistance to cater for the increased work-load that ROSBA will impose on schools. If a permanent increase is not to be sanctioned the schools should be able to hire clerical staff on a casual basis up to an approved budgetary limit. I understand that to do that certain Public Service Regulations would have to be altered, but that will have to be done.

In high schools, it has to be recognised that school-based curricula development is heavily dependent on the availability of clerical and specialist assistance. High schools are being asked to do more to train people for the work-force, and I am not talking about a child-minding program.

The department refuses to recognise the additional administrative and managerial skills and effort required in a modern high school that attempts to live up to both community and student expectations. For example, the boys' church high school of Ignatius Park, in my electorate, employed a specialist liaison officer to bridge the gap between employers and pupils. I understand that has had mutually beneficial results.

At this stage I will give an example of how a school can become out of date. The Pimlico High School, which until recently was the second largest in the State, has mechanical typewriters that are 15 or more years old. They are kept going by the good graces of someone who is interested in the students. Future employers expect those students to be competent in office procedures. The students are mainly girls. When they enter the work-place armed with these outdated skills they do not find manual typewriters or even conventional electric typewriters, but modern equipment such as word processors or programmable electric equipment. The present high school training just does not relate to the real world.

In the TAFE area that the honourable member for Southport referred to—and I endorse his remarks—the administrative problems are even more demanding. The clerical and administrative support is clearly inadequate. TAFEs frequently have 200 or 300 teachers employed full and part-time. There has been continuing conflict, particularly with the part-time teachers, with regard to late payment for services rendered. A decisive step forward was made recently when it was agreed that certain colleges in remote locations such as Townsville and Cairns, could enter into a scheme whereby the TAFE representatives were responsible for the payment of their own part-time teachers. I commend the Minister for that decision, but in a private firm a full-time paymaster would be employed to handle the task of organising payments and keeping the appropriate taxation records for 200 or 300 people. It would be a full-time job, with the appropriate degree of remuneration.

As far as I can tell from my inquiries, no provision whatever has been made for TAFE colleges about to start this program to be provided with additional clerical and administrative assistance. It is certainly clear that it will reduce the work-load in the Brisbane area. Am I to assume that that is to be regarded as a bonus for the Brisbane office and tough luck for the regional colleges? I ask the Minister to look into this with the idea of improving clerical assistance in country colleges.

Another definite step forward was taken—again with some administrative cost—by the decision that colleges should be allowed to make more local purchases, and that they be given a budget for that purpose. I applaud the decision to give colleges this flexibility because the former system certainly inhibited programs and teaching. It must be recognised, however, that colleges will carry a degree of responsibility with respect to the ordering and recording of purchases. Again, there is no recognition of the increased clerical load brought about by these responsibilities.

The Minister is aware of my interest in education, particularly in practical and technical education. My own technical education was gained through a combination of correspondence and technical college study. I support the recognition that these institutions are receiving. I am only disappointed that it has been so belated. The relocation of the Townsville TAFE College to the Pimlico campus means that I have a personal interest in that I have the task of representing that institute electorally. I ask the Minister and his advisers to note carefully what I am about to say concerning the development of the TAFE college at Pimlico.

On 25 August this year I was given a ministerial reply which appears to be no longer valid, to put it charitably. I am sure that what I am about to bring before the Committee will spark strong resentment and community protest in Townsville.

The reply given on that date supposedly confirmed that a start would be made on the catering and hospitality complex in the 1982 year of the 1982-84 triennium and that expenditure of \$500,000 would be incurred in the first year of construction. It was further indicated that the project would be completed by 1984 and that in the 1984 year there would be concurrent expenditure on the technology complex.

On the same day, after receiving the reply, I wrote to the Minister and asked what expenditure would be incurred up to 30 June 1982. I did not receive a reply to that question but I put the reason for the non-reply down to the inability of the department to estimate the progress likely to be achieved by that date.

I am shocked to learn after perusing table C.4-6 of the Commonwealth Tertiary Commission report, volume 2, part 2, that there is no monetary provision for the project listed. Until I am advised otherwise I must assume this is the reason for the non-reply to my letter.

Even more alarming is that, in the ministerial reply of 25 August, it was stated that funding would not allow for the simultaneous erection of the technology complex and the catering and hospitality project. I believe it is therefore reasonable and logical to conclude that the school of technology project will not be commenced, as promised, in 1984.

To add further insult to the Townsville community and to demonstrate the extent to which the Government will engage in pork-barrelling, the same TEC report reveals that \$1.3m will be spent in 1982 on a multi-purpose college at Ayr/Home Hill, estimated to cost \$6.4m all-up. In the rationale given for the Ayr/Home Hill complex the TEC report states—

"The provision of TAFE colleges in Queensland to date has largely been confined to the large cities and towns, a contributing factor to the lower proportion of the population enrolled in TAFE courses than in other States. A pilot project for a college which is designed to provide course units for a number of disciplines in smaller towns is to be located at Home Hill on the Burdekin River. The college will consist of eight single-level buildings to accommodate trade courses in building and engineering, trade-based pre-vocational courses, vocational courses in business, fashion and office education and further education activities, together with a library, staff and student services and college administration. The estimated building cost of \$6.5m . . ."

Whilst I understand the attraction of the project to the residents of the Burdekin area, the needs of Townsville, a major industrial city, are being denied in favour of an "educational white elephant". The Burdekin area does not have the population or industry to support the alleged training that will be offered.

The whole idea of the college and, in particular, the timing, is quite irrational, and as an example of the unrealistic nature of the proposal, the concept of "fashion design" mentioned in the rationale can only be described as incredible. Such a field is so specialised and has such limited application that it could not be supported even in Townsville, which serves a population of 160 000 people, and it would have limited application in Brisbane. The \$6.5m project will rank as one of the most expensive, if not the most expensive, election promise made in 1980, and I note that when the Minister announced the project a few weeks ago he appeared to do so only on a regional basis. He probably has little enthusiasm for a project which will probably haunt him for the rest of his term as Minister.

It is not my style or natural inclination to unnecessarily criticise departmental staff, but in the case of the Education Department I believe it would be appropriate to undertake a independent review to assess the efficiency of senior administration in at least one branch. I will stop short of naming individuals tonight in consideration of the Minister's comparatively short time in control of the department, but my charity in this regard will not extend to the next time the Estimates are debated or to another appropriate opportunity if ministerial action is not taken in the meanwhile.

The Burdekin project was not mentioned in the list of projected expenditure either in previous TEC reports or in the Minister's reply to me on 25 August. In the absence of a satisfactory reply from the Minister it is my intention to bring this matter to the attention of my Federal colleagues, the Tertiary Education Commission and the Federal member for Herbert, a member of the Government parties in Canberra who tenaciously holds the seat virtually by his fingernails.

I have said in previous debates that there is an urgent need for the State Government to assist with projects supporting the tourist industry and to support and help justify the Federal expenditure on the Townsville international airport. The diversion of funds away from Townsville to the Burdekin project at this critical stage has attached to it all the connotations of a Government governing without the slightest awareness of the economic ramifications of its ill-considered actions.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (8.25 p.m.): Education affects very many areas of our lives. Those of us who have been through the education process and who have children or grandchildren at school now have a basic idea of what has been wrong with the education system and what should be done about education in the future.

A little more than \$700m is being allocated for Education this year. That is about \$100m more than was allocated last year. I suppose that if other Ministers received an additional \$100m in their allocations they would consider that they were well off; but when the allocation for Education is divided by the number of people who will benefit from it, it is obvious that the figure is fairly low. However, people would not be able to provide education facilities themselves.

I compliment the Minister and his department on securing an increased allocation for Education. Perhaps the only matter on which people disagree is where the additional money should be spent—whether it should be spent on additional staff or additional equipment. No matter in which area it is spent, some people will say that it is being wrongly spent. The Minister has had to make some fairly tough decisions, and he is bearing up well under the pressure.

I must compliment most teachers on their dedication to their calling. Some people think that teachers do not spend enough time teaching. However, they do not work only between 9 o'clock in the morning and 3 o'clock in the afternoon. They spend a great deal more time in preparing lessons and marking papers. I see the encouragement that teachers, particularly those in my area, give to children. Children respond to this and give everything they have for their teacher and their school. In this way they become outstanding citizens. I am very thankful for those dedicated teachers.

Older parents often say to me that there should be a return to teaching the three Rs in our schools. Some members of the teaching fraternity say that they have never got away from the three Rs. That is a debatable point. It comes back to the individual teacher and to his ability to use the facilities at his disposal.

I remember when my youngest daughter was given spelling each day at school. She would learn it at home and her teacher ensured that the spelling was heard first thing each morning. That caused my daughter to make a determined effort to learn the work. However, that teacher was transferred, as sometimes happens, and was replaced by another teacher who also gave the students spelling to learn each day. However, she did not hear it each morning, she heard it only once a week. Because the students in the class knew quite well that their spelling would not be heard the next morning, their enthusiasm waned. Their incentive to learn also decreased. The teaching of the three Rs depends on the way in which the system is implemented by individual teachers.

Some of the books that children are given to read are open to criticism. Teachers have the authority to set books for children to read, so once again it comes back to individual teachers. Although I cannot remember its name, one book that was brought to my notice would have been better placed in the garbage bin than in a schoolroom. Perhaps if individual teachers had a little more respect and courtesy, that sort of thing would not happen. Students do not gain very much when they are given that type of book to study.

Team-work amongst the staff is very important, particularly since the advent of teacher aides a few years ago. They were introduced by the Commonwealth Government, and they have been accepted by teachers, children and the school community in general. Their acceptance is testimony to the fact that they play an important role in education.

Perhaps more parents could become involved in the teaching program by listening to children who have to undertake remedial reading. When parents sit and listen while children read a book over and over again until they gain some confidence, it gives the children great encouragement.

Mr Hooper: Do you want to make the parents remedial teachers?

Mr STEPHAN: No, I simply point out that they could be there to give encouragement. They do not teach in any way; they simply sit and listen. That gives great encouragement

to the children. Legislation cannot be passed to force parents to become involved, but when they do become involved they certainly give encouragement to the children. The parents who do undertake that work should not be chased away.

The pre-school education program plays an important role and has been accepted in the community. I agree with the Minister, who pointed out that Queensland has the finest, most comprehensive, co-ordinated system of pre-school facilities to be found anywhere in the world. That 26 000 children are presently enrolled in pre-schools is a success story in itself. The number of teachers, schools and parents who are earnestly waiting for more pre-schools to be built is testimony to their importance.

Although another pre-school is in the course of construction in Gympie, the total number of pre-schools being built has been reduced. A number of others are urgently sought by parents in the Gympie area. This demand proves how successful pre-school education has been. The sustained, realistic financial subsidies for community kindergartens have continued to provide a complementary service for children in the younger age group.

The health and physical education program is something that we should never neglect. It is encouraging that the introduction of exciting daily physical education programs in primary schools has generated real enthusiasm. That enthusiasm wanes as the children grow up and reach secondary school. However, if enthusiasm can be instilled in children when they are young, there is every possibility that it will continue later in life.

I am pleased to know that each year the extensive learn-to-swim programs enable thousands of young Queenslanders to become proficient in the water. I am also pleased that a subsidy is paid for the building of swimming-pools in schoolgrounds, along with other educational facilities. In the last six months two swimming-pools have been built in schools in the Gympie area. The fact that the subsidy has been increased by \$10,000 is an indication of the department's willingness and ability to help those who wish to help themselves. Although these subsidies are paid under the Works and Housing portfolio, they are part and parcel of the education program. When we remember that in days gone by we ourselves learned to swim in rivers or creeks amongst the logs, stones and eels, we realise that the learn-to-swim program is advancing along the right track.

Special education has been mentioned. Again, I compliment the department for what it has done. Other members have pointed to the need for this program. However, one area needs a little additional attention. It would help a great deal if, in co-operation with the Health Department, the Education Department were to appoint additional occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

At the special school in my own area one of the most common complaints I receive is that, although the children benefit from some physiotherapy and occupational therapy, they are not given sufficient support to enable them to carry on their program and to achieve their aim of being the same as other people in the community. The parents also become frustrated. Who could blame them? The therapists are attached to the hospital. The parents have to take the children to the hospital once or twice a week. I look forward to the time when therapists might be able to assist at special schools.

Special emphasis has been given to the transition from school to work, which is very important. The work experience and career education program plays an all-important role. The Student Education (Work Experience) Act was proclaimed in 1978. The program has had some teething problems, but it has also received a tremendous amount of support from the local community, business houses and service clubs. If it were not for the service clubs in Gympie, it may have fallen by the wayside. They have put their weight behind it and ensured support by encouraging business houses to make use of it. Once the business houses become involved and get to know the children, they begin to understand a little better the education program as it is and as they might like to see it. If they see shortfalls in it, they have an opportunity to put their views forward.

I am pleased to report that an increase in music-teaching is presently taking place. I thank the Minister for making provision for the services of a music teacher next year in the primary schools in the Gympie area. It is desirable that children become interested in music. It is possible by the establishment of bands to co-ordinate them into music programs. That experience gives them tremendous encouragement to take part in music programs.

Mr Moore: If my school does not get anything, I will have to send all the kids to Gympie.

Mr STEPHAN: If the honourable member sends a couple of children to Gympie, I will accommodate them. I hope that the Minister will take note of that.

One of the most serious problems encountered in Gympie concerns bus transport. Difficulty has been experienced in maintaining the present system. It is interesting to examine the history of the transport system. Although great progress has been made since its introduction over 20 years ago, frustrations are experienced with the present transport system. There are two high schools in Gympie. Some bus routes have been terminated, and students have had to find other transport to reach their school. The students should be given an opportunity to complete their education before such changes are made.

A driver-training program is conducted in Gympie. The pilot scheme has been operating particularly well. I compliment the Wide Bay regional office for its interest and enthusiasm in ensuring the success of driver-training. The confidence that is being instilled into young children is testimony of the success of the role the Education Department is playing. It is doing more than merely paying lip-service to the lessening of the road toll.

Mr Simpson: The department should use that facility up there.

Mr STEPHAN: Yes, the department is using the service at the present time. I compliment it for that. Some teachers have been sent to Shepparton in Victoria, where they have been instructed on the program that is conducted in that State. As a result of what they have seen, they have returned to Queensland and passed on their enthusiasm to teachers and students. Approximately 2 000 students are taking part in the driver-training program. That is no small feat. The driver-training complex was built by the Gympie service clubs. Many hours and hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on the work. The workers deserve encouragement to continue their efforts. It is important to involve students in the program because they are the drivers of the future.

I compliment the p. and c. associations for the work that they do, particularly in relation to compiling school histories. Both the Gunalda and the One Mile schools in my electorate are about to celebrate their centenary. A good deal has happened in 100 years, but very little has been done to document their history.

(Time expired.)

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (8.46 p.m.): I congratulate the Minister on the way in which he has applied himself to his task. He must find it a new and exciting one.

Opposition members foreshadowed a lively debate on class sizes. Their contribution has been the greatest fizzer of all times. They have not come forward with any evidence to substantiate their views. If ever there was a rebuff to those Opposition members who, on an earlier occasion, wanted to suspend Standing Orders so that they could discuss class sizes, this debate was it.

The Minister referred to a great many aspects of education. In relation to some, I congratulate him; in relation to others, I shall be a little critical. First, he referred to the increase in per capita grants to private schools. I congratulate him on that aspect. Private schools are a great asset to this State. My electorate contains many private schools. A new one, known as the School of Total Education, is placing the emphasis on very small class sizes. It will be interesting to see whether the children derive any advantage from those small classes. I tend to think that quality of education is more important than class sizes.

The payments made to school-bus operators are of great benefit in my electorate, in which many children travel to and from school by bus. To some it may seem that the payments are substantial. However, as most bus operators have to keep their drivers standing by and cannot gainfully employ them for the remainder of the day, they would be in dire trouble if they did not receive financial assistance from the State Government.

The upgrading of the remote area allowance scheme is also of great advantage to my electorate. It is of even greater benefit to other electorates.

The Minister referred to potential employment prospects. Some people tell youngsters that whatever they do they should not continue their studies with a view to becoming teachers. With good planning and management—"management" may not be the correct word to use—the Government is able to provide employment for most teachers. Perhaps those who do not want to travel suffer certain disadvantages. However, the Minister was quite correct when he said that the employment prospects for teachers in 1982 are currently looking quite bright. He told us why that is so.

I refer particularly to his comments regarding special education. A great deal is being achieved in this field in country areas. Most disadvantaged children who live in the country are no worse off than their counterparts who live in the city. The Government can take credit for that. It is unfortunate that some children require special education, but it is great to know that the Government is trying to improve their plight. The Minister said that more disadvantaged children are being supported in local schools.

Enrolments in country schools throughout Queensland show that more and more children are being educated. It is a tribute to the teachers in those areas that they are managing quite well. People who would have been denied education 20 to 30 years ago now have an opportunity to be educated.

The Minister said that guidance services for children with special disadvantages were being stepped up, and he told us that Warwick is one of the towns in which the service is being improved. We were pleased when that happened and I am proud to be associated with it. I congratulate the Minister and his predecessor on what has been done.

Some years ago, when we moved into agricultural education in high schools, we did not quite finish the job. Most of the schools are short of equipment. Although they probably have sufficient land, they are very short of equipment. It is very difficult to train people in agriculture without suitable equipment. Efforts have been made to improve the equipment available. If a youngster wants to learn how to drive a tractor it must be modern and hydraulically equipped. It does not have to be a big tractor.

Tonight, I rose to talk mainly about technical and further education. If we are to get people back to work after they lose a job late in life, we must give them proper training. Technical and further education will teach people how to use their leisure-time, but I should like most of the money to be spent on retraining people who want to get back into the work-force.

I will now read from the Tertiary Education Commission's report for the 1982-84 triennium, Volume 1, Part 4, Advice of Technical and Further Education Council. It is an interesting document. Under the heading "TAFE Building Projects Proposed by the States for 1982-84", the proposed building projects for all of the States, including Queensland, are set out. To make my point, I will have to read a fairly lengthy extract, which is in these terms—

"This Appendix sets out the building projects for which TAFE authorities at present expect to be seeking Commonwealth or State funding during the 1982-84 period. The lists of projects do not constitute firm State programs. Annual programs are formulated in the light of the cash flow determined for each year and in accordance with the decision-making procedures of both State and Commonwealth Governments. Thus, the 1982 program will be determined in the third quarter of 1981 and the 1983 and 1984 programs will be determined at similar times in 1982 and 1983 respectively. It will be possible for the firm building programs to reflect, therefore, shifts in demand arising from factors like the impact of Commonwealth initiatives with regard to youth transition programs and to apprenticeships, the introduction of training and retraining programs for older persons, the extent of the demand for skills arising from the development of mineral resources and treatment of mineral products, and the process of transfer to the education system of training formerly undertaken in industry."

This is the interesting paragraph—

“The lists of projects do result, however, from a considerable amount of planning and consultation between State authorities and the TAFE Council. Those projects toward the beginning of each State’s list can be regarded as relatively firm because they have been examined by Council as concept proposals and design is proceeding.”

Turning to page 163 of the report we find that at the top of the list of projects being considered is a college for Warwick. The report states—

“New college appropriate for a smaller centre, providing facilities for engineering trades, fashion, office education, arts and crafts.”

The value of the project is set at \$3.3m. Then comes Townsville—I think the honourable member for Townsville West mentioned the Townsville college—and then Grovely. The fourth town on the list is Ayr and the report reads—

“New college appropriate for smaller centre, providing facilities for engineering trades, fashion, office education, arts and crafts.”

That is exactly the same type of college as was proposed for Warwick, both estimated to cost \$3.3m. Imagine my surprise when I contacted the Commonwealth authorities and was told that the new college at Ayr will cost \$6.6m and that the Warwick college will disappear off the list. I do not intend to blame the Minister for that because I am sure he would not do it, but I think that some of his advisers are pulling the wool over his eyes. He should do something about it—

Mr Burns: Don’t you think Mr Bird looked after Ayr, where he came from, to your detriment?

Mr BOOTH: I would not say such a thing, but if the honourable member keeps talking about it he might almost convince me. We hear a lot about gerrymanders in here, but if that is not a gerrymander of the worst sort, I will eat my hat. On this occasion I join with the honourable member for Townsville West—it is not very often that I do that—in drawing the attention of the Committee to that point. There is no reason for the construction of such a college in Ayr, and it will be a waste to spend that huge amount of money there. We could build three mini-TAFE colleges for \$6.6m.

A cost-saving technique has been developed for the building of pre-schools, primary and high schools. That was mentioned by the honourable member for Cooroora. I am not quarreling with it, I think it is wise. I congratulate the Minister for saving money. Why should we waste money on a technical and further education college in Ayr? That kind of money would almost build a university. Where will its students come from? The population of the area I represent is about double that of Ayr and Home Hill, so it is ridiculous to spend that amount of money on a college in Ayr and wipe all the other projects. A college of technical and further education is essential to a district if it is to progress. When children in my area leave school and want to improve their typing and shorthand they have to attend a business college in Brisbane. That is a very costly business, so a lot of them miss out on the opportunity. I urge the Minister to further consider the construction of the Ayr college to determine whether that project should go ahead. He might make his mark on the administration of this State by stopping the construction of that and similar projects.

I congratulate the Minister on his achievements so far. I appreciate what has been done by the Education Department but I do not appreciate the construction of colleges such as the one proposed in Ayr.

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (8.59 p.m.): I have heard many a good speech in this Assembly in the short time I have been here, but I feel that this debate is nothing more than a political points-scoring exercise so that members have something to take back to their constituents. No matter what one asks for the answer is that there is a lack of finance, and that is a very sore point with me. I wish to refer to a letter I have just received from the Minister. Although I do thank him for his replies to my correspondence, his reply is the same to nearly all the letters I write regarding my area. I wrote a letter requesting an arts teacher at Ravenshoe, but the reply was the same as usual—no finance. It is always the same story with this Government. It says that it does not have the money,

I acknowledge that the responsibility for education is shared by both the Federal Government and the State Government. Canberra had the razor gang. So far nobody has been able to think of a name for the gang in Queensland.

The Government raised \$16m in a very short period to prevent an industrial company being taken over by an interstate group, yet it cannot find an additional few thousand dollars to meet the needs of education. These young children will be the future assets of Queensland and Australia. If we cannot fit them into society, we do not have the right to criticise them later when they hang around juke-boxes. The education system should provide the foundation for those young people so that they can move into society and bring credit not only to themselves but also to the State.

I now wish to refer to special schools, dental clinics and the School of the Air. The children of only two or three constituents in my electorate are taught by the School of the Air. But the School of the Air teaches the children of graziers in the Outback and of workers in the mining industry. Because of a shortage of jobs in the cities, people have to take their children into the Outback and survive there as best they can. Fishermen take their families to sea with them and their children have to depend on the School of the Air for their education.

A pilot program was introduced in Cairns. Four days a week, for half an hour before and after school a maths teacher and an English teacher come into the School of the Air. They give extra lessons to the brothers and sisters of primary schoolchildren who are taught by the School of the Air. Parents have come to me to see whether I can get the Government to make this program permanent. They have been led to believe that the program will cease at the end of this year. It is only an experiment. The two teachers give of their time freely. In the light of the results that have been achieved, I think it ill behoves the Government to allow this program to conclude.

Because of a shortage of money, the Government is holding up a program at the East Innisfail school. The local council has forgone land that it could have used for other purposes. It has given this land to the school to be used for recreational and sporting purposes. That project is being held up by the Works Department. I have written letters about it. Every time I return to my electorate I get a visit from a member of the p. and c. association, asking whether I have heard anything more from the Government. The Government should face up to its responsibilities.

I now turn to special schools. Remedial teachers, speech therapists and special teachers are needed not only in my electorate but in the whole of North Queensland. I know that the amount of money allocated for special education may look a lot on paper, but two speech therapists have to cover the area from Cardwell to Cape York. The Government talks about costs, but I think that in some areas it is penny wise and pound foolish. Once a week a speech therapist has to travel from Cairns to Innisfail, a distance of 56 miles. She loses three hours in travelling time.

Mr Burns: Then you have the cost of travel.

Mr EATON: Yes, and the cost of accommodation if she has to stay in Innisfail overnight. If speech therapists have to travel to the outlying areas, the cost of air fares is incurred. I have written to the Minister asking that a speech therapist be stationed in Innisfail to serve Innisfail and the surrounding area. No travelling time or accommodation costs would be involved.

I pay tribute to the officers of the Education Department because, although they may not have granted all my requests, they have treated me fairly.

The Minister must become tired of writing letters saying that he has no money for more projects. As he has only recently taken over the portfolio and has not really had time to settle in, I will not lay any blame at his feet. However, at this time next year, after the Budget has been brought down, people will want to see a much larger allocation of funds to the education system. If the Minister is to make a success of this portfolio, he will have to extract more funds from the Treasury. I certainly hope that he is successful in doing that.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset—Minister for Education) (9.6 p.m.): I thank all honourable members for their intense interest in education and their obvious concern for the welfare of the students of the State. Very few members in this Chamber do not take an interest in education and very few are not proud of what has been achieved. I have travelled the length and breadth of the State and have generally found that parents and teachers are satisfied with education. I have attended speech nights in metropolitan, provincial and country areas, and I am extremely proud of the type of young student that the schools are turning out to take their place as future citizens of Queensland. Seeing these young people engenders a great deal of confidence in the future.

Recently at Vienna Woods I officially opened a house that, with the financial help of Capalaba Rotary, was built by TAFE students from Mt Gravatt. That was the third such project. It would do any member of this Chamber good to see what those young people achieved in building that house. Now that the house has been completed, the Capalaba Rotary Club will sell it. I believe that another is to be built at Cleveland. It was a wonderful experience to see how proud those young people were of that beautiful house that they built.

I am appreciative of the many issues that have been raised by honourable members. In the short time available to me I will not be able to acknowledge all the points raised in their contributions, but my officers have noted what has been said and will look into the matters that concern honourable members.

On the issue of transition education, I would like to point out first that my department has conducted transition programs of one kind or another in secondary schools and TAFE colleges for many years. Concern over the transition from school to work is not something new. The only novel feature in this regard is the fairly recent involvement of the Commonwealth Government in this activity. Queensland has been in it for years.

I am sure that few members in this Chamber would agree with the honourable member for Wynnum that courses of transition education in secondary schools are ineffective. To the contrary, many of the courses that have been developed are having a significant impact on the students who undertake them and are providing them with additional skills and knowledge that enhance their chances of subsequently finding satisfactory employment.

Of course, we are all aware that, unless jobs are available, some students will complete courses and not be immediately successful in gaining employment. However, the present rate of economic development of this State, which is being carefully fostered by the Government, allows us to feel confident that job prospects for school-leavers will steadily improve.

On a recent trip to Rockhampton I met 23 students who had taken part in a transition program. Twenty of them had obtained employment and the other three had returned to complete further instruction.

Several members have expressed concern about the ever-present problem of discipline of young people. As Minister for Education, I share that concern. However, we are all aware that discipline begins in the home. I support those members who stressed the importance of the role of parents in the education of their children.

Many discipline problems could be overcome by closer co-operation between parents and teachers. I would urge all parents to make an effort to become involved in the schools that their children attend. I have been a member of p. and c. associations for many years. I reared five children. My wife still takes her turn in the tuck-shop at our local high school because we still have a daughter there. It intrigues me that, although the school has 650 pupils, only a very small number of parents take an interest and assist at the tuck-shop. Ladies are brought in from the country. My wife has to take her turn. She does not mind at all; she does not mind making a contribution to the school that has been so helpful to us.

Sometimes at p. and c. meetings—I do not have an opportunity to get along to them now—we had trouble in getting a quorum. If the parents took an interest in their school, the school would be a better place for it. It is all very well to sit back and criticise, as a lot of parents do, and to take things for granted. However, those who take an interest in the school and in the p. and c. association are rewarded for the interest they show. I can assure them of that.

From my visits to schools in the various parts of the State I feel quite sure that the problem of drug-taking, consumption of alcohol and tobacco-smoking by students in Queensland are nowhere near as serious as they are in many other parts of the world. However, we recognise that there is a problem.

At this stage I pay a tribute to the film centre. Although I have not been able to bring to the Parliamentary Annexe the film produced recently on the dangers of alcohol to schoolchildren, I hope that before the session concludes I will be able to show members what we are doing in this field. We receive funds for this campaign from the breweries and other organisations. I place on record, too, my appreciation of the co-operation we receive from the Health Department. These problems are given a considerable amount of attention by the officers of my department. I assure honourable members that every action will be taken to overcome problems that arise.

I now turn to the funding of adult education. It has been claimed during the debate that funds have been cut back. This, of course, is not so. In fact, the appropriation in the 1981-82 financial year for adult education is significantly higher than the actual expenditure last financial year. If my memory serves me correctly, the increase is about 10.9 per cent. Of course, there is a need for careful management of adult education programs. I must draw to the attention of all honourable members that fee increases are kept to a minimum. Fees are increased only when rates of payment to part-time teachers are raised, and are in the same proportion. I think that the last increase was in 1978; so honourable members could well imagine that there was need for an increase.

The use of school facilities by communities is a matter frequently discussed with me. I am very mindful of the need to use school sporting facilities to the fullest possible extent. I would hope that when I do bring amendments to the Education Act before the Parliament—I trust that it is before too long—we will see a further use by the community, and particularly by shire councils, of assembly halls and so on. My own personal view is that if there were greater community use of school facilities we would have less vandalism. Many Queenslanders are waiting for amendments to allow communities, and shire councils, in particular, to become involved in the use of assembly halls and sporting facilities. Under the Act education buildings must be used for education purposes. Therefore, the Act would have to be amended to make provision for greater community use. I am anxious to bring that amendment before the Parliament and I am sure that honourable members would applaud such a move.

Consideration has been given in a number of instances to the joint use of school facilities so that other schools and local authorities may benefit from it. I have received a number of offers from local authorities in all parts of Queensland to become involved. Great advantages to the school and people of the district would flow from the non-duplication of halls in a small town. The ratepayers would be saved a great deal of money.

A number of members raised matters of particular interest to their areas. It must be accepted that problems exist in growth areas. The member for Cooroora mentioned the problems and needs of his area. I would remind all honourable member that 95 per cent of the costs of the Education Department are fixed costs. It has very little flexibility; it does not have a pool of money waiting to be spent. That is not the way that good Government works. We have done our best to fulfil the needs of particular areas. I have spent a lot of time on the Gold Coast and I recognise the major influx of persons to that area. School enrolments in the electorate of Brisbane Central have been decreasing.

Mr Davis: In my estimation, they are not going down.

Mr GUNN: The honourable member is very slow; they are starting to decrease. I am told by my research officers that enrolments are decreasing in the heart of Brisbane, whereas on the outskirts of Brisbane they are increasing. I have not received one complaint from the member for Brisbane Central about crowded classrooms, because his school enrolments are dropping.

Quite a lot has been said about technical and further education. That is one facet that I would like to see extended into country areas. Every young person is

entitled to technical and further education. In fact, I made that statement soon after my appointment as Minister for Education. I said that I favoured the spread of technical and further education into country areas.

It has been claimed that possibly we are spending too much on the quality of buildings. No apology should be made for the quality of the buildings that we construct. I congratulate the Minister for Works and Housing on his choice of school buildings. Recently a high school was constructed in my area. I am happy with the design of the building.

Mr Moore: I bet you got a good one, too.

Mr GUNN: It is a standard building, similar to what would be constructed elsewhere in Queensland.

Mr Moore: I have been waiting for a pre-school in my electorate for 12 years.

Mr GUNN: A prerequisite to pre-schools is children.

Mr Moore: Why don't you close the schools down?

Mr GUNN: We are not closing the schools down. The honourable member for Windsor lives in an old suburb. The class numbers in his electorate have dropped considerably. That is the pattern throughout all older suburbs. It is also occurring in other States of Australia. I have spoken to Ministers for Education in New South Wales and Victoria and I was told by the previous Minister for Education in New South Wales that his Government had schools in inner-Sydney to give away because the population was spreading out. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr D'Arcy) knows how it has spread out into his area. Possibly persons have moved there from Brisbane Central and other inner areas.

Mr D'Arcy: You should shift some of those schools into my area.

Mr GUNN: I think the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has done very well. He has acknowledged that fact, and that is to his credit.

Mr D'Arcy: If you would have a talk to the Minister for Works and Housing, we would have more buildings.

Mr GUNN: The Minister for Works and Housing co-operates very well with me. The electorates of Opposition members have done well. The honourable member for Port Curtis has been man enough to acknowledge our efforts in his area. I had the pleasure of attending a function with him in his electorate. I think it was the member for Archerfield who, in one of his more facetious moments, claimed that we were putting all the money into Government areas and none into Labor areas. That is simply not true. If the honourable member for Wolston were here, he would confirm that children in my electorate rely on special schools in his electorate for their remedial education.

I want to clarify the point concerning superannuation for married women teachers. Those who are permanent staff members may contribute to the superannuation scheme if they wish to do so. If difficulties are arising in relation to superannuation, teachers should take up the matter with the superannuation board in the first instance.

In conclusion, I again thank those honourable members who have shown a keen interest in education and have contributed to the debate on my Estimates. I appreciate the co-operation that I have received from all honourable members.

At 9.21 p.m., by agreement,

Votes Passed Under Standing Order No. 307 and Sessional Order

Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307 and the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 8 October, the questions for the following Votes were put by the Temporary Chairman and agreed to—

	\$
Education—	
Chief Office	11,458,363
Balance of Vote, Consolidated Revenue and Trust and Special Funds	957,036,951
Executive and Legislative, Balance of Votes	8,757,832
The Premier	17,104,984
The Treasurer	363,608,467
Commerce and Industry	7,345,799
Lands and Forestry	24,851,882
Mines and Energy	15,207,387
Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts	33,936,091
Transport	615,175,755
Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs	40,045,760
Welfare Services	56,722,425
Works and Housing	96,729,865
Trust and Special Funds Estimates, Balance of Estimates	1,322,598,950
Loan Fund Estimates, Balance of Estimates	270,675,485
Supplementary Estimates (Consolidated Revenue), 1980-1981	201,718,598
Supplementary Estimates (Trust and Special Funds), 1980-1981	198,540,758
Supplementary Estimates (Loan Fund Account), 1980-1981	23,238,568
Vote on Account, 1982-1983	1,210,000,000

Resolutions reported, and ordered to be received on Tuesday next.

COAL MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Mines and Energy), by leave, without notice:
I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Coal Mining Act 1925-1979 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr I. J. Gibbs, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Mines and Energy) (9.33 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

This Bill can be divided generally into three parts, these provide for—

The amendment of sections dealing with the appointment of officers;

The deletion of certain redundant sections; and

The amendment of sections dealing with the structure of the Act and rules made under it.

Firstly, with regard to the appointment of officers, the Coal Mines Inspectorate of the Department of Mines has been reorganised to provide better control within the inspectorate and a more workable and efficient organisation to deal with an expanding coal industry.

The changes involved the appointment of senior inspectors of coal-mines, principal electrical inspectors of coal-mines and principal mechanical inspectors of coal-mines. Whilst the persons appointed to these positions have administrative responsibilities, they are also required to undertake the inspection of coal-mines and therefore have to be recognised as inspectors under the Act. Provision is made for this.

The further expansion of the coal-mining industry and the demands placed on the inspectorate may require, at some future time, the appointment of an Assistant Chief Inspector of Coal Mines and provision has also been made for any appointee to this position to have the powers of inspection.

At present the appointments of inspectors to the Coal Mines Inspectorate, in the first instance, is in pursuance of the provisions of the Public Service Act. A further appointment by the Governor in Council is then necessary to satisfy the requirements of the Coal Mining Act.

It is considered desirable that any such appointments made under the Public Service Act be deemed also to be appointments made for the purposes of the Coal Mining Act and the Bill removes the present superfluous provision. The Mines Regulation Act already provides for this in relation to appointments of officers for the purposes of that Act.

I now move to the second part—that is, the matters proposed for deletion from the present Act. The head-note to subsection (3) of section 80 is deleted because such head-notes are not considered to be good drafting practice. No substance is lost by the deletion.

The “payment by weight” sections of the Act are also to be deleted. The control exercised by these sections is no longer required as the form of coal production now employed does not provide for the miners’ wages to be paid by the tonnage of coal won by the individual miner, a condition which existed when the sections were originally enacted.

I might also mention that, as a very minor matter, an amendment is proposed to formally apply decimal currency units in the section referring to general penalty. Up to this time, the application of decimal units has been made as a printing conversion only. This amendment will formalise the conversion and is standard procedure in such cases.

Finally, with regard to the structure of the Act, the Committee of Subordinate Legislation has drawn attention to the fact that the Act contains schedules—namely the Second, Third and Fourth Schedules—the rules, codes and symbols of which may be amended by the Governor in Council. These schedules deal with rules which provide for very necessary safeguards in coal-mining in the areas of ventilation, dust control, combustible gas, explosives and safety conditions generally. It is therefore imperative that there is a ready avenue to quickly amend current rules or introduce new ones in the event of dangerous situations becoming apparent or new technology being introduced.

The committee acknowledges this but, quite correctly, believes that these rules should not be contained in schedules to the Act.

In order to rectify the situation, it is proposed that the Coal Mining Act be amended in relation to the powers and procedures involved in the making of rules under the Act so that such rules do not appear in schedules as at present.

The matter presently contained in the schedules will be replaced by new rules which may be made, varied, suspended or terminated by the Governor in Council. These rules will require to be gazetted to become effective and until such matters are finalised the appropriate sections dealing with the repeal of the schedules will not take effect until a date is proclaimed. Although the Bill is short, it is important as it corrects anomalies in the Coal Mining Act, and I commend it to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Prest, adjourned.

NOISE ABATEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. W. D. HEWITT (Greenslopes—Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Noise Abatement Act 1978 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Hewitt, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. W. D. HEWITT (Greenslopes—Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services) (9.39 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Since the early 1960s, Western Governments have increasingly accepted responsibility for providing a better quality of life through improved community amenity. Evidence of this movement became apparent in Australia during the late 1960s and early 1970s when environmental legislation relating to air, water and noise began to appear.

The Queensland Government began drafting environmental noise legislation during the period 1974 to 1978. It soon became evident that this difficult area of human endeavour would invariably place various interests in conflict. It was also apparent that such legislation might require amendment from time to time to accommodate deficiencies that emerge as a result of working experience with the Act.

The Noise Abatement Act, which was proclaimed on 28 September 1978, is an example of the kind of legislation to which I have just referred. The Act has been in operation for 3 years. Working experience with the legislation during that time has indicated that certain amendments are desirable in order to improve the effectiveness and administrative efficiency of the Act. Accordingly, the principal aim of the Bill is to introduce certain provisions that will (a) enable the more efficient administration and operation of the legislation, and (b) clarify the division of responsibility for the investigation of noise complaints.

Before I proceed to discuss the amendments in detail, I shall briefly outline existing legislative arrangements concerning the division of responsibility for the investigation of noise complaints, as this might help place the amendments in perspective.

The Noise Abatement Authority is a 15-member statutory body which meets at approximately 6-week intervals. The members of the authority represent industry, agriculture, the public and Government.

The public may lodge complaints with the Division of Noise Abatement, the technical arm of the authority, alleging excessive noise from commerce and industry. Officers of the division assess the offending noise and a report is submitted to the authority, which is responsible for the enforcement of the Act. However, operating experience has indicated that the majority of complaints are resolved by negotiation between the division and the originator of the noise. Every effort is being made by the division to maintain this co-operative working relationship with industry, because it is believed that the community as a whole benefits from such rapport in the long term. However, if the number of complaints increases, a continued policy of negotiation with commerce and industry relating to noise reduction measures may, because of staff shortages, prove impossible. At present, nine officers service the needs of the whole of Queensland. Obviously, the resources of the division are heavily strained, and in order to continue its present policy the division requires increased manpower.

The Act provides for noise from residential premises to be investigated by the local authority or the police. The police are responsible for the immediate abatement of noise from musical instruments, amplified sound, rowdy premises, places of assembly, and motor cycles or trail bikes. Generally, the police are involved with the abatement of noise from sources that contain, or may possibly contain, a behavioural component.

In addition, the Act is designed so that residential noise not falling within police jurisdiction may be the subject of local authority by-laws. A further responsibility of local authorities is contained in section 13 of the Act. This section contains a preventive mechanism whereby it is mandatory for any application made to a local authority relative to a proposal that may give rise to excessive noise to be referred to the Noise Abatement Authority for its consideration.

This is a very significant provision, because it enables preventive measures to be undertaken at the planning stage of a proposal and also permits the feasibility of a proposal to be considered in the light of noise emission requirements.

It is against this background that I shall proceed to a specific discussion of the amendments. In general, the amendments may be said to work towards (a) removal of ambiguity, (b) streamlining of the procedure for investigating complaints, (c) facilitating the administration of the Act, and (d) improving the effectiveness of the Act.

For example, the definition of "Places of Assembly" contained in section 8 of the Act has been the cause of ambiguity when particular premises are being classified. This ambiguity occurs because certain commercial operations, for example, squash courts, theatres, and speedways, comply with the requirements of the definition of "Places of Assembly" as well as being commercial activities. An amendment is proposed to delete the concept of "Places of Assembly" from the Act and to put in a schedule those classes of premises which will be treated as commercial.

The required action, upon complaint of excessive noise, has been revised to provide for one assessment only in situations where it is not practicable to conduct a second assessment or where an immediate order or licence is required in urgent situations. As well, the requirement to complete the prescribed form is deleted, because written complaints generally contain the required information. However, the complaint must still be made in writing. The amendment is solely to speed up investigation of complaints and to avoid increased administrative duties that presently result from duplication of complaint information.

The section 13 mechanism has caused considerable concern because of the requirement of the Local Government Act that applications be approved within 40 days. Because some local authorities meet only once a month and the Noise Abatement Authority meets approximately every six weeks, it is obvious that the present administrative requirements are unsuitable. Accordingly, to hasten the Noise Abatement Authority's decision, an amendment is proposed to permit a subcommittee instead of the full authority to decide referrals.

The Bill provides for registers of orders and licences to be kept and that these registers be available to the public. It is also proposed to delete the requirement to pay the \$25 licence fee.

Jurisdiction over noise from construction sites presently resides with the local authority. Because many new constructions are for a commercial or industrial purpose, it is proposed to divide the responsibility for construction noise between local authorities and the Noise Abatement Authority. Generally, noise from the construction of one or two residential units will remain the responsibility of the local authority. It is anticipated that building permits could contain noise conditions, should the local authority find it necessary to control noise emissions from such sources. The Noise Abatement Authority will assume responsibility for noise from all other construction sites.

Police responsibility is expanded to include noise from motor vehicles operated other than on a road. The present Act limits police power to cover noise from motor cycles only. The Bill also contains provision to limit the number of police directions to abate excessive noise to three within any six-month period before the originator is required to show cause to a stipendiary magistrate why he should not be fined a maximum of \$500. The present Act does not place any limit on the number of police directions that are required before the originator is liable to be penalised.

The enforcement provisions of the Act are presently unsuitable to control noise from faulty intruder alarms. If the alarm is situated on commercial or industrial premises, the problem arises of ensuring that an officer of the division is present to assess the noise. In addition, the noise is one that requires immediate abatement. Alarms on residential premises may also require immediate abatement by the police, but the present Act does not provide cogent legislation in this respect.

In an effort to provide suitable legislation in this difficult area of endeavour, the Bill provides regulation-making power in relation to intruder alarms. It is the intention of the Noise Abatement Authority to invoke a regulation requiring intruder alarms to meet certain specifications. Such an approach should, in the long term, obviate the necessity for police to enter premises in order to turn off faulty alarms.

The Bill also provides for higher general penalties. A first offence is subject to a maximum penalty of \$2,500 with a daily penalty of \$150. A second offence carries a maximum penalty of \$5,000 with a daily penalty of \$300.

The Bill makes minor alterations to the application of the Act. Animal husbandry activities, with the exception of dog kennels, poultry farms and horse stables, are exempt; also, noise from intruder alarms on licensed premises is placed under the jurisdiction of the Noise Abatement Act.

The amending Bill maintains the spirit of the Act, while extending and clarifying its requirements. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mackenroth, adjourned.

STATE TRANSPORT ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the State Transport Act 1960-1972 and the State Transport Acts, 1938 to 1943, each in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Lane, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (9.50 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

As honourable members will have noted, this Bill deals with the State Transport Act 1960-1972 and the State Transport Acts, 1938 to 1943. Dealing firstly with the State Transport Act 1960-1972, no major changes are proposed and essentially the main amendment is to subsection 21 of section 45 dealing with the liability of carriers for the transport of goods by road.

A recent judgment of the District Court in an appeal, Harper versus Andersen, quashed the conviction of a road transport operator for carrying 30 000 litres of bulk fuel without a permit for a distance greater than 40 km in competition with rail. The District Court judge concluded that section 45(21), which exempts the transport of goods by road from liability under the Act if in the carriage of similar goods those goods cannot be carried directly or indirectly for more than 40 km by rail, was ambiguous. It was held that the carriage of 44-gallon drums of fuel was not similar to the carriage of 30 000 litres of fuel by road tanker. That judgment would have a considerable effect on transport of bulk commodities such as fuel, coal and other ores, as well as grain, which is generally directed to rail as the most suitable transport mode. Without such direction and as part of an orderly movement of transport, road movement of bulk traffic over long distances with its attendant costs of road accidents and road damage would increase greatly. The Bill expresses in clearer terms the present provisions of subsection (21) of section 45 to overcome the ambiguity found by the District Court.

Apart from this specific amendment, maximum penalties as to offences with respect to the carriage of passengers and goods, which have not changed since 1961, will be increased to bring them more into line with present-day values. Where minimum penalties are provided, this provision will be removed and it will be at the discretion of the court, subject to the maximum penalties provided for second, third and subsequent offences presently prescribed in sections 48, 49 and 49A as to the penalties imposed.

Honourable members will appreciate generally that the movement of bulk commodities where rail transport is available and, particularly where seasonal conditions prevail, is best handled by rail which has a capacity for and is properly suited to this transport task.

Turning now to the amendments to the State Transport Acts, 1938 to 1943, honourable members will no doubt be aware that that legislation has largely been repealed. The only significant unrepealed provision is section 22 which confers on the Governor in Council

extraordinary powers to make a proclamation of emergency under certain prescribed conditions. In this connection, the general penalty under section 23 of the Act has not been increased since 1938, and recent experience has shown it to be inadequate. The present penalty of \$200 will be increased to \$1,000 for breaches of the Act.

A new section 23A is inserted. This provides that where an order for the payment of a penalty or costs is made against a person for breach of or failure to comply with any provision of an Order in Council made under section 22, the emergency provision section, that imprisonment in default or the recovery by levy and distress shall not apply. The penalty or costs awarded against a defendant will be recovered in a court having jurisdiction to entertain civil proceedings. The procedure will be for the complainant to obtain a certificate of the order of the Magistrates Court for registration in the civil court when it will be deemed to be a judgment of that court to the intent that like proceedings (including proceedings in bankruptcy) may be taken against the defendant. In other words, imprisonment of a defendant on conviction and failure to pay a penalty or costs is being replaced by a civil process for recovery of the penalty or costs.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Davis, adjourned.

RIVER IMPROVEMENT TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 10 November (see p. 3368) on Mr Tomkins's motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr WILSON (Townsville South) (9.55 p.m.): The main purpose of the Bill is to require owners and occupiers of land to contribute to the cost of specific works. It contains a number of machinery provisions, but Opposition members want the Minister to answer certain questions.

A new section 6A provides for the maintenance of a superannuation scheme. It provides for the payment of superannuation benefits to a trust's officers and employees who qualify. I do not argue against that provision. A new section 12A will legalise or formalise the practice that is adopted by some trusts of investing money.

River improvement trusts are commonplace in the North. The Burdekin, Cardwell and Johnstone River trusts are examples. They allow for local government involvement and control in specific areas of river maintenance.

Opposition members intend to raise matters of a general and local nature. Although we support the amendments, we believe that in certain respects the Government has not come up with the goods. We know that, even though before introducing the Bill the Government consulted with local authorities, they are not satisfied with certain provisions contained in it.

When introducing the Bill the Minister said that numerous land-owners and occupiers indicated that they would be prepared to contribute funds to a trust. That is laughable. I am sure that when the cockies read the Minister's comments they will split their sides laughing. I do not know of any cocky who wants to give money to the Government voluntarily.

The Minister went on to say that several industry organisations suggested that amendments to the Act be considered. I ask the Minister to name those industry organisations. Are they cane-growers organisations, millers, or what? How are those organisations associated with river improvement? What will be their input by way of contributions to the trust fund?

The main contributors are the local authorities. Previously, the Government was contributing 33½ per cent. As a result of a recent decision of this Government, its contribution has been reduced to 10 per cent.

In New South Wales, the Commonwealth contributes 40 per cent, the State contributes 40 per cent and the local authorities contribute 20 per cent. Such a scheme applied in the Northern Rivers and the Hunter River area. I believe it applies also in other States,

The only two occasions in Queensland on which any area received 80 per cent from the Federal and State Governments and 20 per cent from the local authorities were when Proserpine and Brisbane suffered severe damage as a result of flooding in 1974—at a time when a Labor Government was in control in Canberra.

In Queensland, local authorities are required to contribute only 20 per cent and the Government is required to contribute 80 per cent, but local authorities will now contribute 90 per cent and the Government will contribute only 10 per cent. So the contribution of local authorities in Queensland will now be $4\frac{1}{2}$ times that of their counterparts in New South Wales. And the Government claims it is doing a good job! No doubt the local authorities in Queensland will have something to say about that. They would be pleased to have the Minister tell them why they will be required to contribute 90 per cent, whereas the Government will contribute only 10 per cent and whereas in other States the local authorities contribute 20 per cent and the Government contributes 80 per cent.

I draw the attention of honourable members to the Russell River diversion scheme, which on 1 January 1980 was estimated to cost \$30.6m. Ninety per cent of the money is to be borrowed and repaid by the Mulgrave Shire ratepayers, and the Government is to meet the remaining 10 per cent of the cost. On the 1 January 1980 estimate, the annual maintenance costs were set at approximately \$400,000. The beneficiaries under this scheme will be 40 cane farmers.

Mr Menzel: You don't know what you are talking about.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Miller): Order! The honourable member for Mulgrave is interjecting from other than his usual place.

Mr WILSON: I understand that they are either relatives or friends of the honourable member for Mulgrave and that they are trying to get all the Babinda cane growers to contribute. I am sure that they will not be happy to do so. Will the Minister advise the House whether the Babinda Mill Suppliers Committee is one of the organisations to which he referred? Parliament is entitled to such information. Has the honourable member for Mulgrave a pecuniary interest? If he has, he should not vote or speak on the Bill, and if he does so, he should resign his seat.

I will now list the people and organisations who are opposed to the Russell River diversion scheme.

(1) The majority of Babinda Mill farmers say that the costs are prohibitive and that the scheme does not solve the problem.

(2) The Queensland Commercial Fishermens Organisation believes that it will destroy the fishing areas, essential barramundi breeding grounds and important fish and prawn nurseries.

(3) The Russell Heads community believes that it will destroy homes by the erosion it causes.

(4) The Bramston Beach Ratepayers and Progress Association believes that it will cause siltation of sandy beaches and severe flooding.

(5) The Bramston Beach farmers believe that it will increase salinity through osmosis.

(6) The owners of Russell and Mulgrave River Cruises believe that it will cause the complete loss of a tourist industry that has been established since 1934.

(7) General ratepayers in the Mulgrave Shire believe that it will mean additional rates.

(8) The Australian Conservation Council believes that it will be responsible for the destruction of national parks.

(9) The Wildlife Preservation Society believes that it will destroy rare flora and fauna.

With the exception of the relatives and friends of the member for Mulgrave, everyone in Babinda is opposed to the Russell River diversion scheme.

The member for Mourilyan will speak of other matters of a general and local nature, but the Opposition will not oppose the Bill.

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (10.4 p.m.): Although the Opposition agrees with the principles of the Bill, I will raise the doubts that we have about the motives behind its introduction. It is only a machinery measure designed to get the Government off the hook because of its reduced funding of river trusts and local authorities.

During the recent January floods, my area and adjoining shires suffered severe soil erosion and damage to main roads and bridges. The river improvement trust in the Johnstone area is particularly concerned. If money had been available for the construction of a suitable drainage scheme, the build up of water and over 50 per cent of the damage would have been avoided. Instead there was the hassle of trying to find money with which to restore the roads, bridges and paddocks to their former state.

One of the Bill's provisions relates to farmers contributing financially. That has been a cause of concern for some time in the Innisfail area. Although local authorities as a whole are in agreement with the Bill, I would like to point out that with rural industries becoming capital intensive, markets falling away and costs rising it is possible that farmers will be unable to raise sufficient money to help river improvement trusts prevent soil erosion and damage to main roads. The river improvement trust has been requested to assist with ideas to prevent further damage in several areas in my electorate. The standard of main roads in some parts of my electorate is not good. In one area a creek runs towards the road at an angle, and because pipes have been laid under the road at right angles overflowing in the wet season has resulted in erosion of the road and the banks of nearby paddocks. Water was turned onto canefields. It is well known in the sugar industry that water lying in cane paddocks for a certain period has a detrimental effect on the c.c.s., and if it remains there for long enough, it can cause permanent damage to the cane.

So it is with some trepidation that we agree to the Bill in principle. We hope that our fears are ill-founded and that the Bill is administered in the manner suggested by the Minister in his second-reading speech.

Mr MENZEL (Mulgrave) (10.7 p.m.): I support the Bill and commend the Minister on its introduction. The honourable member for Townsville South made a few sweeping statements which showed that he does not know what he is talking about. It is unfortunate that he has been fed information which is totally misleading—

Mr Tomkins: He is not going to listen to you, either.

Mr MENZEL: No. It is unfortunate that he left the Chamber very quickly when I rose to speak.

The honourable member said that this Bill might help 40 Babinda cane growers and the Russell River diversion scheme which, of course, is totally incorrect, because I know of over 50 growers who have signed a petition requesting that the scheme go ahead.

The honourable member also said that the Mulgrave Shire would have to pay 90 per cent of the cost of the scheme, and he cited a figure of \$30m or more. He is obviously unaware that the part of the scheme that has been requested will cost about \$17m. In January this year we had severe floods in Babinda—it seems to be an ever-increasing occurrence—and it is now beginning to be realised that Babinda has lost something like 200 000 tonnes of cane, which will mean the loss of jobs and severe financial losses in the district.

It is rather unfortunate that people got the wrong impression about the whole scheme. Millers and growers from Ingham to Mossman have formed themselves into the Northern Sugar Industry Productivity Committee. That committee has requested that the Government amend the law to make flood mitigation and drainage work a lot easier to carry out. This will enable them to recoup the losses they are incurring ever more frequently through flooding caused by poor drainage.

Unfortunately, the honourable member for Townsville South does not know what he is talking about. He gave us a lot of misleading information that was fed to him by people who do not even live in Babinda and have nothing to do with the sugar industry or the river improvement trust.

I commend the Minister on the introduction of this Bill. It is long overdue that parties other than local authorities should contribute towards the provision of flood mitigation works.

Mr Davis: Would it be fair to say that you are supporting the Bill?

Mr MENZEL: I certainly am. It is rather strange that people make statements when they do not know what they are talking about. The Bill should have been introduced a long time ago.

Mr Wilson: I have here a letter from an organisation in your area. It contains nine points.

Mr MENZEL: People should realise that the Bill has been requested not by people in Babinda but by the sugar industry throughout Queensland. There are 10 sugar mills between Ingham and Mossman, and they produce roughly one-third of the State's sugar. They desperately want something done about drainage and flood mitigation. They represent a substantial part of the sugar industry, and they employ many people. If people are to act in a responsible manner, they should think about the jobs of the workers in the sugar industry.

At a recent meeting, the manager of Victoria Mill, which is on the Herbert River near Ingham, said that that mill had lost at least 200 000 tonnes of cane in the January floods. Representatives from the Macknade mill said that their loss would not be much less. Millions of dollars are being lost in the North through a lack of flood mitigation.

I commend the Minister for introducing the Bill.

Hon. K. B. TOMKINS (Roma—Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs) (10.12 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions. A few points need to be made.

Firstly, I am well aware of the reasons for the cut-back from 33½ per cent to 10 per cent in the subsidies to local authorities. I hope that the reduction will not be permanent. I say to the honourable members for Townsville South and Mourilyan that I am hopeful that the river improvement trusts, which do a first-class job in the areas in which they operate, will be able to continue their work.

Mr Wilson: Just get the Burdekin Dam built and protect the farmers in the area.

Mr TOMKINS: I know about the Burdekin Dam, too.

It is unfortunate that these cut-backs were forced on the State Government by the Federal Government.

Mr Davis: That is a good way to get out from under.

Mr TOMKINS: What I am saying is correct. The member for Brisbane Central would not know the first thing about sugar. He is a good fellow, but half the time he does not know what he is talking about.

Recently in Bowen I attended a meeting of representatives of the northern river trusts, and I was greatly impressed by the work that they do. Since then they have approached the Premier and other Ministers. I hope that we will be able to do more for them in the future.

I commend the honourable member for Mulgrave (Mr Menzel) for his speech. He really understands the sugar industry. He does not say things that are not correct. His area will be one of the hardest hit by the Russell River project. Although that is another question, it is connected with the matters that are being discussed tonight. I again thank the honourable member for his speech. He is extremely well supported by the sugar industry. Recently I was at Babinda where a meeting was attended by approximately 300 people.

Mr Wilson: Which ones are you talking about, the 40 in favour or the 240 against?

Mr TOMKINS: I am talking about the sugar industry. That was a very well attended meeting. The member for Mulgrave did a first-class job in organising it. The exercise has been a very good one and I thoroughly approve of his methods.

Motion (Mr Tomkins) agreed to.

Committee

Mr Akers (Pine Rivers) in the chair

Clauses 1 to 8, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Tomkins, by leave, read a third time.

The House adjourned at 10.18 p.m.
